

PADP 7110 Research Methods in Public Administration
University of Georgia
Spring 2021

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Course time: Wednesdays, 7:15-10:00 pm
Course location: Caldwell 204
Office hours: Wednesdays & Thursdays,
12:00-1:00 or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

An introduction to the application of social science research methods to problems in public management and policy. Topics include research design, measurement, data collection techniques, and research ethics. Several of the key objectives to be achieved include:

- 1) Developing an appreciation of the importance of research methods in government
- 2) Identifying which research designs and data collection strategies are the most appropriate for planning and evaluating public policy, program, and management interventions,
- 3) Gaining increased sophistication as a research "consumer" who understands the strengths and limitations of research studies

Although this course may help strengthen several all 5 key competencies highlighted by the MPA Program, it contributes the most to:

Competency 2. To strengthen your ability to Participate in the Public Policy Process by developing your ability to collect, interpret and persuasively communicate information regarding policy alternatives especially with regards to policy importance and policy evaluations.

Competency 3: To strengthen your ability to Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems and Make Decisions by developing your ability to collect, analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision-making

Note: This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may become necessary as the semester progresses.

REQUIRED TEXTS

O'Sullivan, E., Rassel, G. R. & Berner, M. (2008). Research methods for public administrators (5th ed.). New York: Longman Publishers.

Additional assigned readings available on the e Learning Commons Course Site. Students will be expected to complete the readings **before** attending the class session for which they are assigned.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Given the technical nature of this course, attendance at every class meeting is especially important. Each class builds on material learned in previous class sessions and will often cover some important material not covered in the assigned readings. As a result, even if a student manages to master the required text and all supplemental readings, it is likely that s/he will be insufficiently prepared for the examinations. Students are expected to be in class (on time) as both

attendance and participation will be considered in overall evaluations of performance. As an added incentive, the instructor reserves the right to give quizzes in the beginning of class (no late or make-up quizzes will be allowed). If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility 1) hand in assignments due prior to the beginning (late work will be penalized) and 2) to obtain complete information from on that class and any assignments due the following week from another student.

COMPUTER, TABLET, CELL PHONE & OTHER DEVICE USE

Laptop computers and tablets (i.e. iPads) may be used during class sessions for note taking ONLY. ANY instance of unapproved use of laptop computers or tablets in the classroom will result in your laptop/tablet privileges being revoked for the remainder of the semester. Cell phones and other electronic devices must remain off and stored out of sight at all times during class.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures. In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation (or are given access to recordings of course lectures by the professor) are expected to:

- ✓ Use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- ✓ Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- ✓ Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- ✓ Not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings.
- ✓ Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

ACADEMIC HONESTY (<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty>)

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor and work with the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.uga.edu/students/register-for-services>) to develop an accommodation plan. The student is responsible for providing a copy of that plan to the instructor.

Make-up exams and Incomplete or "I" grades are permitted in only extremely rare circumstances. The instructor has the right to (1) require documentation and proof of the need for

the make-up exam or “I” grade (2) require the completion of different versions of assignments missed and/or (3) impose a grade penalty for a missed exam or Incomplete grade in the course. Please let the instructor know as soon as you see a problem developing. Any students wishing to withdraw from the course must follow the University’s course withdrawal procedures.

Last day to withdraw from full semester classes: March 23, 2021.

EXAMINATIONS & QUIZZES

Two in-class examinations will be administered covering topics raised by the class lectures and assigned readings. Students who cannot be in class on the scheduled dates in which examinations are to be completed must meet with the instructor *prior* to the date in question. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the exam.

Nearly every week there will be either a take-home quiz or a surprise in class quiz. The format of these assignments will be very similar to the questions asked on the final exam. Unless specifically noted on the quiz, these are individual assignments so students will need to show independent work.

EXPERIMENTAL & QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN ASSIGNMENTS

Students (in groups of 2 or 3) will be asked to prepare a research design to answer a question posed to them. These assignments will be very similar to the questions asked on the midterm exam but will be done as memos. More information about each assignment will be provided in class the week before it is due. These assignments would provide good examples to use in your MPA Capstones and Portfolio to showcase the two competences highlight above.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The research proposal assignment is an opportunity for students to integrate all essential components of research methods in an area of interest to them. The students will work in small groups (3 students) to identify a research question of interest to public administration and develop either a quasiexperimental or experimental design a research study to answer this question. The assignment has two parts: 1) a 1-2 page initial research proposal memo, 2) a 15-20 minute oral research proposal presentation.

