

GOVT 500-001: Research Methods in Political Science Fall 2009

Basic Course Information

Time & Place:	Tuesday 4:30 – 7:10 p.m., Innovation Hall 318
Instructor:	Darrene Hackler
Office Location:	Department of Public & International Affairs, Robinson Hall A233
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E-mail:	<i>dhackler@gmu.edu</i>
Office Hours:	Tuesday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., Wednesday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., or by appt.
Blackboard Help:	Collaborative Learning Hub, 703-993-3141, JC 311
Web Assistance:	ITU Support 703-993-8870 or http://itusupport.gmu.edu

Required Reading:

The reading for this course comes from a variety of books and articles. Thus, you will be required to purchase the books below and utilize Blackboard to download all other readings

1. King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton UP. ISBN: 074251126X
2. Brady, Henry and David Collier, eds. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. ISBN: 074251126X
3. Readings on Blackboard, <https://gmublackboard.com/webct/logon/798424548011>, log in using your email username and password.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

The course introduces graduate students to research design and methods to study political science and the practice of government, focusing on classic issues and contemporary debates in the logic and design of empirical research. The course is intended to help you recognize and navigate a variety of social and political scientific research designs—quantitative, qualitative, and interpretive. The course is not on statistics, which you will cover in GOVT 711, nor is it a course in qualitative methods (GOVT 717).

The goal of this course is to help students become better consumers and producers of all research—academic, policy reports, governmental publications, etc. As a *consumer* of research, the course will assist in the development of critical analysis skills, helping you make educated judgments about overall quality by understanding the indicators of good or bad research. Is the research question relevant? Does it consider alternative explanations? Is the research design appropriate to address the question? As a *producer* of research, the course will prepare you to think systematically about research

design around your own interests and topics. This is not only for those heading into academia, but it is also for a policy researcher or analyst, where synthesizing and integrating information into an accessible package is essential. You will develop skills that assist you in logical and systematic reasons for discounting or advocating arguments, resulting in better recommendations. The course serves the purpose of introducing you to the norms in political science and in each of its fields and professionalizing you in our discipline.

After taking this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the discourse of research methods in political science;
- Be a more methodologically acute consumer/reader of political science research;
- Be a more sophisticated potential producer of research—i.e. better able to formulate a project, pursue it effectively, and explain your research choices and results to academic audiences with varied methodological orientations; and
- Prepare a well-organized, clear, and understandable research proposal.

The course has four parts. We spend the first two weeks exploring the philosophy and sociology of science. The second part focuses our attention specifically on social science and the question of what explanation does (or should) involve in these fields. In the third part of the course, we turn to research design choices like questions and cases, types and sources of data, concepts and measures. Fourth and finally, we examine several common data collection methodologies and techniques of analysis.

Course Rules

To avoid any discriminatory practices and in the interest of fairness, the following rules will prevail without exception:

1. Classroom environment: In order to provide the best learning environment and courtesy to all in the classroom, *please* 1) Turn off your cell phones and any other non-note-taking devices when you enter the classroom; 2) Arrive early and do not leave the classroom before the class is finished (i.e. no bathroom breaks or leaving to purchase drinks or food; please plan for these before you enter the classroom); and 3) We are in a computer classroom. If the computers are used for anything beyond seminar presentation, note taking or exercises we do in class, I will lock access.
2. All assignments are due in class the day that they are due. If you are unable to attend class when an assignment is due, make prior arrangements to turn it in early.
3. Any examination or assignment that is missed counts as zero unless documentary evidence is presented to show a medical emergency, or I am contacted with these issues before the deadline.
4. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Requirements

Your grade will be based on the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Readings & Discussion | 20% |
| 2. Discussion Group | 10% |
| 3. Exercises | 15% |
| 4. Critique of Colleague's Research Proposal | 5% |
| 5. Research Proposal | 50% |

Readings & Discussion

The reading load and weekly preparation for this course and your research proposal are demanding. In order for you and your fellow course participants to get the most out of our discussions you must make time to read the assigned material carefully and completely, and to ponder what you have read before coming to class. Utilize the “Structural Analysis of a Research Article” guide toward the end of the syllabus to help you become a better reader for the class and of all research. No student can do well in this course without effective and informed oral participation in class discussions, however, neither the frequency nor stridency of interventions are good measures of such participation. Your productive participation in class discussion of assigned readings will count for 20% of your grade.

