P11.2901: RESEARCH METHODS

Fall, 2009
370, Waverly

Thursdays, 6:45 – 8:25 p.m.

Course Goals:
Upon completion of this course, students should:

- have a working knowledge of a broad-range of research methods;
- understand the logic of causality in research methods;
- feel comfortable evaluating the evidence base for particular policies;
- be familiar with the practical and ethical issues associated with conducting research;
- most importantly, be prepared to plan and implement a research study from start to finish, including:
  - specifying research questions and problems;
  - translating research problems into empirically testable, theory-based hypotheses;
  - formulating research designs to test these hypotheses;
  - developing operationalizations and measures of the core concepts;
  - choosing a sampling strategy; and
  - evaluating the effectiveness of these design elements in addressing the original research question(s).

Course Readings:
The main course text is:

AKA “S, C & C”

An optional text (sign-out copies available; widely available online) is any recent edition of:
AKA “BABBIE”

Additional required course reading materials include chapters that cover topics in the course text with much greater depth and empirical articles from journals related to public policy and administration topics. These are listed in the syllabus and most of them are available online.

About a dozen articles, however, are not available online – these are marked as such in the syllabus (atório). Copies of these articles are available for photocopying.

In general, you should read the assignments in the order they are listed. The readings and assignments listed for each class are due THAT DAY in class.
Course Assignments and Grading:

Weekly Written Exercises (20 points)
A short (1 typed page or so) written exercise will be assigned (almost) every week. Students will be asked to “think out loud” about specific questions or issues related to the readings. In addition, the weekly assignment will periodically also ask students to consider the methodological issues covered that week in the context of their final paper (the research proposal). The questions to be addressed are described briefly in the course schedule – however, a full description of each assignment is provided separately. Make sure to read this before completing the assignment!

Find-n-Critique Exercises (10 points)
During weeks 3 through 6, each student will be asked to find, bring in a copy of, and critique an empirical articles that uses one of the research designs covered that week (e.g., for Week 3, the study should use an experimental design and for Week 6, the study should use a pre-experimental design). The goals of this assignment are to give students the opportunity to think about design in the context of their own interests, help students learn to identify and differentiate among different designs, and create a database of articles representing different research designs for students’ review and consideration. A template for critiquing the studies is available. Students are also expected to discuss the study and their critique of it in class.

Journal Club Presentations (Required of all students; but not graded)
For weeks 8 through 12 (not including the mid-term week) and depending on how many students are in the course, each student will be assigned a week in which she or he will present a published research study to the class. Students are free to choose an article of interest to them, however students should be prepared to discuss their article in light of one of the topics covered that week (e.g., if presenting an article during Week 10, Sampling and Power, how those issues play out in the study should be discussed). However, the article students choose need not focus on the topic for that class. This presentation should be informal and relaxed but the presenter should be prepared to fully describe the study and its research elements and then field questions. Non-presenters are expected to ask insightful and probing and respectful questions. Presenters should email the instructor a copy of the article (or at least an abstract) by the Monday before class. This assignment has several goals, including:

- to expose students to a wide range of research studies and methods,
- to provide students with practice reviewing and critiquing research articles,
- to provide students with practice presenting research,
- to incorporate viewpoints on research other than the instructor’s,
- to encourage class dialogue, discussion, and engagement with research methods.

Mid-Term Examination (25 points)
In the mid-term exam, students will be asked to critique designs that have been proposed for specific research questions and to develop designs for specified research problems. Students will also interpret results from particular designs in terms of internal and external validity. The mid-term exam is in-class and students are permitted to have one page of notes. The in-class nature of the exam should help prepare doctoral students for the Preliminary Qualifying Exam.
Very Brief (< 5 mins) Presentation of Proposed Design (5 points)
During the last class (December 10th), each student will present a brief summary of the research question and design they are proposing in their final paper (see below). In these very brief presentations, students should describe the selected research design, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and entertain questions from the class. Be succinct, focused, and very clear so that you can effectively present the core elements of your proposal in under five minutes.

