

**ORI 397**  
**EMERGING TOPICS IN ORIE**

**1. Teaching Team**

Instructor

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*Office Hours*

Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM or by appointment. If you need to talk with me outside of office hours, please send an e-mail stating the specific problem or topic you wish to discuss.

**2. Course Description and Objectives**

This course will prepare you to undertake research or advanced applications within the fields of operations research, industrial engineering, and analytics. Specifically, we will explore the latest research and applications in these areas and discuss extensions.

We will focus our discussions around a weekly seminar. These seminars will be delivered by academics and practitioners who are working at the forefront of their discipline. These speakers will either be outside visitors or UT faculty. In order to properly prepare for these seminars, you will read papers in advance and turn in a written summary of the work. The seminars will be followed by group discussion of what was presented and the broader research area.

In addition to this weekly activity, you will write a significant and original final paper.

**3. Text**

There is no text for this class. We will use a mix of lecture notes and assigned readings.

**4. Course Calendar**

Class will meet every Friday from 2:00-5:00 PM, except for University Holidays. We will conform to the University Academic Calendar (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/>).

If a class needs to be canceled for any other reason, you will be notified at least one week in advance—if at all possible.

**5. Course Website and Handouts**

All course material will be posted on Canvas.

**6. Coursework**

Homework

There will be a weekly homework assignment (approximately 12 in total), which will be distributed on Friday and will be due at the start of class the following Friday. The assignment will consist of reading a paper by our seminar speaker, summarizing it, and preparing a list of questions you could ask during the talk. This weekly paper should be 3-5 pages in length. **Late homework will not be accepted.**

Consideration for University Authorized Absences will be made. Out of respect for your instructor and fellow students, please give advance notice of any absences if possible.

#### Attendance and Participation

You will be expected to prepare for each seminar and ask questions during the seminar.

#### Final Paper

At the end of the semester you will turn in a 15-20 page research paper. The topic for this paper is of your choosing. Examples could include:

- A detailed literature review for a research topic that interests you. This literature review could serve as the basis for an MS thesis or a PhD dissertation
- An extension of a one of the papers that we will discuss during the seminar
- An application of one of the papers that we will discuss to a new area.

#### **7. Attendance**

We will take attendance each week.

#### **8. Letter Grades**

Your assignments will be weighted as follows:

Homework: 30%

Participation: 15%

Attendance: 20%

Final Paper: 35%

Your weighted average score for the course will be rounded up to the **nearest integer** using Microsoft Excel's® Roundup function. For example, if your weighted average score for the course was 90.3, it would be rounded to 91. A final score of 89.5 would be rounded to 90. Rounding up will take care of any "close calls" and further adjustments will not be made.

Your scores on individual exams, homework, project and the quizzes not be rounded.

Total points will map to letter grades according to the following schedule:

A = 90% or greater

A- = 85% to < 90%

B+ = 80% to < 85%

B = 75% to < 80%

B- = 70% to < 75%

C = 55% to < 70%

D = 40% to < 55%

F = < 40%

The instructor reserves the right to increase your total score by "curving" or some other method. However, these changes will never lower your grade. It is my hope that everyone will earn an A!

#### **9. Honor Code**

After you graduate and enter the workforce your boss will expect that you have been educated. In the "real world" there are no make up exams or partial credit. Therefore, cheating will hurt you in the long run. I expect everyone to follow the UT Honor Code, which states:

**“The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.”**

All suspected violations of the Honor Code will be referred to the Administration for adjudication.

#### **10. University Electronic Mail Notification Policy (Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students)**

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. Note: if you are an employee of the University, your e-mail address in Canvas is your employee address.

#### **11. Disability Statement**

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.

See website below for more information:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

#### **12. Canvas Use**

This course uses Canvas, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. (Student enrollments in each course are updated each evening.) Canvas can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys.

You will be responsible for checking the Canvas course site regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Canvas login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work. However, if there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, I will make an adjustment if it occurs close to the due date.

Canvas is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm, so plan accordingly.

### **13. Course Feedback**

Feedback is an important part of any kind of learning. Without feedback on how well you understand the material, it is more difficult for you to make significant progress. During this course you will give me feedback on your learning in informal and formal ways, such as assignments or exams. I want you to let me know when something we discuss is not clear. This kind of communication will enable me to provide additional information when needed or to explain a concept in different terms.

In addition to feedback on your learning, I will ask for feedback from you about how my teaching strategies are helping or hindering your learning. This kind of feedback is very important to me as I continually strive to be the best teacher I can be. Some of this feedback will be gathered from online anonymous surveys. I encourage you to respond to these surveys so that together we can create an effective teaching and learning environment.