

INF710 (#7793)
Research Design
Fall 2007
Wednesday 2:00-5:00—Draper 313A
[4 credits]
Deborah Lines Andersen

Instructor contacts

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Office hours: Monday 1:30 to 4:15; Wednesday from 12 to 2; by phone; by appointment

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

Alan Bryman. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. 2d Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

M. Ling Pan. 2004 or 2008. *Preparing Literature Reviews: Qualitative And Quantitative*. 2d or 3d edition. Pyrczak Pub.

Class Meetings: The course will meet 13 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 fulltime semester of the program. It will be expected that students have taken INF710 and INF712, and will be taking INF713 while taking this course.

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

- 10% Participation in class discussions on a weekly basis
- 5% Dissertation scan
- 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/> 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):
Speakers will be added as appropriate.

DATE	TOPICS	READINGS	DUE
29-Aug	Introduction		
5-Sep	The Research Process	Ch. 1, 2, 3; 26	Dissertation Scan
12-Sep	No class		
19-Sep	Quantitative Research	Ch. 4 – 6	Prospectus
26-Sep	Quantitative Research; Literature Reviews	Ch. 7 – 9; Pan Ch. 1-9	
3-Oct	Analysis of Quantitative Data	Ch. 10 -12	
10-Oct	Qualitative Research	Ch. 13 - 15	Proposal A
17-Oct	Qualitative Research; Literature Reviews	Ch. 16 – 18; Pan the rest	
24-Oct	Analysis of Qualitative Data	Ch. 19 - 20	Proposal B
Oct 31	Triangulated Methodologies	Ch. 21 - 22	
7-Nov	E-Research; Writing Research	Ch. 23 - 24	Proposal C
14-Nov	Ethics and Politics; [Oral Pre?]	Ch. 25	
21-Nov	Thanksgiving—no class		
28-Nov	Oral Presentation of Proposals		Handout; IRB certificate
5-Dec	Oral Presentation of Proposals		Handout; Final Paper

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 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 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).

Dissertation scan (5%)

The first week of class students will sign up to review one INF 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.

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
- 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 methodologies (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 methodology—quantitative (10%)

This is an expansion of your prospectus, using one *quantitative* methodology (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 methodology—qualitative (10%)

This is an expansion of your prospectus, using one *qualitative* methodology (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 methodology—free choice (10%)

This is an expansion of your prospectus, using another methodology (*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.

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. Draft data collection instruments and other pertinent appendices should be included.

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/>

Plagiarism Policy: Please refer to the University's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) website at <http://www.albany.edu/cetl/teaching/plagiarism.html> 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>

University at Albany. Institutional Review Board. Guides for approval of human subjects research. www.albany.edu/research/compliance/Forms.htm

Albany Graduate Bulletin. www.albany.edu/grad/

PhD Manual for INF. www.albany.edu/inf/