Final Research Proposal (40 points)
You will be required to write a paper (15-20 double-spaced pages or so) that describes the core methodological elements of a research project. The paper will be due at the end of the semester (December 21st) but you must present a brief sketch of your proposed research project during the last class (December 10th).

All students are strongly and enthusiastically encouraged to get feedback on their paper topic as early as possible, ideally around Thanksgiving – failing to get feedback early on can lead to flaws in your research proposals so fatal that you end up having to start from scratch. Draft versions of the paper are happily accepted until December 15th – feedback on those drafts will be provided no later than December 18th, giving students a full weekend to incorporate the feedback.

Earlier drafts are accepted (and strongly encouraged) in any format whatsoever (from notes scribbled on a napkin, to an outline, to a complete draft) and are welcomed prior to the draft submission deadline of December 15th.

The proposal will be in the form of a research grant proposal and should include:

1. Specific aims (broad research questions and specific hypotheses);
2. Background and significance (brief, several pages at most, review of the literature focusing in particular on methodological considerations that set up why this study is better);
3. Research methods (the research design, the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims, and how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted). This section represents the critical part of the paper and will count most heavily.

[Total Points = 100]
# P11.2901: RESEARCH METHODS SYLLABUS
## CLASS SCHEDULE OVERVIEW
### Fall, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments and Exams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Introduction to Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>The Logic of Research Design</td>
<td>Written Assignment #1 Due</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Nature of Causation</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Experimental Designs</td>
<td>Find-n-Critique Assignment #1 Due</td>
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<td>Written Assignment #2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Advanced Quasi-Experimental Designs</td>
<td>Find-n-Critique Assignment #2 Due</td>
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<td>Written Assignment #3 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Classic Quasi-Experimental Designs</td>
<td>Find-n-Critique Assignment #3 Due</td>
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<td>Written Assignment #4 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Pre-Experimental and Barely Quasi-Experimental Research Designs</td>
<td>Find-n-Critique Assignment #4 Due</td>
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<td>Written Assignment #5 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>MID-TERM (Classes 1 – 6)</td>
<td>IN CLASS EXAMINATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Operationalization and Measurement</td>
<td>Written Assignment #6 Due</td>
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<td>Journal Club Presentation</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods</td>
<td>Written Assignment #7 Due</td>
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<td>Journal Club Presentation</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Written Assignment #8 Due</td>
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<td>Statistical Power</td>
<td>Journal Club Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Ethics and Research</td>
<td>Written Assignment #9 Due</td>
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<td>Journal Club Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 26</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving!</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Evaluation Research and Synthesis</td>
<td>Written Assignment #10 Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Journal Club Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>CLASS PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PAPER (LAST CLASS)</td>
<td>SHORT ORAL PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED STUDY &amp; FIELDING OF QUESTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>DRAFTS OF FINAL PAPER DUE</td>
<td>FEEDBACK PROVIDED BY DEC 18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Dec 21</td>
<td>FINAL PAPER DUE</td>
<td>BEFORE MIDNIGHT VIA EMAIL</td>
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<td>NO LATE PAPERS!</td>
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</table>
P11.2901: RESEARCH METHODS SYLLABUS  
DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE  
Fall, 2008  
⊗ Not Available Online (Hard Copy Available for Photocopying)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Research Concepts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class #1 Outline

I. Introductions
   a. Sign up/Contact list

II. Course Overview
   a. Course Schedule/Organization
   b. Office Hours
   c. Syllabus
      i. Texts
      ii. Readings
      iii. Lectures
         1. Outline
         2. No PPT
         3. Overheads
      iv. Weekly Writing Assignments
   v. Find N Critique
   vi. Journal Club
   vii. Mid-Term Exam
   viii. Final Paper

