LIS 6278 Seminar in Theory Development   **Spring 2012**
Dr. Michelle M. Kazmer   **Tuesdays, 2-4:45 p.m. LSB 206**

Course Description

Students will discuss and critique the structural components and research processes related to the origination, construction, and evolution of theory. The seminar will provide students with an awareness of the historical and social conditions that influence a tradition of ideas.

Objectives

The student will understand the theoretical approach to the development of knowledge by:
- Analyzing historical and social factors associated with theory construction
- Reading critically in the area of theory creation and development
- Understanding and practicing tools to critique theories
- Analyzing the progression of ideas through the development of a specific theory

Texts

Shoemaker, P. J., Tankard, J. W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). How to build social science theories. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Other required readings are listed below. Most are available online.

Assessments

5%   Discussion Leading of Assigned Class Reading

20%   Theory Paper 1: Three Theories

20%   Theory Paper 2: Theory Background and Development

20%   Theory Paper 3: Theory Propositions and Concepts

20%   Theory Paper 4: Theory Application and Synthesis

15%   In-class Theory Presentation, including one assigned reading

REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSMENTS

Discussion Leading of Assigned Class Reading (5%)
Please email the professor (no later than Thursday January 19) with your top three choices (ranked 1 as the highest and 3 as the lowest) of readings for which you would like to lead the discussion. Please choose from the readings beginning with January 30. You are to pick one reading, not one whole week.

Please note that leading a discussion means coming prepared with activities for everyone to do and/or questions suitable for driving class discussion for an extended period of time—not lecturing about the reading. You can assume everyone has read the article or book chapter.

Theory Paper 1: Three Theories (20%, Due January 31)
Identify three theories that you think might have potential application to your area of research interest. They need not be from "library and information science" per se, but they need to be theories that might have a reasonable and cogent application to your own research ideas. Write approximately 2000 words (excluding references) in which you identify the three theories you are considering; describe briefly the research and/or disciplines from which they come and the research for which they are normally used; and describe how each of the three theories might be applicable to your own research.

Theory Paper 2: Theory Background and Development (20%, Due February 28)
Select ONE theory with which you will work for the remainder of the semester. For this paper, you should identify the theory with which you will work and write approximately 2000 words (excluding references) about its origins and development over time. You should include information about the person(s) who developed the theory; the intellectual traditions and research milieu in which the theory was originated; the development of the theory over time by the persons(s) who originated it and by persons(s) other than those who originated it; and how the theory has been applied and modified over time.

Theory Paper 3: Theory Propositions and Concepts (20%, Due March 27)
For the this paper, you should write approximately 2000 words (excluding references) identifying, analyzing, relating, and otherwise discussing the concepts and propositions associated with the theory. This paper needs to draw heavily on the class readings and be an extremely rigorous and systematic dissection of your theory, including a brief (no more than 800 words) discussion of the criticisms and limitations of the theory as seen in the literature.

Theory Paper 4: Theory Application and Synthesis (20%, Due April 24)
Write approximately 2000 words (excluding references) providing a detailed discussion of how the theory might be applied to, and refined as a result of, the research problem you wish to explore.

In-class Theory Presentation, including one assigned reading (15%)
Select one reading about your theory that is appropriate background for a class discussion and provide the professor with a citation and a copy of the reading two weeks before your in-class presentation. The presentation of theory in class should include, in some way, all the points addressed in papers 1-3. The presentation should allow time for discussion within the allotted time (approximately 30 minutes).

COURSE OUTLINE

January 10: Thinking about theory in LIS

Grover, R., & Glazier, J.D. (1986). A conceptual framework for theory building in library and information science. *Library and Information Science Research 8*, 227-242.

Glazier, J.D., Grover, R. 2002. A multidisciplinary framework for theory building. *Library Trends 50* (3), 317-329.

January 17: Theories and concepts

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 1: Introduction: The nature of science. In their *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 2: Theoretical concepts: The building blocks of theory. In their *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

January 24: Techniques of process

Becker, Howard S. (1998).Chapter 2 (Imagery). *Tricks of the trade*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 10-66.

Becker, Howard S. (1998). Chapter 4 (Concepts). *Tricks of the trade*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 109-145.

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 8: Creativity and theory building. In their *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

January 31: Relations   *Paper 1 Due*

Meleis, A. (1991). (Strategies for theory development). *Theoretical nursing*. NY: Lippincott.

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 3: Theoretical statements relating two variables. In their *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

February 7: Models

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 4: Theoretical and operational linkages. In *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 7: Theoretical models. In their *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

February 14: Evaluating theories

Meleis, A. (1991). (A model for description, analysis, and critique of theory). *Theoretical nursing*. NY: Lippincott.

Shoemaker, P.J., Tankard, J.W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2004). Chapter 9: Using and evaluating theory. In How to build social science theories. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

February 21: Some ways to categorize theories

Bates, M. (2005). Chapter 1: An introduction to metatheories, theories, and models. In K. E. Fisher, S. Erdelez, & L. E. F. McKechnie (Eds.), Theories of information behavior, Medford, NJ, Information Today, pp. 1-24.

Wallace, R.A., & Wolf, A. (1995). Theories of rational choice. In *Contemporary sociological theory: Continuing the classical tradition*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 279-317.

February 28: Theory use in LIS   *Paper 2 Due*

McKechnie, Lynne E. F. & Pettigrew, Karen E. (2002). Surveying the use of theory in library and information science research: a disciplinary perspective. *Library Trends 50*(3), 406-17.

Perryman, C. (2007). Tracking theory building and use trends in selected LIS journals: More research is needed. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, *2*(3), p. 101-4.

March 6: No Class (Spring Break)

March 13: Theory use in LIS

Kim, S.-J., & Jeong, D. Y. (2006). An analysis of the development and use of theory in library and information science research articles. *Library & Information Science Research 28*(4), 548-62.

Carlin, A. (2009). Segmented professions: Further considerations of theory and practice in LIS and librarianship. *Library Philosophy and Practice, 2009*, p. 1-15.

March 20: Big-picture approaches to LIS theory

Budd, John M. (1995). An epistemological foundation for library and information science. *Library Quarterly 65*, 295-318.

Hjørland, B. (2011). The importance of theories of knowledge: Indexing and information retrieval as an example. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *62*(1), 72-7. doi: 10.1002/asi.21451

March 27: Examples of theory in specific subfields of LIS (Part 1)   *Paper 3 Due*

Barzilai-Nahon, K. (2008). Toward a theory of network gatekeeping: A framework for exploring information control. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *59*(9), 1493-512. doi: 10.1002/asi.20857

Jansen, B., & Rieh, S. (2010). The seventeen theoretical constructs of information searching and information retrieval. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *61*(8), 1517-34.

Wilson, T. D. (1999). Models in information behaviour research. *Journal of Documentation, 55*, 249-270.

April 3: Examples of theory in specific subfields of LIS (Part 2)

Shachaf, P. (2010). Social reference: Toward a unifying theory. *Library & Information Science Research*, *32*(1), 66-76. doi: 10.1016/j.lisr.2009.07.009

White, Howard D. (2007). Combining Bibliometrics, Information Retrieval, and Relevance Theory, Part 1: First Examples of a Synthesis. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology 58*(4), 536-59.

April 10: Student Presentations (Part 1)

One reading to be assigned by each student presenting.

April 17: Student Presentations (Part 2)   *Paper 4 Due on April 24*

One reading to be assigned by each student presenting.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY:

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm.)

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the
 Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY:
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.