
**THE NEW SCHOOL GRADUATE PROGRAM IN
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
NINT5005: RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION
SPRING 2017**

Class Time: Monday 8-9:50 pm, Classroom: Room 617, 66 W 12

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 5-7pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Research is an activity through which we confront our thinking about the world with evidence gathered through the systematic consideration of people, things, and/or events. There are innumerable strategies to confront thought and evidence, so this course cannot be an exhaustive introduction. The central emphasis therefore will be on conventional research design and data collection as these are effective building blocks for many useful forms of research. In particular, the emphasis will be on fieldwork settings such as you might encounter on the International Field Program or working in non-governmental or other social service organizations. Students will learn about forming researchable questions; identifying, designing and implementing appropriate data collections strategies to answer those questions; and basic data analysis and presentation skills. Class time will be largely hands on, with students engaging with each other and the professor to explore how to apply lessons from readings to practical situations, in particular in the design and implementation of individual research projects. The course requires significant out-of-class work, in particular during the data collection phase of the class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

While you cannot expect to leave this course fully conversant in research design and data collection, with diligent work you should be able to:

1. Formulate clear research questions and identify what types of data you will need to work toward answers
2. Critically assess the methods used in research reports and secondary literature
3. Pragmatically assess a field research setting, design a basic data collection strategy using conventional research tools, and initiate a basic data analysis
4. Be aware of and prepared to address the ethical problems of research and comply with Institutional Review Board requirements

ASSIGNMENTS

The majority of assignments will be dedicated to a research project for which you design a data collection process, collect the data and report on the results. Assignments are iterative, meaning that each successive assignment builds on but also retroactively improves preceding assignments. Because of this success in conducting research for this course (or any research for that matter) requires planning so when preparing a given assignment you need to look ahead to future assignments.

While all assignments must be prepared and presented individually, collaborative research is permitted. In the event that you conduct collaborative research, in addition to complying with the assignment descriptions in your work you must also identify the contributions of collaborators and incorporate the collaborative process as an explicit feature of your research design.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

- 1) Observation, Monday February 27 (350 Words + Image; file name: Observation):** Create a photograph or other visual image that depicts a space where you have conducted observation. Briefly state the topic of your research project, describe the site (location, characteristics, uses, etc.) and present and discuss initial observations.
- 2) Data Collection Tools, Friday March 17 (no word limit, file name: Tools):** This assignment has 3 components.
 - a. Describe your topic and pose your key research question.
 - b. Provide fully formatted versions of your interview guide and questionnaire.
 - c. Place every question from your interview guide and your questionnaire in a table (format will be provided). You must describe the informational and interpretive value of each question.
- 3) Literature Review and Methods, Monday April 10 (1000 words + References, file name: LitRev)**
 - a. Present your topic and situate it within relevant substantive and theoretical literature. Be sure to cover the biggest debates that exist in the literature.
 - b. Pose your research question by showing how it addresses gaps in the literature. Discuss why finding an answer to that question is important.
 - c. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative data for your addressing your question.
 - d. Present and discuss your research methods, including sampling, sites, and data collection instruments and practices. Be sure to make the case for why your strategy is likely to produce meaningful results. Be sure to address ethical considerations.

- 4) Data Analysis, Friday May 5 (1000 Words + quotes/tables/charts/graphs, file name: Analysis):**
- Present your revised topic and research question in one paragraph.
 - Select 3 to 5 pieces of data from your observations, quotes from interviews and tables/charts/graphs from your questionnaire (i.e., 9 to 15 pieces of data). From your questionnaire you must have at least one example of bivariate or multivariate data.
 - For each piece, interpret the data and discuss how it helps to answer your question. For qualitative data you must make reference to your coding scheme; include the scheme as an appendix.
- 5) Final Paper, Friday May 19 (4000 Words + references, data and supporting materials, file name: Final):** Prepare a research report that has the following components:
- Introduction:* present your topic, research question, and theoretical discussion. Reference appropriate literature.
 - Methods:* present your research design discussing how the data collection strategies you deployed could your question. Include your data collection tools as appendices; you must discuss how you have handled procedures related to informed consent and ethics generally.
 - Data and Results:* present what your data collection yielded.
 - Analysis:* discuss your findings and their implications for your research question.
 - Conclusions:* Summarize your argument and main findings and present your conclusions. Briefly discuss limitations of the research and further topics or questions.
- 6) Poster Session, Monday May 15:** Prepare a poster that illustrates your research project. Students from all 3 sections will present and discuss their posters on May 15, 8 to 10pm.
- 7) Quizzes, various dates.** On four different dates there will be in-class quizzes. The quizzes will assess your apprehension of key research design and data collection strategies and techniques drawn from course readings.
- 8) Postings, various dates.** For 10 class sessions you must post materials to Canvas, and in most cases also bring the materials to class. The postings must be made by 6 PM of the Sunday prior to the class session for which the posting is indicated. Each posting is worth one point. These postings will be useful to you so don't just post and run: take the time to read what your colleagues post, you will find much of value.

In addition to the scored assignments starting week 3 (February 6) I will call on specific people to share a reading they've done about their topic. Everyone will be called on once during the semester.