Discussion Group

This seminar is interactive and discussion oriented. Each week several students will lead a discussion of the week’s readings worth 10% of your grade. The discussion group must work together to coordinate its comments and make linkages among presentations, with each member presenting/leading discussion. In preparing for leading discussion, it is less about providing a reading synopsis since we will have all read the material, and more about providing a critical analysis of the reading as a whole. Group members should not be presenting each reading separately, but working to find a framework that *integrates* each of your thoughts about the readings as a whole and designing presentation and discussion questions around this framework. Each group will prepare and submit a brief 3 page memo related to the reading for that session. Memos are due by 5:00 p.m. Sunday (2 days before class) and should be sent to all class members via email. Discussion presentations, class questions, and memo formats may vary, but here are some ideas to start the process:

- Identify central idea(s), concept(s), arguments which you found stimulating across the readings, but not a book review of the readings.
- Are there any questions about concepts introduced?
- Are there any connections, linkages, significant contradictions among idea or approaches?
- Are there any concerns or disagreements with ideas encountered?

Everyone in the class must be prepared to participate in response to the discussion group’s memo, presentations, and questions.

Exercises

You will be requested a few times in the semester to do short exercises in preparation for class. You should type your responses and bring them to class to submit. These exercises will primarily be designed to aid you in thinking about and developing a research proposal. These will count for 10% of your grade and your constructive in-class comments on other students’ exercises for a further 5%. Although not all will be assigned to discuss and submit exercises each week in class, all students should complete the exercises to assist the development of the research proposal.

Research Proposal & Critique

The major writing assignment for this class is to implement your accrued knowledge of research design into a research proposal. The research proposal will differ slightly depending if you are a Masters or Ph.D. student. If a Masters student, you will develop a research proposal based on ideas and interests gained from an academic book or research article that you have recently read and held your

interest. If a Ph.D. student, you will develop a research proposal using a Ph.D. dissertation, filed in the last 5 years, in your field/research area. The selection will give you the opportunity to see your future peers' research ("what's in the pipelines"), but not require you to take on a full research agenda of a senior scholar.

Utilizing current research will enable you to see how we work to justify our research decisions and the many conceptual ambiguities we face in doing so. You will submit a memo describing your selection (full citation, topic, field area, and short description of the research idea including as much as you can say about the theory, methods, and findings from the piece that sponsored your ideas) on **Tuesday, September 16th**.

The semester's exercises will help you: develop theory and detailed arguments to elaborate your ideas of explanation or causation, explain relevance of the research and the puzzle or empirical hypotheses, develop a literature review and a research methodology (identification of data sources for collection and analysis), and finally explain the nature of your complete project. You can read a good description of a research proposal can at: <http://uweb.txstate.edu/~ps07/documents/prosdirect> or <http://uweb.txstate.edu/%7Eps07/pro.htm>.

Your research proposal design should be at least 5,000, and no longer than 6,000 words, not including the bibliography. You must use informative headings that reveal the structure and logic of the research design. You must carefully cite all sources: provide a bibliography of relevant material and consistently use **appropriately formatted** parenthetical citations. You should start using Zotero (<http://www.zotero.org/>) to collect, manage, and cite your research sources. You may wish to use the style outlined in the department's "Research Handbook," located at <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/pia/r-links/Guide.pdf>. This guide is somewhat dated, especially with respect to the use of the library's on-line capabilities. For citation of websites and e-mail messages, and other items on the internet, you may follow the format specified in: 1) http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/1.2/inbox/mla_archive.html#citing_sites.

You will submit a full draft of your complete proposal to a colleague for critique/peer review on **Tuesday, November 24th**. Your colleague will prepare a brief memorandum of two or three double-spaced pages that provides you with constructive criticism and complete a "Research Proposal Assessment" form found at the end of the syllabus. The critique memo and form will be returned to you and submitted to me during the following class and is worth 5% of the memo writer's grade. The final draft of the research proposal is due on **Tuesday, December 8th**.

Grading

I will be judging your writing and presentations as a whole, looking at your knowledge, as well as your judgment in selection and presentation of material. Please note that the GMU's graduate grading system allows grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F. Work that does not merit at least a B is not considered acceptable graduate work. The following is offered as a guideline:

A/A-: An excellent grasp of the facts. Evidence of considerable organizing intelligence and powers of argument.

B+: Sound factual knowledge. Evidence of sound expository power, i.e. a clear line of argument throughout the essay.