Proposal Memo. Students will be required to submit a memo written to convince the reader that the research is both important and feasible. In the proposal memo, the following questions must be addressed in 1-2 pages (single space, 12 pt. times roman font, 1 inch margins):

1. What is your research question?
2. Why do you want to undertake it? Who will care and why?
3. What do you think may be happening and how would this study help you know?
(identify the variables, relationships of interest and hypotheses)
4. What audience(s) do you hope to influence?
5. What type of research design might you use to test your hypothesis and why?

Research Proposal Presentation. Each student group will be required to give a formal presentation of their research proposal. Presentations should be 15-20 minutes in length and should incorporate some use of visual aids (grades will reflect quality of content and presentation). The effectiveness of research proposal and findings are not solely dependent on

the importance of the topic or the quality of their design and implementation. Often good research is ignored because the researcher(s) does not clearly and concisely communicate their work. Students are required to use PowerPoint for their presentation and a copy of their slides (in handout format) must be submitted at the time of their presentation. Prior to the final presentation, students must hand in a draft PowerPoint presentation for instructor review and feedback. The proposal presentation should discuss the following elements:

1. Statement of the problem
 - Research objective / question
 - Significance of the problem
2. Outline of the theoretical framework or model
 - Justify and conceptualize the variables that you select
 - Identify independent and dependent variable (s)
 - Introduce testable hypotheses
3. Research design
 - Study design and how it helps rule out alternative explanations
 - Identify study subjects (sample)/ units of analysis
 - Describe sampling procedure
 - Data collection methods (measures/instruments; operationalization)
4. Management Plan
 - The time table
 - Budget
5. Anticipated strengths, weaknesses and benefits.
6. Ethical considerations

This assignment may be a good examples to use in your MPA Capstones and Portfolio to showcase the two competences highlight above.

GRADING

Attendance & Participation	4%
Take Home (or in class) Quizzes	8%
Experimental & Quasi Design Assignments	16%
Midterm Exam	28%
Research Proposal Memo	1%
Research Proposal Presentation	24%
Final Examination	19%

Any assignment not handed in at the beginning (in person) or before (if not in attendance) class on the day it is due will be penalized at least 1 letter grade. Grading penalties increase by 1 letter grade for additional each day an assignment is late.

Course grades will be determined according to the following criteria:

A	89.5-100	C+	75.0-79.49	F	0.0-58.99
B+	85.0-89.49	C	69.0-74.99		
B	79.5-84.99	D	59.0-68.99		

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- 1/13 Introduction: Research Use & Process
- 1/20 Introduction to Research and the Importance of Theory
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 1
Whetten, D. A. (1989). What constitutes a theoretical contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 490-495.
Goldacre, B. (2009). *Bad Science*. London: Fourth Estate. Chapter 13.
- 1/27 Measurement & Data
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 4
Bertrand, M. & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination, *American Economic Review*, 94(4), 991-1013
- 2/3 Research Design: Experiments
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 3 (pp.56-77)
Spencer, M.B., Noll, E. & Cassidy, E. (2005). Monetary Incentives in Support of Academic Achievement. *Evaluation Review*, 29(3), 199-222.
- 2/10 Research Design: Quasi-Experiments ****Experimental Assignment Due****
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 3 (pp.77-94)
Van Ryzin, G. G. (2014). The Curious Case of the Post-9-11 Boost in Government Job Satisfaction." *The American Review of Public Administration*, 44(1), 59-74.
McCartt, A.T., Braver, E.R. & Geary, L. L. (2003). Drivers' use of handheld cell phones before and after New York state's cell phone law. *Preventive Medicine*, 36(5), 629-635.
- 2/17 NO CLASS
- 2/24 Research Design: Cross-Sectional ****Quasi-experimental Assignment Due****
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 2 (pp.25-38)
Houston, D. J. (2006). Walking the walk" of public service motivation: Public employees and charitable gifts of time, blood, and money. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 16(1), 67-86.
Stack, S. & Gundlach, J. (1992). The effect of country music on suicide. *Social Forces*, 71(1), 211-218.
- 3/3 Research Design Continued
- 3/10 **MIDTERM**
- 3/17 Surveys Sampling & Administration ****Research Proposal Memo Due****
O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapters 5 & 6
Lange, J.E., Lauer, E.M. & Voas, R.B. (1999). A Survey of the San Diego-Tijuana Cross-Border Binging: Methods and Analysis. *Evaluation Review*, 23(4), 378-398.
- 3/24 Research Proposal Meetings