ASSIGNMENT SCORING

Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by 6pm on their respective dates.

| Assignment | <i>Score</i> |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Observation | 5 |
| Tools | 10 |
| LitRev | 10 |
| Analysis | 10 |
| Final | 25 |
| Poster | 10 |
| 4 Quizzes (@5 each) | 20 |
| Postings | 10 |
| Total | 100 |

ASSIGNMENT RULES, EXTENSIONS AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

RULES

- Assignments must be emailed by the stipulated deadline. Late assignments must be submitted for feedback, but will be given a score of 0. (Also see policy regarding extensions.)
- Use the following protocol for all assignment file names: LastName-FileName.
- Assignments must not be over the word limit.
- All assignments must be fully formatted as stand-alone papers, i.e., they must include a title, your name, page numbers, etc.
- All assignments must use ASA citation style. See Canvas for resources.
- For questionnaire and data analysis assignments it is best to use Qualtrics. You have access to this program through MyNewSchool. You may use Google Forms or other software, though bear in mind they are not as robust tools as Qualtrics. You must also have access to a spreadsheet program. The standard is Excel and class activities will be based on this program.

EXTENSION REQUESTS

All papers must be submitted by the stipulated deadline to receive a score. If you have reason to believe that you cannot finish an assignment in time, you must request an extension a minimum 24 hours before it is due. Extensions will not be approved automatically so you must have good cause for your request. If a request is made less than 24 hours before the deadline only certified medical excuses, university accommodation requests or other formal procedures will be considered in determining whether an extension will be allowed.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| Criterion | Approximate Weight (%) |
|--|------------------------|
| <i>Breadth of research:</i> Incisive use of scholarly literature and other sources of credible information; identification and use of appropriate data sources and comparative cases. | 25 |
| <i>Incorporation of readings:</i> Use of assigned readings; outside reading must not be done in lieu of assigned reading, but in addition to it. | 25 |
| <i>Quality of prose:</i> Clear, grammatical sentences; correct use of terms and concepts; clear and compelling use of examples, illustrations, images, and/or numerical data | 25 |
| <i>Formatting and editing:</i> appropriately formatted with titles, headings/subheadings, page numbers, etc.; consistent and thorough citations; complete and properly formatted bibliography; properly captioned figures, tables and/graphs; all documents must be proof-read before submission | 15 |
| <i>Creativity:</i> Making interesting and unusual associations or comparisons; nuanced interpretation of facts, events, theories, policies, etc. | 10 |

STUDENT RESOURCES

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- The University (and associated) Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>. You can also use library services at NYU's Bobst Library. Do not presume that you can do the assigned work for this course without ever setting foot in the library.
- The University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>. If you have challenges organizing your time, conducting research, writing, and/or working with deadlines you should avail yourself of the resources available through the learning center. If I detect that you are in need of such services I will instruct you to do so.
- University Disabilities Service: www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/ In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course,

academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to correctly and appropriately differentiate their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at <http://www.newschool.edu/provost/academic-honesty-and-integrity-policy.pdf>.

Plagiarism is wrong, unoriginal, and very annoying. Don't do it. Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center/virtual-handout-drawer/>

Attendance in both Lectures and Labs is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of class. As per New School rules, if you miss more than two class periods we must report your absences to the administration.

READINGS AND SCHEDULE

All readings with the exception of the textbook are available through Canvas. All readings and preparation activities are subject to change if necessary.

| Date | Topic | Readings | Assignments Bold are graded assignments; Italics are class prep; () indicate scored postings |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 23-Jan | Introductions and Organization | Holly: Research Diaries | |
| 30-Jan | Topics and Research Design | Gordon 1, Booth 3-4, Lee: Discourse, Blackmore: Policy | <i>Get access to Excel, Qualtrics, RefWorks. Post/Bring In 'Topic → Problem' statements (1)</i> |
| 6-Feb | Literature and Secondary Data | Kamler: Literature, Gordon 6 | <i>Post/Bring in Tables/Graphs and Quotes from Secondary Sources (2)</i> |
| 13-Feb | Observation and Ethics | Gordon 3; Scheyvens 1, 9; Nofke: Action Research | <i>Do field observation, post/bring a photograph with a paragraph explaining its significance (3)</i> |
| 20-Feb President's Day, No Class | | | |
| 27-Feb | Interviews | Gordon 2; Barbour: Interviewing and FG | Observation Due Monday 27 February; Bring draft interview guide |
| 6-Mar | Questionnaires 1 | Gordon 4-5, Dawson: Linked Fates | <i>Post questionnaire examples (4); Begin conducting interviews</i> |
| 13-Mar | Questionnaires 2 | Miller: Street Intercept, Fowler 5 | <i>Bring draft questionnaire, fully formatted; Data Collection Tools Due Friday 17 March</i> |
| 20-Mar Spring Break, No Class | | | |
| 27-Mar | Getting (Re)Organized | Re-read Holly; Marshall 8; Gordon 7 | <i>Post/Bring research diary entries (5); Revise questionnaire</i> |
| 3-Apr | Data Analysis: Qualitative | Mason | <i>Post/Bring coding scheme (6); Begin implementing questionnaire</i> |
| 10-Apr | Data Analysis: Quantitative 1 | Bryman | Literature Review and Methods Due Monday 10 April |

| Date | Topic | Readings | Assignments Bold are graded assignments; Italics are class prep; () indicate scored postings |
|------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 17- Apr | Data Analysis: Quantitative 2 | Booth 15 | Post/Bring Graphs and Charts from Class Data (7) |
| 24- Apr | Data Visualization | Laumans; Consult links on Canvas | Post/Bring Graphs and Charts other visualizations from Own Data (8) |
| 1- May | Making Claims | Booth 7-8 | <i>Post/Bring at least 3 claims charts (9);</i> Data Analysis Due Friday May 5 |
| 8- May | Telling Stories | Becker | <i>Post/Bring in Tables/Graphs and Quotes from Own Data (10)</i> |
| 15- May | Poster Session | Consult links on Canvas | Final Paper Due Friday May 19 |