B: Knowledge of the basic facts. Ability to draw some conclusions, although of a somewhat superficial and generally conventional kind. Main lines of argument visible but with some problems.

C: Knowledge of the basic facts but weak in argument or relevance, OR reasonably relevant but displaying factual weakness.

Honor Code Policy

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. Please consult the Student Handbook for a full definition of these terms. **All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.** Violations include but are not limited to the following:

- Cheating includes any “willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students,” by any means whatsoever, or the attempt to do so. Examples: copying off another student; using notes during a closed-book exam; obtaining an assignment ahead of time from a student who took the class a previous semester; turning in the same work in more than one class (without prior authorization from all professors concerned).
- Plagiarism includes “presenting as one’s own the works, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement” or “borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.” Examples: getting your paper off the Internet; turning in a paper that was written by somebody else; buying a paper; taking a written piece from someone else but rewording it so that it looks different.
- Lying includes “the willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work.” Examples: lying to faculty member by saying you were sick when you were not; falsely claiming a death in the family or a personal emergency; falsifying any official documentation.
- Stealing encompasses “taking or appropriating without the permission to do so, and with the intent to keep or to make use of wrongfully, property belonging to any member of the George Mason University community or any property located on the University campus.” Examples: stealing exams or paper assignments from the professor for the purposes of cheating; selling notes you take in class to an individual or a business.

Course Schedule†

Below is the schedule of topics to be discussed and assigned readings that should be read *before* the start of that class. The two main texts are referred to by the authors’ last names. Others are on Blackboard or can be found in the library’s collection of e-journals (<http://library.gmu.edu/phpzone/ej.php>). See below schedule for important dates regarding last days to drop/add, etc.

†The schedule for readings and assignments may change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Week 1 9/1 **Course Introduction**—Come prepared to discuss reading King, Keohane, and Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Ch. 1.

Shields & Tajalli. 2006. "Intermediate Theory: The Missing Link in Successful Student Scholarship?" Available at <http://ecommons.txstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=polsfacp>.

Note: You are expected to create and use the Conceptual Framework, Literature Review, and Operationalization tables in your Research Proposal. **Please print each table and bring to class:** <http://uweb.txstate.edu/%7Eps07/conframe.htm>

- Conceptual Framework table will help you organize your empirical research process.
- Literature Review table will help theorize your research.
- Operationalization table will help transform your inquiry from theory to methodology, linking the "conceptual subject-matter" to the "techniques and organs of observation."

Cycle of Research, <http://uweb.txstate.edu/~ps07/ce.htm>, **please print and bring to class.**

- Utilize glossary in Brady and Collier, starting on p. 273.
- Using the library: databases (dissertation abstracts), e-journals, MyAladin, WRLC, pdfs, etc...
- Using Zotero. Visit <http://www.zotero.org>, read requirements, and download to start using.
- Discussion group sign-up

PART ONE: CLASSIC PUZZLES IN THE PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENCE

Week 2 9/8 Theory and Observation: Inference and Testing

Godfrey-Smith. *Theory and Reality*. Ch. 4.

King, Keohane, and Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Ch. 2.

Brady and Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 5 & 9 (Rogowski & McKeown).

Van Evera. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Ch. 1, p. 7 – 21; refer to glossary in Brady and Collier, starting on p. 273, for comparison.

Week 3 9/16 All discussion groups meet separately to work on Exercise 1.

- Exercise 1: Use a) last week's discussion of theory and b) your selected article/book/Ph.D. dissertation to address and discuss the questions below. Following this meeting, prepare a memo regarding the responses for your selection and bring to the next class.
 - What's theory? Systematically look for the word in your selection and summarize what you think they mean.
 - What is/are the author(s) doing with theory? (testing, extending, developing parts, etc...)
 - What is their question?
 - What are the alternative explanations or other compelling answers to examine and rule out?
 - What's author(s) theory?

✓  Research Proposal Selection Due **via TBD (email or Blackboard)**

Week 4 9/22 Scientific Change: Paradigms, Research Programs, and the Progress Puzzle

Godfrey-Smith. *Theory and Reality*. Ch. 5.

Ball, Terence. 1976. "From Paradigms to Research Programs: Toward a Post-Kuhnian Political Science." *American Journal of Political Science* 20, no. 1: 151-77.

Chernoff, Fred. 2004. "The Study of Democratic Peace and Progress in International Relations." *International Studies Review* 6: 49-77.

- Discuss and submit Exercise 1.

