This course will help PhD students select appropriate research design and field methods for dissertation research. The course provides a comprehensive review of the research design process and will result in each student developing his/her project proposal. The first section of the course focuses on articulating the research objectives, choosing a research paradigm, preparing the literature review, developing a fundraising strategy and ethics. The second section of the course focuses on managing the research process itself, selecting the appropriate data collection strategy and writing. Students will develop a clearer idea of their project focus during this course as all assignments will be geared toward building a complete project proposal. We will also discuss the writing process, especially how to write journal articles (journal selection, review process) and how to position your work in your academic field.

This course is strongly recommended for PhD students developing their dissertation proposals. This course is designed as an integrative preparation for researching and writing a dissertation and for building a career as a researcher. It assumes that students will be exposed to specialized literatures and in-depth research methods in other coursework, either before or after this course. The focus is on understanding the PhD as a research degree and the role that a dissertation plays in training you to be an original, creative and relevant researcher. The course exposes you to the process of creative research by sequentially exploring 1) the relationship between researcher and reader/recipient of the results; 2) how to choose researchable topics; 3) moving from question to research strategy; 4) designing a research project; 5) understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different types of evidence and research strategies; 6) addressing policy inferences that could be drawn from your results; 6) thinking about audience for your work (funders, professors, future employers, future journal articles).

Learning Goals:
1. This course will help you articulate your dissertation research question so that you can make an original and substantial contribution to the field. Measure: Concept Paper, Research Proposal and journal article idea developed by the end of the course.
2. This course will help you explore research paradigms and methods so that you can develop in-depth knowledge and advanced research skills. Measure: Class projects exploring alternative paradigms and research approaches/methods.
3. This course will help prepare you for a profession as an academic – negotiating ethics, writing and reviewing. Measure: Class discussion and assignments on ethics, journal articles and funding.
Related PAB Goals: Research, Quantitative and Qualitative Methods, Professional Ethics

**Ethics**

Collaborative learning is the goal of this class. Class discussion depends on full participation of all students. Thus, failure to deliver your component of the work on time undermines the learning experience of others and therefore constitutes an ethics violation of the class code (and will result in a grade reduction). If you find that you cannot complete an assignment for which you volunteered, then post a request to switch with someone to the class list and most likely someone will pick up for you. If not, you are still responsible. Grades for class participation reflect this collaborative learning framework.

**Academic Integrity:** Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work. Citation of sources is fundamental to the academy – when in doubt, cite. Students caught plagiarizing will be given an F. Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. See [http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html](http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html)

Course materials developed in this class or posted on Blackboard are intellectual property belonging to the author. Students are not permitted to buy or sell any course materials without the express permission of the instructor. Such unauthorized behavior constitutes academic misconduct.

Academic Accommodation: In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made.

All required books and articles (except web based publications which can be viewed online) are on reserve in the Fine Arts Library. You may wish to purchase books which go into detail on methods you expect to be using.

**Required Books (all available on reserve)**

Recommended Books


Assignments and Grading

Class participation is critical. Students must be prepared to discuss readings in class. Written summaries of readings will be required. Small writing assignments will be due weekly. Article summaries and other written assignments must be posted to Blackboard class web site 48 hours in advance of class discussion so that I and other students can review and give you comments in class. Students will be assessed on the quality of their critiques of each other’s work. Each class will be a mix of discussion of articles and of progress on your own work. The goal is to help you advance in development of your dissertation ideas and research design plans.

Weekly assignments and article reviews 50%
Quality of Review of Peers’ work 15%
Concept Paper and Literature Review 10%
Final Proposal 25%

Syllabus

January 27 Introduction and Overview of Course
Syllabus and class overview.
Writing assignment in class – 1 paragraph description of your research project with conceptual diagram.

Readings to complete before first class:


February 3 Research Paradigms—Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Methods?

Assignment (post to Blackboard by Feb 1) Locate your research topic within one of the paradigms and discuss the epistemology, ontology, axiology, logic and methods that make sense given your stance and your question. Use Teddlie and Tashakkori table 5.2
p 88 to help guide you. 1-2 pages. This will help you relate the discussion to your own work.