III. Idiosyncratic Discussion of Core Research Concepts
   a. Definitions of Research
      i. Defining Terms of Research
         1. Theoretical
         2. Empirical
         3. Nomothetic
         4. Probabilistic
         5. Causal
      ii. Types of Research Questions
   iii. Structure of Research
   iv. Inductive vs. Deductive Reasoning

b. Big C: Causation

c. Four Cs
   i. Causation
   ii. Comparison/Counterfactual
   iii. Control
   iv. Context/Complexity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Foundations of Research</td>
<td>BABBIE – Chapter on Human Inquiry and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overview of Research Methods</td>
<td>BABBIE – Chapter on Paradigms, Theory and Social Research</td>
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</table>
|       |        | Logic of Causation                        | S, C & C -- Ch. 1 (Experiments & Generalized Causal Inference),  

**Broken Windows Theory of Crime**


**Assignment #1 Due (Exercise in Causal Thinking)**

After reading the set of articles associated with the Broken Windows debate, answer the following question:

If you were the Criminal Justice Coordinator for New York City (a position appointed by the Mayor to develop and implement policies related to criminal justice), would you use “broken windows” theory to set criminal justice policy? Describe the theory and how it is supposed to work and then explain, very specifically, why you would or would not use the theory. Draw a causal model depicting the theory and identify alternative explanations. Make sure to use your speculative skills and feel free to choose parts of the theory that make sense to you – just be sure to persuasively explain your decision.

Thinking about a possible topic for your final research paper, describe a causal relationship you might want to test.
Class #2 Outline

I. Establishing Causality
   a. Threats to Internal Validity

II. Bolstering Causal Arguments
   a. Argument
   b. Measurement
   c. Analysis
   d. Taking Action

III. Research Design Notation
   a. Overview of Typology of Research Designs

IV. Using Design Elements to Rule Out Threats to Internal Validity

V. Examples of 3rd Variables

VI. Discuss Broken Windows and the Decline of Crime
   a. Proposed Causes for the Decline of Crime
   b. Broken Windows Theory
   c. Alternative Explanations

VII. Discuss Proposed Research Proposal’s Causal Relationship
### Class# | Date | Topics | Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)
---|---|---|---
3 | Sept 24 | Experimental Design | S, C & C – Ch. 8 (Randomized Experiments), pp. 246-278.
S, C & C – Ch. 9 (Practical Problems 1: Ethics, Participant Recruitment, and Random Assignment), pp. 279-313.

BABBIE – Ch. on Experiments


Rightarrow Assignment #2 Due (Design an Experiment and Discuss Its Ethics)

® Thinking about a possible topic for your final research paper, outline an experimental design to address your proposed research question. Spell out your research question, specific hypotheses, and the proposed sample. Describe the experimental and control groups. Describe the process and procedures for randomly assigning cases (people, cities, states, units, etc) to groups. Include a one-paragraph (or so) explanation and justification for randomization – think about this as what you would write as part of your application for human subjects review committee approval or as part of an introductory letter to potential participants to help them understand why random assignment is being used.

Rightarrow Find-and-Critique an Article (Experimental Design) #1
(template follows)
Class #3 Outline

I. Typology of Research Designs

II. Classic Pre- and Post-Test with Comparison Group Quasi-Experimental Design
   a. Interpretation of Results Using Simple Quasi-Experimental Designs
   b. Threats to Internal Validity
   c. Why RA is so Powerful
   d. Random Assignment vs. Random Sampling

III. Probabilistic Equivalence

IV. Social Threats to Internal Validity

V. Challenge of Achieving Random-Ness
   a. Unit of Assignment
   b. When Assignment Occurs

VI. Experimental Design Options
   a. Signal to Noise
   b. Factorial Designs
   c. Switching Replications

VII. Real World RA Examples

VIII. Discussion of RA in Proposed Research

IX. Discussion of Find N Critiques
**FIND-AND-CRITIQUE A RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Find an empirical article about a study that uses a type of design that is featured for that week. Summarize the elements of the study and write a sentence or phrase evaluating that element. Use the template below for guidance, but feel free to use a different format.

