

PADP 7110
Research Methods
Fall 2023

Department of Public Administration and Policy
School of Public and International Affairs
University of Georgia

Course Information

Professor: Lefteris Jason Anastasopoulos ("Dr. A")

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Office Location: 280E Baldwin Hall, 355 S. Jackson Street

Office Hours: TBA.

Course Meeting Time and Location

Location: Baldwin Hall, 101D

Time: Wednesdays, 4:10-6:55pm

Course Overview and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the application of social science research methods to problems in public administration and policy. Topics include research ethics, research design, measurement, and data collection techniques. The core objectives of this course are

- 1) Developing an appreciation of the importance of research methods in contemporary public inquiry.
- 2) Identifying which research designs and data collection strategies are the most appropriate for planning and conducting research studies in the areas of public administration and policy.
- 3) Gaining increased sophistication as a research consumer who understands the strengths and limitations of research studies.
- 4) Gaining basic knowledge of analytic techniques used in research studies.

Required Text and Readings

Textbook: O'Sullivan, E., Rassel, G., Berner, M. & Taliaferro (2017). *Research Methods for Public Administrators, 6th Edition*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis. <https://a.co/d/brXj8sO>

Pearl, J., & Mackenzie, D. (2018). *The book of why: the new science of cause and effect*. Basic books. Available on Amazon: <https://a.co/d/hq4b3Lv>

Additional required readings will be posted on eLC. **Students are responsible for checking eLC prior to each class period for assigned readings and being prepared to participate in class discussion.**

MPA Competencies

This course will aid students in the development of at least one MPA competency:

To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems and Make Decisions

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will utilize various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision-making and policy creation. Students will learn to effectively and concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings.

Furthermore, they will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the field of public administration and policy.

Course Assignments and Grading Policies

Assignment 1: Complete IRB training: Each student will complete IRB training through UGA's PEP system. Login to the PEP system (<http://pep.uga.edu>) using your UGA MyID and Password and complete the *Social & Behavioral Research* basic course. Students must upload their Completion Certificate in the IRB training assignment box to receive credit for this assignment. Note: This is an individual assignment. (5 points)

Assignment 2: Discussion Leader (weekly): Each group will be responsible for leading class discussion on one (or more) assigned course readings. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on the eLC. (10 points)

Assignment 3: Quizzes (weekly): Each student will be responsible for completing a weekly quiz covering the material for that week. All quizzes will be available on the eLC after each class and will be submitted through the eLC. (15 points - 1 to 2 points per quiz)

Assignment 4: Literature Review and Research Questions: Each group will conduct a literature review, identify and describe a conceptual framework, and develop research questions that will be used to guide their research proposal. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on eLC. (10 points)

Assignment 5: Research Design and Hypotheses: Each group will describe the research design that will be used to address their research questions, including the major strengths and weaknesses of the proposed research design. Students will also develop study hypotheses. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on eLC. (10 points)

Assignment 6: Data Collection, Instruments and Measurement: Each group will describe the data collection method(s) that will be used in the proposed study. If applicable, students will also develop a draft of all instruments that will be used in the proposed research study. Each group will also specify the measurement of all variables that will be included in the proposed research study. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on eLC. (10 points)

Assignment 7: Research Proposal Draft: Each group will submit a draft of their research proposal about 2 weeks before the proposal is due. The draft will be critiqued and returned before the final draft is due. (10 points)

Assignment 8: Research Proposal Presentation: Each group will give a 10-15-minute presentation of their research proposal. Each group will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to help guide the presentation. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on eLC. (5 points)

Assignment 9: Final Research Proposal: Each group will prepare a final research proposal based on prior assignments and feedback provided by the instructor and peers throughout the semester. Additional details of this assignment will be provided separately on eLC. (20 points)

Assignment Submissions and Due Dates

All assignments must be submitted via eLC. Formatting requirements for each assignment will be specified in the instructions provided for each assignment.

Assignment 1: IRB Training	08/30
Assignment 2: Discussion Leader	Weekly
Assignment 3: Quizzes	Weekly
Assignment 4: Literature Review and Research Questions	09/27
Assignment 5: Research Design and Hypotheses	10/18
Assignment 6: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement	11/01
Assignment 7: Research Proposal Draft	11/15
THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Assignment 8: Research Proposal Presentations	11/29
Assignment 9: Final Research Proposal Due	12/08

Grading


Grades are calculated as follows:

	Points
Assignment 1: IRB Training	5
Assignment 2: Discussion Leader	10
Assignment 3: Quizzes	15
Assignment 4: Literature Review and Research Questions	10
Assignment 5: Research Design and Hypotheses	10
Assignment 6: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement	10
Assignment 7: Research Proposal Draft	10
Assignment 8: Research Proposal Presentation	5
Assignment 9: Final Research Proposal Due	20
Class Participation	5

