Research Methods

Fall 2021

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Office Hours: TBA

Course schedule:
Monday 8:40-10:30
FASS 1097
Tuesday 8:40-9:30
Zoom Meeting ID: 974 6217 6164

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Discussion Section:
Thursday 9:40-10:30
Zoom Meeting ID: 914 4019 2650

Course Description and Objectives:

The goal of this course is to introduce you the process of conducting research in social sciences and give you some ideas on how you can evaluate research results. As you have seen in many other previous courses, social science is not just about collecting and providing information on human behavior across space and time. In this course we will discuss what else it might entail. We are going to see that there are different approaches that have different views on this question and also on questions such as how you collect information, what kind of information you collect and how you analyze the collected information.

We will start the course with a discussion on what research is, why we carry out research and how we plan it. Then, we will talk about how theory guides our research. We will continue with two critical issues that a social scientist faces in her research: measurement and sampling. Then a large section of the course deals with various methods used in social science research: case study, ethnographic field work, experiment, survey, and statistical analysis of aggregate data. We will conclude with a discussion of how a research report is written.

Student Responsibilities:

(1) Required Reading and Participation.
You are expected to complete the assigned readings before class. The class will require your active participation. The part of your grade based on class participation will be determined by (1) attendance and (2) participation.

(2) Exams.
There will be a mid-term exam and a final.
The date of the mid-term: **November 8**
The date of the final: **to be announced**

(3) Research Paper Proposal
You will need to choose a research topic and specify a clearly stated research question that can be analyzed with at least one method that is discussed in this course. After reviewing the previous literature on this topic, you will first introduce a theoretical approach and a hypothesis or tentative explanation for your question. Then, you will need to provide a detailed outline of how the selected method can be used to answer the question that you have framed. You will need to clearly discuss the measurement and sampling issues. You need to give me a brief outline on **November 15**. This outline has to include your topic, question, theoretical approach and the method. You need to conduct the literature review before you submit me the outline in order to write an outline that makes sense. I do not need to see the literature review in the outline, but you have to provide the list of references that you have used in your review.
You will also need to present your proposal. The presentation will be brief (15 minutes), but it needs to provide all the detailed information that will go into the written proposal.
Presentation Dates: December 20-28
Proposal due date: December 31

Your course grade will be based on the mid-term exam (25%), the final exam (30%), paper proposal (20%, presentation, 10%, outline 5%), participation and attendance (10%).

Grading Scale:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 63-69	F <50
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 50-62	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72		

Textbooks:

Neuman, Lawrence W. *Understanding Research.* Pearson.

The book above can be found at the university bookstore and also course reserves.

Homer web page: https://www.homerbooks.com/urun/understanding-research

You are also assigned additional articles and book chapters as outlined in the next section. You can find them on SUcourse.

Hybrid Teaching:

For one of our meetings (Tuesdays, 8:40-9:30) we will synchronously meet on-line over Zoom. If you experience any difficulties with the internet connection, please contact me immediately.

Reading Assignments

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

(1) September 27 Introduction

Neuman, Chapter 1, pages 3-14

(2) September 28 Types of research and planning a study

Neuman, Chapter 1, pages 14-25, Chapters 2 and 3

Geddes, Barbara, 1991, "A Game Theoretic Model of Reform in Latin American Democracies", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 2, pp. 371-392.

Research Proposal Example (available on SUCourse, resources)

Theory building

(3) October 4 Theory and hypothesis

Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten. 2009. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research.* Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.

(4) October 5 Example: Formal Modeling

Fiorina, Morris P. 1975. "Formal Models in Political Science." *American Journal of Political Science*. 19(1): 133-59.

Measurement

(5) October 11 Conceptualization

Neuman, Chapter 5, pages 122-132

(6) October 12 Operationalization and examples

Neuman, Chapter 5, pages 132-151

Munck, Gerardo L. And Jay Verkuilen. 2002. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy, Evaluating Alternative Indices*," Comparative Political Studies*, 35 (1)

Sampling

(7) October 18 Nonrandom sampling

Neuman, Chapter 4, pages 94-100

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How The Cases You Choose Affect The Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis*. 2(1): 131-50.

(8) October 19 Random sampling

Neuman, Chapter 4, pages 100-119

SURVEY OF VARIOUS METHODOLOGIES

(9) October 25 Case study and ethnographic research

Neuman, Chapters 10 and 11

(10) October 26 Examples

Marx, Anthony W. 1996. "Race-Making and the Nation-State" *World Politics,* 48.2, 180-208.

Auyero, Javier. 2000. "The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account", *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 55-81.

Levitsky, Steven. 2003. *Transforming Labor-Based Parties in Latin America: Argentine Peronism in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1.

(11) November 1 Experiments

Neuman, Chapter 7.

(12) November 2 Experiment Example

Vicente, Pedro C. and Leonard Wantchekon. 2009. "Clientelism and vote buying: lessons from field experiments in African elections" *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Volume 25, Issue 2, 1 July 2009, Pages 292–305

November 8 Midterm Exam

(13) November 9 Survey

Neuman, Chapter 6.

Aytaç, S.E. & Çarkoğlu, A. 2018. "Presidents Shaping Public Opinion in Parliamentary Democracies: A Survey Experiment in Turkey" *Political Behavior* (2018) 40: 371. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-017-9404-x

(14) November 15 Statistical analysis of aggregate data (**Proposal Outline Due!)**

Neuman, Chapter 8.

Kemahlioglu, Ozge. 2009. "Particularistic Distribution of Investment Subsidies under Coalition Governments: The Case of Turkey" *Comparative Politics.* Vol. 40, Number 2.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

(15) November 16 Descriptive statistics

Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds. 2008. *Political Science Research Methods*. CQ
    Press. Chapter 11, pp. 351-393.

(16) November 22 Hypothesis testing

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 11, pp.393-414.

(17) November 23 Hypothesis testing, continued

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 11, pp. 414-425.

(18) November 29 Bivariate analysis

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp.426-439.

(19) November 30 Bivariate analysis, continued

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp.439-477.

(20) December 6 Introduction to regression analysis

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp.477-485.

(21) December 7 Regression analysis, continued

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 12, pp.485-502.

(22) December 13 Multivariate analysis

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 13, pp.503-519.

(23) December 14 Multivariate analysis continued

Johnson and Reynolds, Chapter 13, pp.519-549.

(24) December 20 Proposal Presentations

(25) December 21 Proposal Presentations

(26) December 27 Proposal Presentations

(27) December 28 Proposal Presentations