Objectives

This course presents basic concepts and methods in quantitative and qualitative research used in social sciences/public administration. Research is a form of problem solving. The astute researcher matches problems with methods. This course will start you on the track to eventually becoming a sophisticated producer and reader of research. Your major goals in this course are:

1. Appreciate the role of scientific inquiry in social sciences
2. Learn the vocabulary and concepts of research
3. Understand the complexities of data collection
4. Examine ethical issues and standards of conduct concerning research
5. Match research methods to research questions
6. Assess the pros and cons of different research techniques
7. Learn to work with different types of data
8. Research a particular issue

Readings

- Additional readings will be distributed electronically.

Course Policies

- As a graduate student, you are expected to take considerable responsibility for the direction and quality of your own learning. You are expected to complete assignments on time, to speak up in class when you have questions and ideas, to contribute to a spirit of cooperative learning, and to demonstrate significant investment in your work. You should not miss classes, arrive late, or come unprepared for the class.
- **Academic dishonesty**, such as plagiarism or cheating on a paper, will result in an automatic F for the paper. It is acceptable to discuss the work with other students in the class. It is also acceptable to receive a limited amount of help from another student in the class. But, the work you turn in should be your own.
• Use gender-free language in your papers and class discussion. Unbiased language is as much a matter of accuracy as it is of fairness.
• As a matter of courtesy, please turn off cell phones, pagers, and other communication and entertainment devices prior to the beginning of class. Notify me in advance if you are monitoring an emergency, for which cell phone ringers should be switched to vibrate.
• **Accessibility Services** (Mesa Vista Hall 2021, 277-3506) provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If you think you need alternative accessible formats for undertaking and completing coursework, you should contact this service right away to assure your needs are met in a timely manner. If you need local assistance in contacting Accessibility Services, see the Bachelor and Graduate Programs office.

**Course Evaluation/Outcomes**

Students’ learning outcomes will be reflected in weekly quizzes/assignments and final research proposal.

**Take Home Weekly Assignments (50 Points)**

There are 10 weekly assignments (5 points each), based on the readings and lectures.

**Research Proposal (50 Points)**

Students will select a research topic of their choice. They are to write a research proposal, which should be typed, double-spaced, spell checked, proof read, and stapled together. It will be done in two parts:

(I) **Literature Review Paper (20 Points):**
   It should include: (i) Title; (ii) Abstract; (iii) Introduction; (iv) Literature Review; and (v) References in the APA style. The maximum length of the paper is about 1,000 words (4-5 pages).

(II) **Methodology Paper (30 Points):**
   It should include: (i) Tractable research question; (ii) Well developed research design; (iii) Identifiable the types of data that will be used; (iv) Specification of the research methods that will be employed; and (v) Justification of why the research design and methods identified are preferable to alternative approaches. The length of the paper is about 2,000 words (8 to 10 pages).

**Course Grades**

- A+ (96 – 100 Points)
- A (93 – 95 Points)
- A- (90 – 92 Points)
- B+ (86 – 89 Points)
- B (83 – 85 Points)
- B- (80 – 82 Points)
- C (70 – 79 Points)
Course Outline

August 19
Topics: Introduction, Syllabus. Using APA.
Readings: http://www.apastyle.org/ (optional); http://library.nmu.edu/apastyle.htm

August 26
Topic: Research Ethics.
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 4 on Ethics in Social Sciences Research
No Credit Assignment: Complete IRB Training via CITI. Go to the following link: http://hsc.unm.edu/som/research/hrrc/training.shtml, and click on “CITI”. After completing all required modules and quizzes for Social and Behavioral Research, print out your curriculum Completion Report and bring to class next week.

September 2
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 1 on the Scientific Approach; Conducting a Literature Review
Assignment 1: Pick the topic for your final research proposal and do a literature search. Bring the list of references in APA style in the next class. It should include some books and some peer reviewed journal articles. Minimum 10 references.

September 9
Topic: Building Blocks.
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 2 on Conceptual Foundations of Research, and Chapter 3 on Elements of Research
Assignment 2: To be given in class.

September 16
Topic: Measurements
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 7 on Measurement
Assignment 3: To be given in class.

September 23
Topic: Sampling
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 8 on Sampling and Sample Design
Assignment 4: To be given in class.

September 30
Topics: Using Secondary Data
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 13 on Secondary Data and Content Analysis; Illustrative Examples; Using the Manuscript Census in Social Research

October 7: Fall Break
LITERATURE REVIEW PAPER DUE
October 14:
Topic: Qualitative Research, Ethnography, Case Studies
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 9 on Observational Methods and Chapter 12 on Qualitative Research; Origin of Field Research; Anthropological Study of Brady Bar
Assignment 5: To be given in class.

October 21
Topics: Survey
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 10 on Survey Research; An Illustrative Example
Assignment 6: To be given in class.

October 28
Topics: Interview, Focus Group
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 11 on Questionnaire Construction; An Experimental Comparison of Open and Closed Questions; Interview Flow Chart
Assignment 7: To be given in class.

November 4
Topic: Experiments
Assignment 8: To be given in class.

November 11
Topic: Writing Proposal
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Appendix A on Writing Research Reports

November 18
Topic: Data Analysis
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 14 on Data Preparation and Analysis
Assignment 9: To be given in class.

November 25 Thanksgiving

December 2
Topic: Data Analysis
Readings: Frankfort-Nachmias et al, Chapter 15 on The Univariate Distribution & Chapter 16 on Bivariate Analysis
Assignment 10: To be given in class.
METHOD PAPER DUE