

University of California, Los Angeles

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September, 2015

Syllabus for PhD Seminar on Research Methods and Design

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Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/borgman/377/>

IS 298A, Information Studies, UCLA
Research Methods and Design
Fall 2015
Thur, 9-12:30pm, 245 GSEIS

IS 298A
PhD SEMINAR ON RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

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Course overview	1
Learning outcomes:.....	2
Assignments and Grading	2
Office Hours.....	2
Course Materials	3
Schedule of Course Topics and Activities	5
Course Activities.....	5
Sept 24, Topic 1: Course introduction, overview and review.....	6
Oct 1, Topic 2: Ethics in research; human subjects protection.....	6
Oct 8, Topic 3: Reliability, Validity, and Bias	7
Oct 15, Topic 4: Research design and operationalization of concepts	8
Oct 22, Topic 5: Experimental and quasi-experimental research	8
Nov 5, Topic 6: Randomization and sampling	8
Nov 12, Topic 7: Survey research.....	9
Nov 19, Topic 8: Qualitative field research.....	9
Dec 3, Topic 9: Data analysis	10
Dec 10, Exam week: Topic 10: Course review and wrap-up	10

Course overview

This is the core PhD seminar in research design for the Department of Information Studies, covering a range of social science research methods for studying human behavior. It follows, or is offered concurrently with, 291A, *Theoretical Traditions In Information Studies*. Graduate students in Information Studies or related fields (education, communication, public policy, management, psychology, etc.) who have not taken 291A but who have extensive background in epistemology or research methods may enroll with instructor's permission. Also prerequisite is at least one course in descriptive and inferential statistics.

The course is conducted as a workshop, drawing upon students' research projects as cases. We will survey quantitative and qualitative research designs and address research ethics and the protection of human subjects. The first week of the course will provide a brief review of epistemological issues, basic concepts of research design, and a refresher in statistical concepts. The course is intended to prepare students for further study on specific methods and to assist in preparation for the PhD qualifying exams.

Students will begin to build their personal libraries on research methods via the course readings. Materials include popular textbooks on social science research methods and the primary publication manual for social science research.

Students will develop a research project and will present an analysis of research reported in a journal article in class.

Learning outcomes:

1. Students will become conversant with a range of research methods used in social settings, including experimental, quasi-experimental, and qualitative methods.
2. Students will identify and describe the elements of reliable and valid research and means to reduce bias in research.
3. Students will present critiques of published research using appropriate concepts in research design.
4. Students will develop a research design on a topic of their choosing, using an appropriate method.

Assignments and Grading

- Reading assignments weekly, to be completed prior to class sessions
- Major project 50%
- Short assignment: selection, analysis, and presentation of a research article 25%
- Class participation and mastery of readings 25%
- Grading policy: Late papers will be accepted only with instructor permission *in advance*. They will be marked down 2 points per day late.

Office Hours

Office hour time is essential for developing your seminar project papers and for selecting journal articles for the article critique assignment. Students are expected to meet individually with the instructor at least twice during the term.

Office hours are Mondays, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Please sign up in advance by Doodle. While you are welcome to stop by during office hours, most slots fill up in advance. If you are not able to keep an appointment, please cancel it on the Doodle as early as possible so that someone else may have the slot.

Course Materials

One of the objectives of this course is to assist students in building a personal library on research methods and design. The texts are classics that will assist you in your research career (and in writing your seminar paper). Other assigned readings will be available via CCLE, the course management system. Bring your texts and other readings to class with you (in print or digital form) on days they are assigned, as we will be referring to them.

As discussed in the CCLE forum prior to the start of term, the Babbie 13th ed, APA manual, and Shadish, Cook, and Campbell are available in LuValle bookstore. You are welcome to acquire these elsewhere, but be sure you get the correct editions. The Lofland book is available free online.

Required:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Manual of the APA, 6th ed.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Babbie, E. (2012). *The Practice of Social Research, 13th ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. *NB: This edition is required because we will be referring to it together in class.*

Lofland, J.; & Lofland, L.H. (1995). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis. 3rd ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Out of print; please buy a used copy online from Amazon or elsewhere: http://www.amazon.com/Analyzing-Social-Settings-Qualitative-Observation/dp/0534247806/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1441236434&sr=1-3

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D. & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference.* Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0395615569

Recommended:

Blackstone, A. (2012). Principles of Sociological Inquiry – Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. Saylor Academy. Retrieved from https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_principles-of-sociological-inquiry-qualitative-and-quantitative-methods/ [Also available at <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=139>]

Creswell, J. (2013). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 4th ed.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Flick, U. (2014). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research, 5th ed.* Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc.