- 3/31 Survey Measurement
 O’Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapter 7 & 10
 McDowall, D., Loftin, C., & Presser, S. (2000). Measuring civilian defensive firearm use: a methodological experiment. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 16(1), 1-19.
 Fowler, F.J., Sr. (1995). Appendix A: Commonly Used Measurement Dimensions & Appendix B: Measures of Common Covariates. In *Improving Survey Questions*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. (Applied Social Research Methods Series, vol. 38)
- 4/7 Survey Design Exercise
- 4/14 Research Ethics
 O’Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapters 8 & 15 (pp. 478-482)
- 4/21 Research Ethics continued & **Research Proposal Presentations**
 Piff, P. K., Stancato, D. M., Côté, S., Mendoza-Denton, R., & Keltner, D. (2012). Higher social class predicts increased unethical behavior. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109(11), 4086-4091.
- 4/28 **Research Proposal Presentations**
- 5/5 **FINAL EXAM**

HEALTH & SAFETY

Everyone has a critical role to play as we work together to protect the health and safety of every member of the Bulldog Nation.

Face Coverings. As a reminder, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.

****Per CDC guidance, Masks with valves will not be allowed****

DawgCheck. By coming to campus, you are acknowledging that you have checked, and do not have, symptoms of COVID-19. Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>

Keeping a safe distance. In all public spaces (including stairwells, halls, offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and labs), please maintain six feet between you and others. The seating capacity in your classroom has been modified to allow for social distancing. Please sit in designated, marked

seats. In all public spaces, including classrooms, you should not remove signage or re-arrange furniture, even if it appears that furniture is not being used.

Don't congregate. If you want to spend some time chatting with someone, please take it outside or online. We are also requesting that you enter and exit, staying outside of the building as long as practicable before your class begins and then leaving quickly when the class is finished.

Keeping it clean. Cleaning and disinfecting of public spaces are important to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. There are sanitation wipes/buckets near your classroom. *Prior to heading in to class*, you should take a wipe from the station and wipe down all high-touch surfaces associated with your seat. You should help further slow the spread of the virus by frequently washing your hands. Bathrooms will be cleaned frequently during the day

What do I do if I have symptoms? Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I test positive? Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is **required** to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed? Revised Guidelines for COVID-19 Quarantine Period. Effective Jan. 4, 2021, students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 10 days (consistent with updated Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines). Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined.

We strongly encourage students to voluntarily take a COVID-19 test within 48 hours of the end of the 10-day quarantine period (test to be administered between days 8 and 10). Students may obtain these tests at Legion Field (<https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/>) or at the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in the University Health Center without an appointment. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>

If the test is negative, the individual may return to campus, but **MUST** continue to closely monitor for any new COVID-19 symptoms through 14 days. DawgCheck is the best method for monitoring these symptoms. If new symptoms occur, the individual must not come to campus and must seek further testing/evaluation.

If the test is positive at the end of the 10-day period, the individual must begin a 10-day isolation period from the date of the test.

How do I get a test? Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162. UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests.

How do I participate in surveillance testing if I have NO symptoms? You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the expanded surveillance testing that is being offered from January 4 – 22: up to 1,500 free tests per day at Legion Field and pop-up locations. Testing at Legion Field can be scheduled at <https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/>. Walk-up appointments can usually be accommodated at Legion Field, and pop-up saliva testing does not require pre-registration. For planning purposes, precise sites and schedules for the pop-up clinics are published on the UHC's website and its social media as they are secured:
<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-surveillance-testing>

Mental Health and Wellness Resources. If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources for a student seeking

Mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>)

Crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

Help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., there is a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>)

Additional resources can also be accessed through the UGA App.