PART TWO: EXPLANATION(S)

Week 5 9/29 Understanding and Explanation & Literature Reviews

Wendt, Alexander. 1998. "On constitution and causation in International Relations." *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 5: 101-18.

Baglione, Lisa. 2007. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science*. Ch. 3. Read the following as examples of literature reviews, compare to Baglione's description, and complete Exercise 2.

- Thomas and Darnton. 2006. "Social Diversity and Economic Development in the Metropolis." *Journal of Planning Literature* 21(2): 153-168
- Hackler & Mayer. 2006. "Diversity, Entrepreneurship, and Urban Environment" *Journal of Urban Affairs* 30(3): 273-307.

- Start to develop your conceptual framework and literature review tables based on your research proposal work so far. You will submit copies next week.
- Exercise 2: Think about how the progression within philosophy of science literature, note the different types of literature reviews from the above readings, and reflect on your selected research article/book/Ph.D. dissertation to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - What's the purpose of a literature review?
 - How do they differ? Identify differences. Do they examine change/evolution of knowledge in X, dueling paradigms, on methodological techniques, on findings, etc...?
 - What categorical framework is used to divide up literature? Would you do it differently?
 - Critique: what is missing with the approach and how can it be improved?

Week 6 10/6 Causation and Explanation

King, Keohane, and Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Ch. 3.

Brady and Collier. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 2-3.

Goldthorpe, John H. 2001. "Causation, Statistics, and Sociology." *European Sociological Review* 17, no. 1: 1-20.

Brady, Henry. 2008. "Causation and Explanation in Social Sciences." In Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, 217-70.

Recommended: Gerring, John. 2007. "Review Article: The Mechanistic Worldview: Thinking Inside the Box." *British Journal of Political Science* 38:161-79.

- Redraft your conceptual framework and literature review tables and prepare copies to submit.
- Exercise 3: Return to our discussion of literature reviews and use your research and critique to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - How can a focused literature review be developed?
 - How can you develop your research and offer alternative explanations?
 - What are the alternative explanations?
 - Finally, develop hypotheses and explain how you justify selection of cases.



10/13 No Class: Fall Recess

Week 7 10/20 One, Two, or Many Explanatory Programs

Brady and Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 1 (p. 3-14) & 13.

Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz. 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14: 227-49.

- Exercise 4: Use your research to address the following questions about causality in your research. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - What's the universe of cases in your research?
 - Does your research explain an outcome with one case or explain variance among multiple cases?
 - What are the trade-offs with your case selection?
 - How does it improve or worsen qualitative and quantitative research?



Progress reports on research proposal development

PART THREE: ASKING QUESTIONS AND CHOOSING CASES

Week 8 10/27

a. What to Ask? Research Topics, Puzzles, and Hunches (a.k.a. hypotheses)

King, Keohane, and Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*, Review section 1.2.1. (p. 14-19).

b. Systematizing Qualitative Methods: KKV's Practical Advice and Responses to It

King, Keohane, and Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Ch. 4-6.

Brady and Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 6-8.

- Exercise 5: Use your research and conceptual framework table to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - What is the research question? Is it a descriptive or causal inference?
 - How are cases selected?
 - If your research uses one case to explain an outcome, what are the theoretical propositions? What is the expected outcome?
 - If your research uses multiple cases, what are the empirical implications? What is/are the hypothesis(es)? What are the dependent variable and independent variable(s)?



Progress reports on research proposal development

Week 9 11/3 Conceptualization and Measurement

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3: 529-46

Hendrick, Rebecca. 2004. "Assessing and Measuring the Fiscal Health of Local Governments: Focus on Chicago Suburban Municipalities." *Urban Affairs Review* 40, no. 1: 78 - 114.

Munck, Gerardo L. and Jay Verkuilen. 2002. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices." *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 1: 5-34.

- Develop an operationalization table based on your research and coordinate it with your conceptual framework and literature review tables. You will submit all next week.
- Exercise 6: Use your research to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - How is/are your descriptive concept(s) or causal model's dependent variable and independent variable(s) *conceptualized*, moving from background to systematized concept(s)?
 - What are the operational definitions for classification procedures or indicators (a.k.a. measures or operationalizations) of the variables?
 - What are the results of the qualitative classification of cases or how are the indicators applied to produce scores for cases?

Week 10 11/10 Data: Quality, Challenges, and Level of Measurement

Herrera, Yoshiko M. and Devesh Kapur. 2007. "Improving Data Quality: Actors, Incentives, and Capabilities." *Political Analysis* 15: 365-86.

