

U297: Research Design

Department of Planning, Policy, and Design

Class Meets:	Thurs 11:00am-1:50pm, SSPA 1165
Instructor:	Tim Bruckner tim.bruckner@uci.edu tel: 949 824-5797
Office Hours:	SE I Rm 218 F, Thurs 2-4pm and by appointment
EEE:	Readings, Grades, and Schedule Available on EEE.

The key objective for doctoral study involves creation of new knowledge. Research design and methodology serve as core elements that assist the student with this process. Design elements include formulating a well-defined research question and identifying appropriate methodology to address your question. Persons conducting research in planning, policy, and design face a challenge in that the field does not converge on one “correct” research design. Rather, the field provides a wide array of designs and methodologies to understanding social phenomena and constructing knowledge. In this course, I will provide rigorous training on research design and methodology in the social sciences. The overarching objectives for the course are (1) to propose a pragmatic framework for social scientific inquiry; and (2) to familiarize students with research designs and methodologies that serve as the basis of a research proposal or dissertation.

Specific learning objectives:

By the end of the course, I expect that students will have gained the following knowledge and/or skills:

- **Describe** the iterative process of the construction of knowledge
- **Formulate** a well-defined, feasible, and testable research question
- **Compare** the strengths and limitations of various research designs in relation to your specific aims
- **Locate**, within the taxonomy of methodologies, the appropriate tools to address your specific question
- **Apply** the elements of a structured literature review to your topic
- **Critically evaluate** design and methodological elements of the peer-reviewed literature
- **Write** a coherent and compelling research proposal that reflects mastery of all the aforementioned skills

Required Texts:

1. Frankfort-Nachmias, C. and D. Nachmias. 2000 (6th edition). *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. New York, NY: Worth Publishers. (note: 7th edition is ok too, but more expensive). Hereafter referred to as **FNN**
2. Yin, Robert. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 2009 (4th Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Hereafter referred to as **YIN**
3. Locke, Lawrence F., Waneen Wyrick Spirduso, and Stephen J. Silverman. 2000 (4th Edition). *Proposals that Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Hereafter referred to as **LSS**

I will disseminate other required readings either on EEE or as class handouts. I reserve the right to add or reorganize assigned readings as appropriate.

Work Requirement:

As the work requirement indicates (below), class participation, in terms of thoughtfulness not quantity, plays an important role in determining the final grade. Many of our discussions will involve assigned readings. To ensure thought-provoking discussions, I expect that students will have read the assignments before the associated class lecture (except for the first session).

Approximate grading weights appear as follows:

Midterm	20%
Research Proposal	50%
Class Participation	25%
Completion of surveys/evaluations*	<u>5%</u>
TOTAL	100%

* Students receive 1% for First Week Survey, 2% for Midterm Evaluation, 2% for Final Evaluation.

The midterm will take place in class on **May 6th** and will cover material through April 30th. The final Research Proposal will be due one week after the last class, **June 10th, 5pm**. I will hand out detailed guidelines for the Research Proposal in class.

Week 1: April 1st

Course overview

The creation of knowledge and the search for a paradigm

Literature reviews

Readings:

FNN: pp. 2-22, pp.485-497

YIN: vii-viii

LSS Chs 1 & 4

Discussion: Epistemological Issues

Assignments:

- prepare a description of proposed research (2-5 pages) that includes the following components: overview of the research problem; the research question; contribution of proposed research
- begin literature review

Week 2: April 8th

Fundamentals of the Research Process

Readings:

FNN: pp. 23-86

LSS Chs 2 & 3

Discussion: Proposed Research

Assignments:

- Continue to develop proposal including theoretical/conceptual framework, identification of hypotheses (if any), key concepts, variables, units of analysis (5-8 pages)
- Continue literature review
- Complete/Pass the UCI Institutional Review Board (IRB), Human Research Tutorial, online at: <http://apps.research.uci.edu/tutorial/>

Week 3: April 15th

Guest Speaker: Sanjoy Mazumdar

Case Study Design

Readings:

- LSS Chs 5-7

- YIN Chs 1-3

- Mazumdar, Sanjoy & Geis, Gilbert (2001). "Case study method for research on disability", in Altman, Barbara N. & Barnartt, Sharon (Eds.) (2001) *Research in social science and disability* vol. 2: Exploring theories and expanding methodologies. New York, NY: Elsevier, 12: 255:275.