**Bring in a copy of the article and make sure to cite the full reference.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN</th>
<th>DESCRIBE/LIST</th>
<th>CRITIQUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>State actual research question(s).</td>
<td>Is this an interesting question? Is it worth investigating? Does the literature review substantiate the research question(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>Spell out specific hypothesis(es).</td>
<td>Do hypotheses match research question? Are hypotheses clearly stated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Describe sample.</td>
<td>Is sample appropriate for hypotheses? Generalizability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>How was sample sampled? What kind of sampling was used (e.g. random, convenience)</td>
<td>Is this the most appropriate approach given the hypotheses and the design?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Label design (e.g., post-test only with comparison group)</td>
<td>Is this a good design for testing hypotheses? Any internal validity issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Describe role of time in study: Specify number of measurement points and intervals between.</td>
<td>Does length of time between measures make sense in terms of expected change in phenomenon of interest? Are there other factors related to time that affect the study?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
<td>List.</td>
<td>Does this IV match the hypotheses? Is it the appropriate construct?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures of IV</td>
<td>Describe how IV is measured/assessed. Provide info, if available, on psychometric properties of measures.</td>
<td>Do the measures capture the construct of interest? Validity? Do the measures do so consistently? Reliability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>List.</td>
<td>Does this DV match the hypotheses? Is it the appropriate construct?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures of DV</td>
<td>Describe how DV is measured/assessed. Provide info, if available, on psychometric properties.</td>
<td>Do the measures capture the outcome variable of interest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Variables</td>
<td>List and describe type of variable (e.g., intervening, mediating, moderating, control)</td>
<td>Does this variable match the hypotheses? Is it the appropriate construct? Are any key variables (i.e., 3rd variables) not included?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures of Other Variables</td>
<td>Describe how other variables are measured/assessed.</td>
<td>Do the measures capture the variable of interest?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Describe in brief the kind of analyses used.</td>
<td>Does analysis make sense? Is it appropriate for the design and the hypotheses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Findings Conclusions</td>
<td>Describe in brief.</td>
<td>Do the findings and conclusions match well with the design and sample? Is the applicability of the findings discussed? Are limitations addressed?</td>
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<td>Class#</td>
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<td>Topics</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Advanced Quasi-Experimental Designs</td>
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Class #4 Outline

I. Quasi-Experimental Designs (NEGD)
   a. Internal Validity

II. Interpretation of Results Using Simple Quasi-Experimental Designs

III. Quasi-Experimental Designs that Simulate Random Assignment
   a. Matching
   b. Propensity Scoring

IV. Discuss Relative “Convincingness” of 3 Empirical Articles

V. Discuss Find-n-Critiques
Class# | Date | Topics | Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)
---|---|---|---
S, C & C – Ch. 7 (Regression Discontinuity Designs), pp. 207-242.

BABBIE – Ch. on Research Design

Pre-Test/Post-Test with Comparison Group


Time Series


Regression-Discontinuity


Assignment #4 Due (Time Series vs Other Quasi-Exp Designs)
Do you think that multiple baseline designs like the ones described in the Biglan (2000) article “provide evidence about the effects of an independent variable that is superior to all other designs that have been labeled ‘quasi-experimental’ (p. 43).” Explain why or why not. Here are some hopefully helpful “hints” to consider in your explanation (do not feel obligated to address all of these!):

- the difference between multiple baseline time-series and pre- and post-test with untreated group designs;
- degree of control over the independent variable;
- differences between nomothetic and idiographic understandings of social processes;
- external validity (generalizability);
- the idea that the use of control or comparison groups presumes that the relationship under study is generalizable;
- the variability of the measured process;
- diffusion of ideas from treatment to control group;
- the ability of each type of design to minimize threats to internal validity (considering in particular testing and selection-maturation).