Readings:


Recommended


Feb 10 Focusing Your Research Question/Outlining Your Literature Review

Post to Blackboard by Feb 8: Assignment: 2 page concept paper and 1-2 page Literature Review Outline (outline key topics and authors to cover in your lit review, or make a map as in Creswell p 35) Will discuss in small groups the second half of class.

Readings:


Recommended
February 17  Funders and the Proposal Writing and Review Process

**Assignment: Funder profiles. Post to blackboard by Feb 15.** – Identify funders for your work. Describe goals and objectives of funders and how your work might fit. Outline proposal format and funding guidelines (limitations) and time lines for a funder you intend to solicit. Will discuss first half of class.

Second half of class we will review research funding proposals and discuss review process. See Blackboard for examples of proposals.

**Useful Resources**
Miller and Salkind. 2002. Pp.663-760 “Part 8: Research proposal, funding, budgeting, reporting, and career planning.” Good list of grant sources. (On Reserve)


*(Some Useful websites)*
SSRC: [http://programs.ssrc.org/dpdf/](http://programs.ssrc.org/dpdf/)
Fulbright: [http://fulbright.state.gov/root/resources-for/students](http://fulbright.state.gov/root/resources-for/students)
Einaudi Center: [http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/funding/grad.asp](http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/funding/grad.asp)
Lincoln Land Institute: [http://www.lincolninst.edu/education/fellowships.asp](http://www.lincolninst.edu/education/fellowships.asp) (Latin America, China, US)
Foundations: [http://fdncenter.org](http://fdncenter.org)
SPIN (international) [http://www.infoed.org/wConnect/wc.dll?spinwww%7Ejumpspin](http://www.infoed.org/wConnect/wc.dll?spinwww%7Ejumpspin)
IRIS: [http://carousel.lis.uiuc.edu/~iris/search.html](http://carousel.lis.uiuc.edu/~iris/search.html)

February 24  Article Review

**Assignment: Article Review 3-5 ds pages (post to Blackboard Feb 22)** - Read, critique and write a review of an *empirical* research article from a top journal in your field. Discuss paradigm, method of data collection and analysis and its appropriateness to the research question. Provide a reflection on the strengths and limitations of the approach and how it might inform your own work. Include a discussion of the following elements in your review.

- Journal: Audience and role in your field
Article:
- How the authors framed the problem and purpose
- Situating the study in the literature
- Informed by a conceptual and/or theoretical framework
- Appropriateness of the methods
- Researcher's role in the setting
- Quality of findings
- Ways researcher analyzed and represented the data

Understanding the Review Process
For the second half of class I will provide examples of reviewer comments on journal articles and we will discuss the review process. During the term, I will invite you to participate in journal article reviews as they come across my desk.

Read http://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_guidelines_for_peer_reviewers_0.pdf

March 2     Data Collection and Sampling Issues
Assignment: Preliminary Methodology (Post to Blackboard Feb 29) 3-5 ds pages. Will discuss second half of class.

Discuss sampling, data quality and data collection strategies. Select Data Collection Strategies to be discussed in detail March 23-April 13 (Second Half of Class) See list below. Topics can be shifted to meet interests of students

Reading:

Recommended

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 3, "Focusing and Bounding the Collection of Data: Further Design Issues.", Chapter 4 “Early Steps in Analysis.”


March 9     Ethical Issues in Research

Assignments: One page list of key ethical questions you will face (Use Miles and Huberman chapter 11 as a guide). Post to Blackboard March 7.
Take Human Subjects and Responsible Conduct of Research tests (Each of the two sets of tests takes about 3 hours)

11:00 -12:00 Guest lecture: Amita Verma, Director, Office of Research Integrity and Assurance and Myles Gideon, Senior IRB administrator.

