INF710 (#8813) and PAD704 (#8413)

Research Design
Spring 2012—4 credits
Wednesday 1 to 4 p.m.
Husted 310
Deborah Lines Andersen

Instructor contacts
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Class listserv INF710SP12@listserv.albany.edu [all caps; apologies to PAD students; please subscribe today]
Office hours: Monday 2 to 5; Tuesdays from 1 to 3 unless there are faculty meetings; after class by appointment

Texts: (First two available at Mary Jane Books on Western Avenue)


Methodology Articles: As noted in the class time table that follows, there are 8 methodology articles to read during appropriate weeks. See the bibliography following the time table for citations. They are on ERes at Andersen, INF711, password “____”

Class Meetings: The course will meet 15 times. There are no quizzes for the course and no final examination. Final papers are due the last day of class, but will be accepted earlier.

Class Attendance: Attendance is taken each week. In the unavoidable event of an absence, students should make arrangements with other students to pick up class notes and assignments. Time will be given during the first meeting of class for students to find study partners. Students who miss more than two classes will have their final average dropped by three points per each additional absence. This course depends heavily upon lectures, discussion, and student participation. Students need to attend class to get full benefit from the course.

Prerequisites: This course is normally taken in the third semester of the INF PhD program. It will be expected that students have taken INF710 and INF712, and will be taking INF713 while taking this course. Public Administration students are taking this in the second semester of PhD study. The class will be a mix of INF and PAD this semester.

Student Performance Evaluation: Students are evaluated based upon the following weightings:

- 10% Participation in class discussions on a weekly basis; presentation of class readings
- 5% Dissertation scan with one-page handout for each member of class
• 10% Project prospectus
• 10% Project A using single methodology
• 10% Project B using single methodology
• 10% Project C using single methodology
• 15% Report to the class with handout based on the final project
• 25% Final project triangulating the three methodologies for a single research design
• 5% Completed IRB core training [http://www.miami.edu/bb/sunyreg/](http://www.miami.edu/bb/sunyreg/) which means turning in the passing certificate either done previously or in this semester.

**Objectives for Students:** It is expected that students who finish this course will be able to:

• evaluate the design and results of published research that uses both quantitative and qualitative methodologies;

• describe the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of research methodologies;

• create proposals that use differing methodologies to address the same research issue;

• prepare a proposal that draws upon the research design principles presented in this class;

• present a coherent proposal to the class and field questions that address issues of content and methodology.

**Weekly Course Outline** (Topics, Readings, and Assignments to Hand In):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
<th>DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-Jan</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25-Jan</td>
<td>The Research Process</td>
<td>Ch. 1, 2, 3; 26;</td>
<td>Dissertation Scan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-Feb</td>
<td>Quantitative Research</td>
<td>Ch. 4 – 6; MA-A*</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-Feb</td>
<td>Quantitative Research; Literature Reviews</td>
<td>Ch. 7 – 9; Pan Ch. 1-9;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>MR-B</td>
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<tr>
<td>15-Feb</td>
<td>Analysis of Quantitative Data</td>
<td>Ch. 10 -12; MA-C</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22-Feb</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Ch. 13 – 15; MA-D</td>
<td>Proposal A</td>
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<tr>
<td>29-Feb</td>
<td>Qualitative Research; Literature Reviews</td>
<td>Ch. 16 – 18; Pan the rest;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>MR-E</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-Mar</td>
<td>No class-winter break</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-Mar</td>
<td>Analysis of Qualitative Data</td>
<td>Ch. 19-20; MA-F</td>
<td>Proposal B</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-Mar</td>
<td>Triangulated Methodologies</td>
<td>Ch. 21 – 22; MA-G</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Mar</td>
<td>Triangulated Methodologies</td>
<td>Brewer and Hunter</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-Apr</td>
<td>E-Research; International Research, Writing Research; Discussion of Final Papers</td>
<td>Ch. 23 – 24; MA-H</td>
<td>Proposal C</td>
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<td>11-Apr</td>
<td>Ethics and Politics</td>
<td>Ch. 25</td>
<td>IRB certificate</td>
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<td>18-Apr</td>
<td>Oral Presentation of Proposals I</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-Apr</td>
<td>Oral Presentation of Proposals II</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-May</td>
<td>Oral Presentations of Proposals III</td>
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<td>Papers due**</td>
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Students who give presentations on 2 May have the option of turning in their final papers on 7 May in order to incorporate comments made in class.

*MA or Methodology Articles are as follows:


[C] Quantitative—again read McNeal, Hale and Dotterweich (above) from the point of view of data analysis. How well do they tell their story?


NOTE: You are not expected to turn in anything for the methodology articles. Bring your copy to class and be prepared to discuss its content, methodology/gies, findings, etc. The DISCUSSANT for each reading is expected to give a 5 to 10 minute overview of the materials and then open up with 3 or 4 questions, sticky points, confusing issues, discussion topics, comparisons to other materials read, discrepancies with other materials…. The class will take time each week to respond to these.

Incompletes: No incompletes will be given in this class without the express permission of the instructor in advance of the end of the semester. Students who do turn in papers late without the express permission of the instructor will have their paper grade lowered by 5 points under the assigned grade. See the instructor in advance about marriages, births, and other legitimate issues that might cause a paper to be late.