Find-and-Critique an Article (Quasi-Experimental Design) #3
Class #5 Outline

I. Time Series Designs
   a. Overview
      i. Classic Time Series
      ii. Interrupted Time Series
      iii. Multiple Baseline Designs
   b. Examples

II. Regression-Discontinuity Designs
   a. Overview
      i. Explicit Selection Criteria
      ii. Discontinuity
      iii. Threats to IV Dealt With
   b. Examples

III. Discuss Superiority of Interrupted Time Series Designs

IV. Discuss Find N Critique
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6     | Oct 15 | Pre-Experimental and Barely Quasi-Experimental Designs | BABBIE – Ch. on *Survey Research and Elaboration Method*  
S, C & C – Ch. 2 (Statistical Conclusion Validity and Internal Validity), pp. 33-63.  
Ch. 4 (Quasi-Experimental Designs that Either Lack a Control Group or Lack Pretest Observations), pp. 103-134 and  
**Correlational** |  
**Elaboration Method** |  
**Administrative Data** |  
Statistical Control |  

**Assignment #5 Due (Which Study is Most Internally Valid and Why)**  
For each of this week’s four empirical articles (Brennan et al., 1999, Dukes, Stein & Ullman, 1997, Jha et al., 2001, Diez Roux et al., 2001) outline the degree to which at least two “threats to internal validity” may be operating and describe a quasi-experimental design that could be used to eliminate or at least minimize each of those threats. Then pick which of these four studies is the most persuasive in terms of internal validity and explain why.  

Thinking about a possible topic for your final research paper, identify and describe two threats to internal validity that are likely to be the most worrisome.  

**Find-and-Critique an Article (Quasi-Experimental Design) #4**
Class #6 Outline

I. Review of Design Elements Used in Experiments and Quasi-Experiments

II. Pre-Experimental Designs and Single Group Threats to Internal Validity
   a. Table: Review of Sources of Invalidity

III. Pre-Experimental Designs Broadly
   a. Correlational
   b. Elaboration Methods
   c. Administrative Data
   d. Statistical Control

IV. Specialized Pre-Experimental and/or Barely Quasi-Experimental Designs
   a. Proxy Pre-Test
   b. Separate Samples
   c. NEDV

V. Discuss Internal Validity of Empirical Articles

VI. Discuss Find N Critique Articles

VII. Review for Mid-Term
mid-term
October 22, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class#</th>
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<th>Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>MID-TERM EXAMINATION (in class)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DESCRIPTION OF MID-TERM

- In-class
- One page of notes may be used throughout the exam (one-sided, 8 ½" by 11")
- Counts for 25 points out of 100

What you will be asked to do:

- Explain and interpret simple graphs representing the results of particular designs.
- Critique the use of a design in answering a specific research question.
- Compare and contrast several research designs, especially quasi-experimental designs.
- Develop a research design to answer a specific research question.
- Evaluate the internal validity of a study or design.

What you should know:

- Experimental designs
- Quasi-experimental designs
  - Regression-discontinuity and propensity scores will not be covered because approach is more statistical than design-based
- Threats to internal validity
- Definitions of all the major definitions and concepts we’ve covered
<table>
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</thead>
</table>
| 8     | Oct 29 | Measurement and Operationalization, External Validity | BABBIE – Ch. on **Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement**  
BABBIE – Ch. on **Indexes, Scales and Typologies**  
S, C & C – Ch. 3 (Construct Validity and External Validity), pp. 64-102. |
|       |        | Unit of Analysis               | Assignment #6 Due (Additional Validity Problems)                                                                |
|       |        |                                | Based on the articles about the World Health Organization Quality of Life Instrument… |
|       |        |                                | Does the proposition that pregnancy and quality of life are related have adequate **statistical conclusion validity**? |
|       |        |                                | Identify and explain a potential **construct validity** problem with the instrument. |
|       |        |                                | Identify and explain a potential **reliability** problem with the instrument. |
|       |        |                                | Identify and explain a potential **external validity** problem with the instrument and discuss how one could address this problem. |
|       |        |                                | If we assume that pregnancy and quality of life are related (i.e., have adequate statistical conclusion validity), how **internally valid** is the proposition that pregnancy causes a decrease in pregnant women’s quality of life? |
|       |        |                                | **Journal Club Presentation**                                                                                 |
Class #8 Outline

I. Overview of Measurement and Operationalization
   a. Multiple Levels
      i. Real
      ii. Theoretical
      iii. Operational