Go to the landing page [http://www.oria.cornell.edu/training_landing.cfm](http://www.oria.cornell.edu/training_landing.cfm)

**Log-in to the CITI Online Training site with your Cornell NetID and password**

Instructions:

- Click on the link below to log-in to CITI. You will now be on the CITI "Home Page."
- Under "Cornell University Courses" use the "Add a Course or Update Learner Groups" feature to select and enroll in the course that you wish to take.
- Each course contains multiple "modules." To successfully complete a course, you must complete and pass the tests for each module.
- If you have taken courses with CITI while you were at another organization (not Cornell), you will need to affiliate your CITI profile with Cornell, so that your training records are available to Cornell. When you login to CITI, click on the option to do so before you take any courses. Contact rcr@cornell.edu for assistance.

Take two tests, **human subjects** and **responsible conduct of research** (the FULL one, [http://www.oria.cornell.edu/rcr/](http://www.oria.cornell.edu/rcr/)). Send proof of having taken the tests to me.

If you want to develop your exemption or review request, I am willing to review it, but typically this is done later in the research design process and conducted under supervision of your chair. Link to forms - [http://www.irb.cornell.edu/forms/](http://www.irb.cornell.edu/forms/)

**Readings:**


Review University Committee on Human Subjects Guidelines. Especially IRB Decision Tree on how to determine if you are required to submit a human subjects review. http://www.irb.cornell.edu/

March 16  Dissertation Review and Class Discussion
Assignment: Select a recent dissertation relevant to your topic and write a 3-5 page review of the dissertation discussing the following. Due on Blackboard March 14
Discuss paradigm, literature review, method of data collection and analysis and its appropriateness to the research question. Provide a reflection on the strengths and limitations of the approach and how it might inform your own work. Discuss policy implications and relevance to future job prospects and journals. Why do you think the student chose a book form or the papers option? Interview the student and the student’s chair if you can. How long did the research phase take? The writing phase? How does this inform your own dissertation plans?

March 23 - Data Quality Concerns and Analysis Approaches
Assignment - Due in Class- hard copy: Revised Concept Paper and Preliminary Literature Review  (6-10 double spaced pages, 10-20 cites). Print this and bring it. Do not load to Blackboard.

Readings:

Second half of class Data Collection Strategies with discussion leaders. Discussion Leaders: review and summarize readings and post to Blackboard. Bring in your interview guide, survey, case study plan, etc. for group discussion

Recommended


Managing Overseas Research

March 30  Spring Break

April 6 The PhD Research Process – From Design to Implementation to Analysis
First Half of Class: Guest Lecturers Yunji Kim and Giyoung Park

Second half of class Data Collection Strategies with discussion leaders. Discussion Leaders: review and summarize readings and post to Blackboard. Bring in your interview guide, survey, case study plan, etc. for group discussion

April 13  Data Collection Strategies – Choose topics of interest and discussion leaders
Discussion Leaders: review and summarize readings and post to Blackboard. Bring in your interview guide, survey, case study plan, etc. for group discussion

April 20 – Journal Article Writing
Assignment: Write a short abstract (200 words) for a journal article you would like to write. Then outline your article in 2-3 ds pages. List clearly what is the publishable idea in your article, where it sits in the theory/literature, describe your data, method and analysis process, your major findings and the relevance of your work to theory, policy or practice. Then provide a list of journal targets explaining why you have selected each one (1-2 ds pages). Post to Blackboard April 18. We will discuss these in groups.

Recommended Reading


“How to get your papers rejected (or not),” Technovation 32 (2012) 6–8.

April 27: Revised Methodology and Proposal Writing Tips

Assignment: Revised Methodology Section (3-5 ds pages) Due April 25.
Be prepared to critique each class member’s methodology section (first half of class).

Second half of class - Group Discussion of Proposal Writing

Recommended Readings to help you with proposal writing

Chapters from Creswell, 2009, Chapter 4-7 on writing proposals.


Dissertation Proposal Workshop website at Berkeley has some useful information, including timelines for the entire dissertation process!
http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop/

May 4  Managing the Writing and Research Process


Second half of class : Guest Lecture: Joseph Rukus, on managing the research process – proposal to field work to analysis to writing– first half of class

May 11  Final Proposals Due - Hand in hard copy. 30 ds pages max