Lofland, J., Snow, D., Anderson, L. & Lofland, L. H. (2006). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis* Belmont, CA, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. [I prefer the earlier edition but it is out of print. This later one dropped some important material and is expensive.]

Majchrzak, A, Markus, M. (2013). *Methods for Policy Research: Evidence-Based Social and Business Entrepreneurship, 2nd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Silverman, D. (2007). *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.

Schedule of Course Topics and Activities

These course topics and meeting times are presumed final unless we determine otherwise in class discussion. If students are available, we will meet earlier in exam week. All readings are to be completed in advance of the class meeting. Students are graded on class participation and mastery of readings (see assignments and grading). Bring your assigned reading to class (books and articles; latter can be in print or on your laptop/tablet). The assignments are explained in documents separate from this syllabus.

Course Activities

- Week 0 (September 24): Topic 1: Course introduction and overview; topic assignments discussion.
- Bring IRB certificate to class and upload to CCLE.
- Week 1 (October 1): Topic 2: Ethics in research; human subjects protection
Confirm journal article topic assignments
- Week 2 (October 8): Topic 3: Reliability, validity, bias; Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Seminar project proposal due
- Week 3 (October 15): Topic 4: Research designs; operationalization
Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Week 4 (October 22): Topic 5: Experimental and quasi-experimental research.
Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Week 5 (October 29): No class meeting: Prof. Borgman in Tokyo
- Week 6 (November 5): Topic 6: Randomization and sampling; Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Week 7 (November 12): Topic 7: Survey research; Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles

- Week 8 (November 19): Topic 8: Qualitative field research; Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Week 9 (November 26): No class meeting: Thanksgiving Holiday
- Week 10 (December 3): Topic 9: Data analysis; Workshop 1 or 2 student seminar project topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; Seminar project papers due Friday, December 11, 5pm (upload to CCLE site; Word files much preferred)
- Exam week:
(Dec 10 or earlier in week) Course review and wrap-up; Summary of readings, methods, and designs; preparation for qualifying exams and dissertations

Sept 24, Topic 1: Course introduction, overview and review

The course will begin with a general overview of topics and a review of basic statistics.

Readings:

Babbie:

Preface, xv-xxi

Part 1: An introduction to inquiry

Ch 1: Human inquiry and science

Ch 2: Paradigms, theory, and social research

Ch 16: Statistical analyses

Current news on research ethics:

The Case of the Amazing Gay-Marriage Data: How a Graduate Student Reluctantly Uncovered a Huge Scientific Fraud. (2015). Retrieved June 1, 2015, from <http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2015/05/how-a-grad-student-uncovered-a-huge-fraud.html>

Campos, P. (2015, August 21). Alice Goffman's Implausible Ethnography. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Alice-Goffmans-Implausible-/232491/>

Oct 1, Topic 2: Ethics in research; human subjects protection

Prior to class: take CITI course on Social and Behavioral Research: (allow at least 2 hours): <http://training.arc.ucla.edu/ucla/>. Bring your certificate to class.

Babbie, Ch 3: The ethics and politics of social research

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch 9: Practical Problems 1: Ethics, participant recruitment, and random assignment

The Belmont Report, Office of the Secretary, Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research, The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, April 18, 1979.

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>

Ethics Guide: Association of Internet Researchers. (2012). Retrieved from

<http://aoir.org/documents/ethics-guide/>

Shea, C. (2000). Don't Talk to the Humans: The Crackdown on Social Science Research.

Lingua Franca, 10(6). <http://www.linguafranca.com/print/0009/humans.html>

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~roos/Courses/grstat502/shea.pdf>. The original link is dead but the second one works (or use Google Scholar to look elsewhere).