II. Review of Types of Validity

III. Reliability
   a. True Score Theory
   b. Types of Reliability
      i. Test/Retest
      ii. Rater (Inter and Intra)
      iii. Parallel Form
      iv. Internal Consistency

IV. Measurement Validity
   a. Types of Construct Validity
      i. Translation Validity
         1. Face Validity
         2. Content Validity
      ii. Criterion-Related Validity
         1. Predictive Validity
         2. Concurrent/Discriminant Validity
         3. Convergent/Divergent Validity

X. Unit Issues
   a. Data Collection
   b. Analysis

XI. Discuss Validity of WHO-QOL

XII. Journal Club Presentation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods</td>
<td>BABBIE – Ch. on Qualitative Research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✔ Assignment #7 Due (Critique Qualitative Studies)</td>
<td>Do you agree or disagree with Silverman’s (1998) critique of the article on quality of care in the hospital (Irurita, 1996) and his critique of the article on perinatal cocaine crack users (Pursley-Crotteau and Stern, 1996)? Are there problems you had with these studies that Silverman did not address? What threats to internal validity come into play in these two studies? What are the strengths in the studies that you think are worth noting? Do you believe in the results from these two qualitative research efforts?</td>
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<td>✒ Thinking about your final paper, which aspects of your research questions/objectives might better be addressed qualitatively rather than quantitatively? Briefly describe how you would go about addressing those particular question(s) qualitatively – describe your overall approach and then get down to specifics: how you would collect the data and how you would analyze the data?</td>
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<td>✔ Journal Club Presentation</td>
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</table>

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Class #9 Outline

I. Qualitative vs Quantitative Debate

II. Distinction between Qualitative and Quantitative Data

III. Underlying Tenets of Qualitative vs Quantitative Approaches

IV. Defining Features of Qualitative Research
   a. Involvement of Research
   b. Gathering Data
   c. Analyzing Data
   d. Time Commitment

V. Overview of Qualitative Research Traditions

VI. Slightly More In-Depth Exploration of Grounded Theory

VII. Concrete Example of Qualitative Data Coding and Analysis

VIII. Rigor in Qualitative Research

IX. Discussion of Quality in Qualitative Research Articles

X. Journal Club Presentation
Class# | Date  | Topics  | Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)
---|---|---|---
10 | Nov 12 | Sampling | BABBIE – Ch. on The Logic of Sampling

S, C & C – Ch. 11 (Generalized Causal Inference: A Grounded Theory), pp. 341-373.


Assignment #8 Due (Sources of Error and Power)

Define, in your own words, the three sources of sampling error identified in the article assessing the representativeness of the British Crime Survey (Elliott & Ellingworth (1997). Provide a real-world example of each of the two “semi-quantifiable” sources of error using your imagination (not the examples provided in the article). How would you minimize those sources of error?

Answer, again in your own words, the questions raised by Mone and colleagues (1996) in the article on statistical power in management research: Of what importance, really, is statistical power? Why should researchers be interested in power and why should they seek to increase the power of their research? What’s the difference, if any, between “design sensitivity” and “power”?

Thinking about your final research paper, describe the sampling strategy you’re considering using. What types of sampling errors might be of concern? How large an effect size do you anticipate? Why? How might you increase power in your proposed study?

Journal Club Presentation
Class #10 Outline

I. Sampling
   a. Population
      i. Theoretical
      ii. Accessible
   b. Sampling Frame

II. Reminder/Refresher
    Statistics=Guide for Determining Sample’s Representation of Population
    Sampling Distributions
    Confidence Intervals

V. Random Sampling Error vs Systematic Error

VI. Power
   a. Components of Power
      i. Confidence Level
      ii. Type I Error
      iii. Type II Error
      iv. Power
   b. Effect Sizes
      i. Calculating Power, Necessary Sample Size etc

VII. Discuss British Crime Survey Sources of Sampling Error and What Power Really Means

VIII. Journal Club Presentation
## Class# | Date | Topics | Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)
--- | --- | --- | ---
11 | Nov 19 | Ethics of Doing Policy Research | BABBIE – Ch. on *Ethics and Politics of Social Research*

- **Assignment #9 Due (Write an IRB Application)**

Thinking about your final paper, write an application for IRB review - using the form available at [http://www.nyu.edu/ucaihs/forms/application.doc](http://www.nyu.edu/ucaihs/forms/application.doc).

