

INDEPENDENT READING & RESEARCH COURSE GUIDE

(9554, 9685, 9710)

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This information is intended as a general guide for students who wish to pursue an Independent Reading and Research (IRR) course as part of the requirements for the Master of Arts or Ph.D. degree.

Three IRR courses are offered:

- 9685 - for students in Master of Arts in Education Studies program
- 9554 - for students in Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology program
- 9710 - for students in Ph.D. in Education Studies program

Doctoral students may only complete one IRR during their degree.

PURPOSE OF AN INDEPENDENT READING AND RESEARCH COURSE

An IRR course provides a graduate student with an opportunity to pursue an area of special interest that is not treated in a detailed manner in a regular course. A student and an instructor have an opportunity to explore shared interests. IRR courses are not intended to provide opportunities to enrol in an established course during a term when it is not scheduled. Students may not take an IRR as part of a thesis or directed research project.

TYPES OF INDEPENDENT READING AND RESEARCH COURSES

An IRR is in principle a reading course requiring research into the literature. The most widely used format involves a course of guided readings and discussions with an instructor. In some cases, an element of empirical research may be undertaken subject to ethical review and approval where appropriate. The evaluation would normally be based on prescribed written assignments.

PROCEDURES

- Normally students should complete several courses before undertaking an IRR.
- A graduate student wishing to enroll in an IRR must discuss it with his/her Supervisor who may suggest the names of possible IRR supervisors. It is the student's responsibility to contact a member of the faculty with a specific request.
- After the student and the instructor have decided upon a topic, the student prepares a course proposal which clearly indicates the program to be followed and the completion requirements. The program of study must include:
 - a statement of the purpose and rationale;
 - a list of topics to be investigated;
 - a description of the assignments (minimum of 2) with completion dates and mark value;
 - a preliminary bibliography of at least eight or ten references;
 - at least six dates on which the student and the instructor will meet to discuss the readings and assignments.

Two or three pages is generally a sufficient length for the proposal.

An IRR will normally be completed in one term and will involve work equivalent to a graduate half-course.

- The student must submit the proposal, along with the [IRR Course Approval form](#) (signed by the student and IRR Supervisor) to the Graduate Programs Office for approval by the appropriate deadline date. The IRR Proposal must be approved before work begins and before the beginning of the term in which work is to commence.
- The arrangements in paragraphs (A) to (D) must be completed before the course begins (see Submission due dates below)

EVALUATION

The IRR Supervisor will submit a final grade to the Graduate Programs Office according to the usual procedure.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE DATES FOR PROPOSALS:

Fall Term:	August 31
Winter Term:	December 15
Summer Term:	April 30

FORMAT SUGGESTIONS FOR AN IRR PAPER

Consult with your supervising faculty member on the precise details of the format to be followed in presenting written work as part of an IRR.

Written work should normally conform to the following requirements:

TYPING:

An essay may be printed in black ink in either 10 or 12 size font on one side of the paper only. All textual material may be 1.5 or double spaced. Footnotes, long quotations and references may be single-spaced.

MARGINS:

Leave at least a one inch margin on all sides of the paper.

This also applies to all illustrative material: diagrams, maps, photographs, charts, tables, etc.

SPELLING:

Use a consistent form.

STYLE MANUALS:

Each instructor and thesis/project Supervisor offers advice on selecting an appropriate style manual. The American Psychological Association style manual is typically used at the Faculty of Education

PLAGIARISM:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see [Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students](#) in the Western Academic Handbook [reproduced below]).

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

The Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students states:

Scholastic Offences include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Plagiarism - the “act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own.” (Excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, West Group, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). This concept applies with equal force to all academic work, including theses, assignments or projects of any kind, comprehensive examinations, laboratory reports, diagrams, and computer projects. Detailed information is available from instructors, Graduate Chairs, or the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Students also may consult style manuals held in the University’s libraries. See <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>
- Cheating on an examination or falsifying material subject to academic evaluation.
- Submitting false or fraudulent research, assignments or credentials; or falsifying records, transcripts or other academic documents.
- Submitting a false medical or other such certificate under false pretences.
- Improperly obtaining, through theft, bribery, collusion or otherwise, an examination paper prior to the date and time for writing such an examination.
- Unauthorized possession of an examination paper, however obtained, prior to the date and time for writing such an examination, unless the student reports the matter to the instructor, the relevant program, or the Registrar as soon as possible after receiving the paper in question.
- Impersonating a candidate at an examination or availing oneself of the results of such an impersonation.
- Intentionally interfering in any way with any person’s scholastic work.
- Submitting for credit in any course or program of study, without the knowledge and written approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit previously has been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.
- Aiding or abetting any such offence.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

A student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, ranging from reprimand to expulsion from the university.

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