Food, Phones, and Comfort: Please feel free to bring a snack to class. Please avoid peanuts (some people have allergies) and really aromatic foods. Please turn off your cell phone. If absolutely necessary leave it on, but exit the room as quietly as possible (hard to do with the phone ringing somewhere in your
backpack!) If you have any condition that would make different presentation of materials (e.g., size of type), placement in the room, special seating, or different teaching style (where possible) beneficial to you, please see the professor. In the past students with hearing or learning style issues have tape-recorded lectures for future reference.

**Trees and Other Resources:** Feel free to turn in all assignments on the back of paper that has already had one use. Old stationery, printed articles you no longer need, and rough drafts are good examples of such paper. If you find that you have made a mistake in a paper, neatly correct it with pencil or pen rather than reprinting the whole thing. Think ecologically.

**Description of Course Deliverables**

**Participation in class discussions on a weekly basis (10%):** At the PhD level students should be fully prepared to discuss readings and topics in each class of the course. The 10 percent of this grade will be scaled from 0 for no participation to 10 for consistent participation every week (keeping in mind that students must give all students a chance to participate). These 10 points include the discussant assignments discussed above.

**Dissertation scan (5%):** The first week of class students will discuss and plan to review one INF or PAD PhD dissertation and write a one page synopsis including title, author, year, purpose and/or problem addressed, bibliography count (how many articles; books; e-references), methodology or methodologies used, population and sampling method, and major findings. Please bring copies of your scan for each member of the class (N = ____) and be prepared to discuss the dissertation for the class in week 2. Cohorts need to work together to insure that no two people present the same dissertation.

**Project prospectus (15%):** This is a three-page, double-spaced document that lays out the foundation for the project that each student will work and build on for the rest of the semester. It should include:
- research problem and/or questions
- a rationale for why this research should be done
- research hypothesis(ses) or research question(s)
- at least two research projects (based upon journal articles) that have already addressed this or a related issue. What theory have these research projects drawn upon? What questions did they address? How will your research be similar or different to these? Please cite these journal articles appropriately in the text of your prospectus, and give complete citations in footnotes or endnote.
- proposed methods (3—which might change as course continues)
- proposed population and sampling method
- proposed major (dependent and independent) variables
- hypothesized findings
- future research possibilities.

**Proposal A using single collection method—quantitative (10%):** This is an expansion of your prospectus, using one *quantitative* method (e.g., survey) to collect data. It should run no more than 10 double-spaced pages, have a title, and include a literature review of at least 3 pages as well as a section on strengths and limitations of this methodology. A draft data collection instrument must be appended to the paper.

**Proposal B using single collection method—qualitative (10%):** This is an expansion of your prospectus, using one *qualitative* method (e.g., interview, focus groups, case study) to collect data. It should run no more than 10 double-spaced pages, have a title, and can include the same literature review as above. It should include a section on strengths and limitations of this methodology. A draft data collection instrument must be appended to the paper.
Proposal C using single collection/analysis method—free choice (10%): This is an expansion of your prospectus, using another method (quantitative or qualitative) to collect data. It should run no more than 10 double-spaced pages, have a title, and can include the same literature review as above. It should include a section on strengths and limitations of this methodology. A draft data collection instrument must be appended to the paper. If you do system dynamics or other forms of modeling this is the appropriate proposal for using this methodology.

Report to the class with handout based on the final project (15%): Time and order of presentations will be determined during class. This will include a single-page handout to members of the class and a PowerPoint presentation.

Final project triangulating the three methodologies for a single research design (25%): The final project will run no more than 20 double-spaced pages and include all three methodologies in a unified proposal that, in addition to the elements cited above, includes a section on timing of data collection, a discussion of triangulating these methodologies, and a section on balancing strengths and weaknesses of each methodology through this triangulation. Issue of human subjects review get their own section in this paper. Collected draft data collection instruments and other pertinent appendices should be included. Brewer and Hunter will provide guidance for this paper.

Completed IRB core training (5%): You need to have the appropriate research training that this campus requires before starting any research project. Please turn in a passing certificate either done this or a previous semester from the Miami course at [http://www.miami.edu/bb/sunyreg/](http://www.miami.edu/bb/sunyreg/)

Plagiarism Policy: Please refer to the University’s Institute for Teaching, Learning and Leadership (ITLAL) website at [http://www.albany.edu/teachingandlearning/trl/teaching_resources/prevention.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/teachingandlearning/trl/teaching_resources/prevention.shtml) for information on plagiarism, academic dishonesty, how to avoid them and how to detect them. In this course academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the project in question and referral to both College and Departmental administrations for subsequent action. Two substantiated instances of academic dishonesty can result in dismissal from a program and the University.

Additional Resource Bibliography
“General Regulations Governing the Submission of a Dissertation in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Doctoral Degree.” Office of Graduate Studies, AD 112 (442-3981) [http://www.albany.edu/graduate/pdfs/DINSTR.pdf](http://www.albany.edu/graduate/pdfs/DINSTR.pdf)

University at Albany. Institutional Review Board. Guides for approval of human subjects research. [www.albany.edu/research/compliance/Forms.htm](http://www.albany.edu/research/compliance/Forms.htm)


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