Answer each section, but feel free to simply sketch out a brief response.

- **Journal Club Presentation**

Nov 26 | Thanksgiving |
Class #11 Outline

I. Horror Stories

II. Principles Underlying Ethical Conduct of Human Subjects Research

III. Case Study in Determining What's Ethical When Doing Human Subjects Research

IV. Discuss NYU Applications

V. Discuss Compatibility of Policy Analysis and Ethics

IX. Journal Club Presentation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Evaluation Research and Synthesis</td>
<td>BABBIE – Ch. on Evaluation Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment #10 Due (Can Econ Dev Programs Be Evaluated?)**

Can economic development programs be evaluated? Why or why not? What are at least three of the challenges to evaluating such programs and what designs would you use to overcome each of those challenges?

**Journal Club Presentation**
Class #12 Outline

I. Types of Evaluation Research
   a. Process and Implementation
   b. Outcome

II. Meta Analysis

III. Discuss Whether Economic Development Programs Can be Evaluated

IV. Journal Club Presentation
### Class# | Date | Topics | Readings and Assignments (Due Day of Class)
---|---|---|---
13 | Dec 10 | Class Presentations of Summary of Research Proposals |  ⇒ Brief (5 mins or less!) Presentation: Describe with great clarity and simplicity the research question(s), hypotheses, sample, data collection and design of the research project you are proposing in your final paper. Be prepared to answer questions from the class about your methods and design.

**FINAL PAPER**

**TOPIC DUE**

The last class serves as the very last day to get approval for your paper topic – and such approval is granted only after you have orally presented your topic to the entire class. It is highly recommended, therefore, that you talk to me (or send me an e-mail) about the topic and your approach and get both my approval and my feedback well before you have to present it in class!

**DRAFTS DUE**

Drafts of papers received in my office or via e-mail on or before Dec 15th (before midnight) will be reviewed and comments will be e-mailed back to you by the end of the day on Dec 18th (giving you a full weekend to incorporate feedback).

Please note that drafts of ANY form and AT ANY TIME prior to the deadline are gladly accepted and HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, including incomplete proposals, outlines, a few sentences describing problems you’d like help with, sketches etc. You will benefit from getting feedback as writing a research proposal is much more difficult than you may anticipate – fatal flaws in research proposals often require starting from scratch (much better to identify these problems BEFORE you start writing).

NB: Good research proposals simply cannot be written in a few days!

**FINAL PAPER DUE**

The final paper is due by midnight on Dec 21st via e-mail. Late papers are not accepted.

For assistance in structuring, writing, and formatting the paper, please consult some of the guides to writing a proposal that are available on Blackboard.
## RESEARCH METHODS (FALL 2009)
### FINAL PAPER GRADING SCHEMA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Points Given</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Organization and Clarity of Writing</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Aims and Hypotheses</strong> (well-stated, testable, clear, connected with design)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Background and Significance/Literature Review</strong> (clear and well-developed argument, proper evidence cited, connected with design and hypotheses)</td>
<td>5</td>
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### METHODS

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design</strong> (stated clearly, answers/addresses hypotheses, limitations/strengths acknowledged accurately, appropriate given constraints)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sample/Sampling</strong> (sample and sampling strategy are specified and appropriate, sample size and power are discussed, response rate, selection biases and generalizability issues addressed)</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measures/Data Collection</strong> (IVs, DVs, and control variables properly identified, domains and associated variables outlined, match with hypotheses, means of assessing discussed, strengths and limitations acknowledged)</td>
<td>9</td>
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| **TOTAL**                                      | 40            |              |          |