Levels of measurement, read and understand the content from the following links:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/measlevl.php>,

<http://courses.csusm.edu/soc201kb/levelofmeasurementrefresher.htm>,

<http://www.andrews.edu/~calkins/math/webtexts/stat01.htm#LEVELS>,

<http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/datalevl.htm>,

http://www.ucel.ac.uk/showroom/levels_of_measurement/downloads/levels_notes.pdf

- Redraft your operationalization, conceptual framework, and literature review tables to submit in class.
- Exercise 7: Use your research to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - What data are you using for the operational definitions or indicators in your research?
 - What are the levels of measurement for these?
 - Discuss measurement issues (validity, bias, efficiency, coverage, accuracy, etc...) in regard to your data.

PART FOUR: GATHERING DATA AND ANALYSIS

Week 11 11/17 Data and Methodology: Strategies and Techniques of Analysis

- See "Data Collection Methods" toward the end of the syllabus

a. Documents: Legal Scholarship and Secondary Data

Epstein & King. "The Rules of Inference." Available at: <http://gking.harvard.edu/files/rules.pdf>, p. 61-80.

McDonald, Michael P. 2007. "Income Inequality and Voter Participation." Unpublished manuscript.

Robbins, Suzanne and Maksim Tsvetovat. 2008. "Guns, Babies and Labor: Networks of Money in the 2000 Elections." Unpublished Manuscript.

b. Observations: Case Study

Dueck, Colin. 2005. "Realism, Culture and Grand Strategy: Explaining America's Peculiar Path to World Power." *Security Studies* 14, no. 2: 195-231.

- Return to your operationalization and conceptual framework tables to update with appropriate data collection methodology. You will submit any changes next week.
- Exercise 8: Use your research to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - What is your data collection strategy? How will you collect or gather your data?
 - How does this affect measurement issues (validity, bias, efficiency, coverage, accuracy, etc...)?
 - How could you use controls to diminish these issues?
- Select colleague for research proposal exchange and critique

Week 12 11/24 Data and Methodology: Strategies and Techniques of Analysis II**c. Survey: Questionnaire and Interviews**

Keeter, Scott. 2005. "Survey Research." In *Doing Research: Methods of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis*, D. Druckman, ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Research. 123-162.


Various Authors. 2002. "Interview Methods in Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35, no. 4: 663-88.

Schoenberger. 1991. "The Corporate Interview as a Research Method in Economic Geography," *Professional Geographer* 43(2):180-189.

Fenno, Jr., Richard F. 1977. "U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration." *American Political Science Review* 71, no. 3: 883-917.

d. Other Field/Group Techniques: Focus Groups

Morgan, David. 1996. "Focus Groups." *Annual Review of Sociology* 22: 129-152.

- Submit new draft of all tables (conceptual framework, literature review, and operationalization).
- Exercise 9: Use your research to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - Returning to the idea of case selection with data collection, how will you analyze this data?
 - Include comments about appropriateness of longitudinal, cross-section, panel, etc... analysis.
 - Are the cases homogeneous? This is a matter of statistical importance, so how does it affect your employment of techniques of analysis?
 - Are the cases independent or interactive cases? This is a matter of statistical importance, so how does it affect your employment of techniques of analysis?
- ✓  Submit full draft of research proposal to your colleague for review. Include conceptual framework, literature review, and operationalization tables in the draft.

Week 13 12/1 The Promise (and Peril?) of Multi-Method Research


Brady and Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 10 (Tarrow).

Liebermann, Evan. 2005. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3: 435-52.

Seawright, Jason and John Gerring. 2008. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options." *Political Research Quarterly* 61, no. 2: 294-308.

b. Applying Multi-Methods:

Monroe Sullivan, Daniel. 2007. "Reassessing Gentrification: Measuring Residents' Opinions Using Survey Data." *Urban Affairs Review* 42, no.4: 583-592.

- Exercise 10: Use your research to address the following. Prepare a memo discussing responses and bring it to this class.
 - Are mixed methods appropriate or not in your research?
 - How are mixed methods employed in your research?
 - Would employing mixed methods improve your research design? What would such an approach help address?
 - How and why may you alter your original developed hypotheses and justification of the selection of cases?
- ✓  Critique memorandum of research proposal. Submit copies of completed assessment form (final page of syllabus) and memo to your colleague and to me.