UCLA OHRPP (Office of Human Subjects Research Protection Program) Guidance, Procedures, and Policies (Read intro, skim through rest) <http://aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf>

Recommended readings:

Proposed Revisions to the Common Rule: Perspectives of Social and Behavioral Scientists: Workshop Summary. (2013). Retrieved from

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18383

Oct 8, Topic 3: Reliability, Validity, and Bias

Babbie, Part 2: The structuring of inquiry, overview

Ch 4: Research design (discussions of causality)

Ch 5: Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement

Shadish, Cook and Campbell,

Ch 1: Experiments and generalized causal inference

Ch 2: Statistical conclusion validity and internal validity

Ch 3: Construct validity and internal validity

Ch 9: Practical Problems 1: Ethics, participant recruitment, and random assignment

Gould, Stephen Jay. 1996, 1981. *The Mismeasure of Man*. Norton. Introduction (pp. 51-61). <http://books.wwnorton.com/books/detail-inside.aspx?ID=13131&CTYPE=G>

(scanned chapter may not load properly Firefox) or

<https://books.google.com/books?id=WTtTiG4eda0C&pg=PA56#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Kuhn, Thomas. 1987. "The Function of Dogma in Science." In *Scientific Knowledge: Basic Issues in the Philosophy of Science*, ed. By J. Kourany.
<http://strangebeautiful.com/other-texts/kuhn-function-dogma.pdf>

Recommended readings:

Popper, Karl. 1989. "Conjectural Knowledge." In *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*. Norton. (pp. 1-31)

Oct 15, Topic 4: Research design and operationalization of concepts

Babbie (continuing discussion from topic 3)

Part 2: The structuring of inquiry, overview

Ch 4: Research design

Ch 5: Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement

Shadish, Cook and Campbell

Ch 2: Statistical conclusion validity and internal validity

Ch 3: Construct validity and internal validity

Oct 22, Topic 5: Experimental and quasi-experimental research

Babbie

Part 3: Modes of observation, overview

Ch 8: Experiments

Shadish, Cook and Campbell,

Ch 4: Quasi-experimental designs that either lack a control group or lack pretest observations on the outcome

Ch 5: Quasi-experimental designs that use both control groups and pretests

Ch 6: Quasi-experiments: interrupted time-series designs

Campbell, Donald T. and H. Laurence Ross. 1968. "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis." *Law & Society Review* 3: 33-54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3052794>

Nov 5, Topic 6: Randomization and sampling

Note: Be prepared to explain the differences among indexes, scales, and typologies, and to outline a sampling plan for your research project.

Babbie

Part 2: The structuring of inquiry

Ch 6: Indexes, scales, and typologies
Ch 7: The logic of sampling

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch 8: Randomized experiments: Rationale, designs, and conditions conducive to doing them

Rosenthal, Robert. 1963. "On the Social Psychology of the Psychological Experiment: The Experimenter's Hypothesis As Unintended Determinant of Experimental Results." American Scientist 51: 268-283. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27838693>

Recommended readings:

Bookstein, Abraham. 1983. "Sampling From Card Files." Library Quarterly: 53: 307-312. (Download available on CCLE)

Orne, Martin T. "On the Social Psychology of the Psychological Experiment: With Particular Reference to Demand Characteristics and Their Implications." American Psychologist 17 (1962): 776-783.
<http://www.psych.upenn.edu/history/orne/orne1962amerpsychol776783.html>

Nov 12, Topic 7: Survey research

Babbie

- Part 2: The structure of inquiry
 - Ch 6: Indexes, scales, and typologies (continued)
- Part 3: Modes of observation, overview
 - Ch 9: Survey research

Nov 19, Topic 8: Qualitative field research

Lofland & Lofland, Introduction, Part I, Part II (pp. 1-178)

Clifford, Geertz. Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

- Ch 1: "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture" (pp. 3-30)
http://www.sociosite.net/topics/texts/Geertz_Thick_Description.php
- Ch 15: "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" (pp. 412-453)
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20024056>

Recommended readings:

Babbie

- Part 3: Modes of observation
 - Ch 10: Qualitative field research

Heider, Karl G. "The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree." *American Anthropologist* 90, no. 1 (March, 1988): 73-82. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/678455>

Dec 3, Topic 9: Data analysis

Babbie

Part 3: Modes of observation

Ch 11: Unobtrusive research

Ch 15: The elaboration model

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch 11: Generalized Causal Inference: A Grounded Theory

Lofland & Lofland, Part II (pp. 179-230)

Recommended readings:

Babbie

Ch 13: Qualitative data analysis

Ericsson, K. Anders and Herbert Simon. 1980. "Verbal Reports as Data." *Psychological Review* 87: 215- 251. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/614352862?accountid=14512>

Dec 10, Exam week: Topic 10: Course review and wrap-up

Summary of readings, methods, and designs; preparation for qualifying exams and dissertations.