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

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Course time: Thursdays, 6:15-9:00 pm
Course location: Gwinnett Rm 118
Office hours: 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: October 25, 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	6%
Take Home (or in class) Quizzes	8%
Experimental & Quasi Design Assignments	16%
Midterm Exam	25%
Research Proposal Memo	1%
Research Proposal Presentation	29%
Final Examination	15%

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

8/19 Introduction: Research Use & Process

8/26 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.

9/2 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

9/9 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.

9/16 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.

9/23 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.

9/30 Research Design Continued ****Research Proposal Memo Due****

10/7 **MIDTERM**

10/14 Research Proposal Meetings

10/21 Surveys Sampling & Administration

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.

10/28 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)

11/4 Research Ethics

O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner. (2008). Chapters 8 & 15 (pp. 478-482)

11/11 Research Ethics continued & **Final Exam**

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.

11/18 **Research Proposal Presentations**

12/2 **Research Proposal Presentations**

12/9 **Research Proposal Presentations**

CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS FOR FALL 2021 CLASSES

Face coverings:
Following guidance from the University System of Georgia, face coverings are recommended for all individuals while inside campus facilities.

How can I obtain the COVID-19 vaccine?
University Health Center is scheduling appointments for students through the UHC Patient Portal (https://patientportal.uhs.uga.edu/login_dualauthentication.aspx). Learn more here – https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-vaccine.

The Georgia Department of Health, pharmacy chains and local providers also offer the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you. To find a COVID-19 vaccination location near you, please go to: https://georgia.gov/covid-vaccine.

In addition, the University System of Georgia has made COVID-19 vaccines available at 15 campuses statewide and you can locate one here: https://www.usg.edu/vaccination

What do I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms?
Students showing COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5p.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 for COVID-19?
If you test positive for COVID-19 at any time, you are **required to report it** through the DawgCheck Test Reporting Survey. We encourage you to stay at home if you become ill or until you have excluded COVID-19 as the cause of your symptoms. UGA adheres to current Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) quarantine and isolation guidance and requires that it be followed. Follow the instructions provided to you when you report your positive test result in DawgCheck.

Guidelines for COVID-19 Quarantine Period (As of 8/1/21; follow DawgCheck or see DPH website for most up-to-date recommendations)
Students who are fully vaccinated **do not** need to quarantine upon exposure unless they have symptoms of COVID-19 themselves. All others should follow the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recommendations:

Students who are not fully vaccinated and have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms **should self-quarantine for 10 days**. Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period and continue self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms for a total of 14 days. You should report the need to quarantine on DawgCheck (https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/), and communicate directly with your faculty to coordinate your coursework while in quarantine. If you need additional help, reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance.

Students, faculty and staff who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against the disease and show no symptoms.

Well-being, Mental Health, and Student Support
If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care & 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 to support your well-being and mental health: https://well-being.uga.edu/

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) is your go-to, on-campus resource for emotional, social and behavioral-health support: https://caps.uga.edu/, TAO Online Support (https://caps.uga.edu/tao/), 24/7 support at 706-542-2273. For crisis support: https://healthcenter.uga.edu/emergencies/.

The University Health Center offers FREE workshops, classes, mentoring and health coaching led by licensed clinicians or health educators: https://healthcenter.uga.edu/bewelluga/

Monitoring conditions:
Note that the guidance referenced in this syllabus is subject to change based on recommendations from the Georgia Department of Public Health, the University System of Georgia, or the Governor's Office or. For the latest on UGA policy, you can visit coronavirus.uga.edu.