Week 14 12/8 Research Design: Quantitative and Qualitative Trade-offs

Brady and Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Ch. 11-12.

✓  **Research Proposal Due**

Final: 12/15 ***HOLD** 4:30 – 7:15 p.m.

Important dates to know:

Last day to drop with no tuition penalty: **September 15

Last day to add classes: **September 15

Last day to drop with no academic liability: **October 2

Data Collection Methods and Examples

Documents: These methods identify trends in leisure research and practice. Participants keep diaries and journals researcher conducts content analysis of studies, reports and diaries.

- Historical
- Literature review
- Meta-analysis
- Diaries
- Content Analysis
- Secondary Data (data mining)

Observations: How people behave and interact in public open spaces. Observe systematically, become a participant observer.

- Interpretive
- Ethnographic
- Participant observer
- Case study

Survey: To learn what people think about leisure motivation. To identify relationships between motivation and satisfaction. Use interviews, surveys and standardized scales.

- Questionnaire
- Interview
- Standardized Scales/Instruments

Experimental: Obtain information under controlled conditions about leisure attitudes and experience with virtual reality. Subjects may be randomly assigned to various tests and experiences then assessed via observation or standardized scales.

- True designs
- Quasi designs

Other Field Methods/Group Techniques: To identify trends and issues about leisure services, management and delivery systems. Focus Group systems. Various group, question and pencil paper exercises are used by facilitators.

- Nominal Group Technique
- Delphi

Multi/Mixed-methods Approach: Interviews, journals and quantitative measures are combined to provide a more accurate definition and operationalization of the concept.

- Combination of methods shown

Source: Issac & Michael, 1985; Leedy, 1985; Dandekar, 1988; Thomas & Nelson, 1990.
(http://www.prm.nau.edu/prm447/methods_of_data_collection_lesson.htm)

Structural Analysis of a Research Article

Utilize the following to become more focused in your reading for this class and of your reading for your research proposal. Document these points in Zotero to become more organized in your research.

Article Analysis

Write an abstract of the article in 100 to 200 words. Make sure and include a discussion of the unique research purpose/question, methods used to achieve the purpose (or address the question) and key findings (relate the findings to the research question). There should be a paragraph for each section (purpose, method, findings).

In a coherent essay, answer the following questions about the theory in the article.

- Specify what the article is trying to accomplish.
- Specify two hypotheses developed in the article
- How do the hypotheses help the author(s) accomplish their objectives?
- Identify or name the most basic building blocks of the hypotheses [there should be at least two]. The basic building blocks of the hypotheses are sometimes referred to as the concepts or elements of the hypothesis.
- How are the basic building blocks of the hypotheses related? (positive, negative or no direction specified).

In a coherent essay, answer the following questions about the methods used in the article.

- What research technique or methodology was used?
- What is (are) the dependent variable(s)? In your discussion identify the correspondence between the dependent variable and the relevant "basic building block or element" of the hypothesis identified above. In other words, for each dependent variable what basic concept in the Hypothesis does the dependent variable measure? [repeat for each hypothesis]
- What is (are) the independent variable(s)? In your discussion identify the correspondence between the independent variable and the relevant "basic building block or element" of the hypothesis identified above. In other words, for each independent variable what basic concept in the hypothesis is measured? [repeat for each hypothesis]
- Explain how the variables are operationalized. [repeat for each hypothesis]

In a coherent essay answer the following questions about the statistical methods used in the article.

- If available, specify the mean(s) of the dependent variable(s). Interpret the mean [repeat for each hypothesis].
- If available, specify the mean(s) of the independent variable(s). Interpret the mean [repeat for each hypothesis].
- What statistical test was used to test the hypothesis? [repeat for each hypothesis]
- What evidence was used to test the hypothesis? Did the evidence support the first hypothesis (give concrete numbers)? Did the evidence support the second hypothesis (give concrete numbers)? [repeat for each hypothesis]
- Discuss the connection between the statistical evidence and the article intention.

Research Proposal Assessment

Submit form with the research proposal to colleague and with final draft to instructor.

Name: _____
Topic: _____
Title: _____

1. Organized

2. Quality of Writing
 - Strengths

 - Weaknesses

3. Analytical Component

4. Quality of References used/Use of References
 - (well integrated)

5. Purpose stated clearly/ Purpose achieved†
 - purpose of the *overall research project*

6. Changes necessary for an acceptable research proposal.

7. General Comments:

† if omitted 10% deduction

Grade _____