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1 08/16	Course Introduction	INTRODUCTION - Pearl and Mackenzie - "Mind over data" - Available online: http://bayes.cs.ucla.edu/WHY/why-intro.pdf
Week 2 08/23	Introduction to Research Methods • Quiz 1 due.	Ch. 1 O'Sullivan Beginning a Research Project CHAPTER 1 - Pearl and Mackenzie - "The Ladder of Causation" - Available online: http://bayes.cs.ucla.edu/WHY/why-ch1.pdf
Week 3 08/30	Research Ethics • Assignment 1 Due: IRB Training • Quiz 2 due. • Discussion leader presentation.	Ch. 8 O'Sullivan Protection of Human Subjects and Other Ethical Issues CHAPTER 2 - Pearl and Mackenzie - From Buccaneers to Guinea Pigs: The Genesis of Causal Inference - Available online: http://bayes.cs.ucla.edu/WHY/why-ch2.pdf

Week 4 09/06	Literature Reviews and Research Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 3 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Literature Reviews (UNC Writing Center) Lipowski, E.E., 2008. Developing great research questions. CHAPTER 3 - Pearl and Mackenzie - From Evidence to Causes: Reverend Bayes Meets Mr. Holmes.
Week 5 09/13	Introduction to Measurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 4 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 4 O'Sullivan Measuring Variables Milgram, 1963. Behavioral Study of Obedience. (available via eLC)
Week 6 09/20	Research Design: Experimental Designs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 5 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 3 O'Sullivan. Designs for Explanation (58-77) CHAPTER 4 - Pearl and Mackenzie - Confounding and Deconfounding: Or, Slaying the Lurking Variable Selten, F., Robeer, M., & Grimmelikhuijsen, S. (2023). 'Just like I thought': Street-level bureaucrats trust AI recommendations if they confirm their professional judgment. <i>Public Administration Review</i> , 83(2), 263-278. (available via eLC).
Week 7 09/27	Research Design: Quasi-Experimental Designs Assignment 5 Due: Literature Review and Research Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Assignment 4 Due: Literature Review and Research Questions</u> • Quiz 6 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 3 O'Sullivan. Designs for Explanation (77-87) CHAPTER 5 - Pearl and Mackenzie - The Smoke-Filled Debate - Clearing the Air Gerds, C., Fuentes, L., Grossman, D., White, K., Keefe-Oates, B., Baum, S. E., ... & Potter, J. E. (2022). Impact of clinic closures on women obtaining abortion services after implementation of a restrictive law in Texas. <i>American journal of public health</i> , 112(9), 1297-1304. (available via eLC).
Week 8 10/04	Research Design: Non-Experimental Designs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 7 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 2 O'Sullivan, Designs for Description Ch. 3 O'Sullivan, Designs for Explanation (pages 87-93) Putnam, R.D., 2007. E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century the 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture. <i>Scandinavian political studies</i> , 30(2), pp.137-174.

Week 9 10/11	Review Week: Come to class with questions! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 7 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	
Week 10 10/18	Data Collection: Sampling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Assignment 5 Due: Research Design and Hypotheses.</u> • Quiz 8 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 5 O'Sullivan, Sampling Squire, P. (1988). Why the 1936 Literary Digest poll failed. <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> , 52(1), 125-133.
Week 11 10/25	Data Collection: Survey Design and Survey Instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 9 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 6 O'Sullivan, Contacting and Talking to Subjects Ch 7 O'Sullivan Collecting Data with Questions and Questionnaires See Additional Readings on eLC.
Week 12 11/01	Survey Instruments & Measurement (cont'd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Assignment 6 Due: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement</u> • Quiz 10 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch 4 O'Sullivan Measuring Variables See Additional Readings on eLC.
Week 13 11/08	Review and Course Wrap Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 11 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	Ch. 15 O'Sullivan, Completing the Project and Communicating Findings
Week 14 11/15	TBA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Assignment 6 Due: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement</u> • Quiz 12 due. • Discussion leader presentation. 	
Week 15 11/22	No Class Thanksgiving Break 	

Week 16 11/29	Assignment 9: Research Proposal Presentations	
Exam Week 12/06	Assignment 10: Final Research Proposal Due	

Class Attendance and Class Participation Etiquette

Students are expected to attend each scheduled class meeting, to be on time, and to be prepared for each class session. In addition, students are expected to actively participate in class.

Note that students must inform the instructor in advance if they are unable to attend class.

All electronic devices and other extraneous materials must be put away before class. To make sure that all students feel comfortable, it is expected that all students will follow the following etiquette rules:

- be in your seat and ready to begin class promptly at the official start time
- refrain from talking while the instructor or other students are presenting material
- turn off or silence all electronic devices
- refrain from using cellphones or other electronic devices for any activity that is not directly related to class

****Unless specifically required for a class activity or by prior approval of the course instructor, students should not use computers, cell phones or other electronic devices during class.**

Students who violate these policies will be asked to leave class immediately. Repeat offenders may be dropped from the 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 agree in writing that they:

- Will 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.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.

- 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.

PREFERRED NAME AND PRONOUNS

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

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>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the course instructor during regular office hours or by appointment. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, you can also contact the Disability Resource Center, 114 Clark Howell Hall, 706-542-8719 (<http://drc.uga.edu>). If you have a letter from Disability Services indicating you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me as early as possible so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for class.