- Mazumdar, Shampa & Mazumdar, Sanjoy (2009) Religious placemaking and community building in Diaspora, *Environment and Behavior*. 41(3) 307-337.

Discussion: Case Study Design and Method

Assignments:

- Submit annotated bibliography, based on your literature review to date, including at least 10 references relevant to your research proposal (3-5 pages)
- Continue to revise and expand research proposal, including literature review, refinement of theoretical/conceptual framework, and discussion of research design

Week 4: April 22nd

Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs: part I

Readings:

- FNN, pp. 87-111; 196-200
- Shadish, Cook, Campbell, Chapter One: Experiments and Generalized Causal Inference. pp. 1-32. In: *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs*
- M. Boarnet et al. Evaluation of the California Safe Routes to School Legislation: Urban Form Changes and Children's Active Transportation To School, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, volume 28, issue 2, supplement 2, February, 2005, pp. 134-140.
- Bruckner TA et al. Economic Antecedents of Medicaid-financed Mental Health Services among Youths in California. *International Journal of Mental Health* (in press).

Discussion: Use of experimental and quasi-experimental design: Boarnet and Bruckner articles as time permits.

Assignments:

- Revise and expand research proposal, integrating your literature review and discussing the internal and/or external validity of your proposed design (15-20 pages)
- Continue literature review

Week 5: April 29th
Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs part II
Measurement

Readings:

- FNN: pp. 112-60
- Certero, R. 2002. Induced Travel Demand: Research Design, Empirical Evidence, and Policy Directions, Journal of Planning Literature, 17:1--*read to p12 only*
- Ewing: Measuring sprawl and its impact. *pp1-36 only*

Discussion: Finish discussion of research designs from Week 4; Certero and Ewing articles

Assignment:

- Continue to revise and expand research proposal, including discussion of operationalizing concepts and variable measurement

Week 6: May 6th
Continuation of Measurement
MIDTERM EXAM

Readings:

FNN: review pp. 137-160

Discussion: Finish discussion of measurement from Week 5. Discuss student measurement issues.

Assignments:

- Peer review of research proposal (20-30 pages submitted);*
- Continue to work on research proposal. Include data collection methods;
- Investigate on and off campus research funding opportunities.

Week 7: May 13th
Sampling

Readings:

FNN: 161-204

Kalton Ch 1. Introduction. In: Introduction to Survey Sampling. Sage, 1983.

Discussion: Review results of diagnostic exam. Discuss sampling designs and examples.

Assignments:

- Review peer comments on proposal and revise and expand;
- Select a classic or outstanding qualitative article and begin reading.

Week 8: May 20th
Survey & Questionnaire Design
Secondary Data Sets

Readings:

FNN: 205-54; 275-302

Kalton Ch 9. Nonresponse. In: Introduction to Survey Sampling. Sage, 1983.

Discussion: Questionnaire examples; proposal questions and progress.

Assignments:

- Continue to work on research proposal. Include budget and possible funding sources. Develop and include a research schedule
- Finish reading qualitative study for presentation next week (see guidelines distributed to class)

Week 9 May 27th
Qualitative Research

Readings:

- FNN: 256-73

-YIN Chs 4-6

- Bollens SA. Comparative Research on Urban Political Conflict: Policy Amidst Polarization. The Open Urban Studies Journal, 2009, 2, 1-17 1

Discussion: Qualitative approaches; Bollens article. Discuss students' research.

Assignment:

Continue to work on research proposal. Include data analysis approach (25-35 pages).

Week 10: June 3rd
Proposal Writing, Dissertation, and Publishing

Readings:

FNN: 485-97

LSS: review Chs 4-6

Discussion: Students present proposal for class comments.

Assignment:

Finalize research proposal to submit for final grade (30-40 pages). *Due at 5pm on Thursday, June 10, 2010.*