PADP 7110
Research Methods
Spring 2026

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:	Thursdays, 3:40-4:40 PM 280E Baldwin Hall

Course Meeting Time and Location

Location:	Baldwin Hall, 102
Time:	Wednesdays, 7:00-9:50pm

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.

- Paperback: https://a.co/d/brXj8sO
- FREE eBook from UGA library: https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ugalib/detail.action?docID=6416229

Rosenbaum, P.R., 2023. *Causal inference*. MIT Press. https://a.co/d/1vhAoig

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 though 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 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 8: 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	02/04
Assignment 2: Discussion Leader	Weekly
Assignment 3: Quizzes	Weekly
Assignment 4: Literature Review and Research Questions	02/18
Assignment 5: Research Design and Hypotheses	03/18
Assignment 6: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement	04/01
Assignment 7: Research Proposal Presentations	04/25
Assignment 8: Final Research Proposal Due	05/05

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 Presentation	5
Assignment 8: Final Research Proposal Due	30
Class Participation	5

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1 01/21	Course Introduction	**None**
Week 2 01/28	Introduction to Research Methods ● **Quiz 1 due.**	**Ch. 1 O'Sullivan** Beginning a Research Project
Week 3 02/04	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 **"How the Idea of A Normal Person Got Invented"** by Todd Rose. *The Atlantic. Feb. 18, 2016 (eLC)*
Week 4 02/11	Literature Reviews and Research Questions ● **Quiz 3 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Literature Reviews** (UNC Writing Center) **Lipowski, E.E., 2008**. Developing great research questions.

		Davis, Murray S., *That's Interesting! Towards a Phenomenology of Sociology and a Sociology of Phenomenology* , Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 1:4 (1971:Dec.) p.309
Week 5 02/18	Introduction to Measurement ● **Quiz 4 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 4 O'Sullivan** Measuring Variables **Milgram, 1963.** Behavioral Study of Obedience. **(available via eLC)** **CHAPTER 1 - Rosenbaum -** The Effects Caused By Treatments
Week 6 02/25	Research Design: Experimental Designs ● **Quiz 5 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 3 O'Sullivan.** Designs for Explanation (58-77) **CHAPTER 2 - Rosenbaum -** Randomized Experiments Selten, F., Robeer, M., & Grimmelikhuijsen, S. (2023). 'Just like I thought': Street-level bureaucrats trust AI recommendations if they confirm their professional judgment. Public Administration Review, 83(2), 263-278. **(available via eLC)**.
	03/04 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
Week 7 03/11	Research Design: Quasi-Experimental Designs **Assignment 5 Due: Literature Review and Research Questions** ● **Assignment 4 Due: Literature Review and Research Questions** ● **Quiz 6 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 3 O'Sullivan.** Designs for Explanation (77-87) **CHAPTER 3 - Rosenbaum -** Observational Studies: The Problem Anastasopoulos, L.J., 2019. Migration, immigration, and the political geography of American cities. *American Politics Research*, 47(2), pp.362-390. **(available via eLC)**.
Week 8 03/18	Research Design: Non-Experimental Designs ● **Quiz 7 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 2 O'Sullivan**, Designs for Description **Ch. 3 O'Sullivan**, Designs for Explanation (pages 87-93) **CHAPTER 6 - Rosenbaum -** Quasi-Experimental Devices in the Design of Observational Studies Kadar, N. (2019). Rediscovering Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis (1818– 1865). *American journal of obstetrics and gynecology*, 220(1), 26-39. **(available via eLC)**.

Week 9 03/25	Review Week: Come to class with questions! ● **Quiz 8 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**CHAPTER 8 - Rosenbaum -** Replication, Resolution and Evidence Factors Amrhein, V., Trafimow, D. and Greenland, S., 2019. Inferential statistics as descriptive statistics: There is no replication crisis if we don't expect replication. *The American Statistician*, *73*(sup1), pp.262-270. **(available via eLC)**.
Week 10 04/01	Data Collection: Sampling ● **Assignment 5 Due: Research Design and Hypotheses.** ● **Quiz 9 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 5 O'Sullivan,** Sampling Squire, P. (1988). Why the 1936 Literary Digest poll failed. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *52*(1), 125-133. **(available via eLC)**.
Week 11 04/08	Data Collection: Survey Design and Survey Instruments ● **Quiz 10 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	**Ch. 6 O'Sullivan,** Contacting and Talking to Subjects **Ch 7 O'Sullivan** Collecting Data with Questions and Questionnaires Davis, D. W., & Silver, B. D. (2003). Stereotype threat and race of interviewer effects in a survey on political knowledge. American Journal of Political Science, 47(1), 33-45. **(available via eLC)**.
Week 12 04/15	Survey Instruments & Measurement (cont'd) ● **Assignment 6 Due: Data Collection, Instruments & Measurement** ● **Quiz 11 due.** ● **Discussion leader presentation.**	Mosteller, F., 2009. Why Did Dewey Beat Truman in the Pre-election Polls of 1948?. In *The Pleasures of Statistics: the Autobiography of Frederick Mosteller* (pp. 5-17). New York, NY: Springer New York. **(available via eLC)**. Duckitt, J. (2015). Authoritarian personality. *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences*, *2*, 255-261. **(available via eLC)**.
Week 15 04/22	**Assignment 9: Research Proposal Presentations**	
Exam Week 05/05	**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

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Accessibility and Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

   Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting https://well-being.uga.edu.

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.

UGA Student Honor Code

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." *A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at* honesty.uga.edu *. Every course syllabus should include the instructor's expectations related to academic honesty.*

Policy on Generative AI

1) Purpose

This course values independent thinking, clear writing, and evidence-based argumentation. Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot) may be used in limited ways that support learning without replacing your own analysis or prose.

2) Core rule

You may use generative AI to support your work (research assistance, brainstorming, editing), but you may not use it to produce your original written content or intellectual contribution.

3) Definitions

- Generative AI (GenAI): Tools that produce text, images, code, or other content in response to prompts.
- Original writing: Your thesis, claims, reasoning, synthesis, interpretation, organization of arguments, and the sentences/paragraphs that communicate them.
- Editing: Improving clarity, grammar, structure, or style of text you already wrote.

4) Permitted uses (allowed)

You may use GenAI for:

1. Research support
   - Generating keyword lists and search strategies for library databases.
   - Suggesting relevant subtopics, counterarguments, or angles to investigate.
   - Summarizing *sources you provide* (e.g., an article you upload) to help comprehension.
   - Helping you draft an annotated bibliography *only if the summaries are your own rewrite and you verify every claim with the original source*.
2. Writing improvement (editing only)
   - Grammar, spelling, clarity, concision, transitions, tone adjustments.
   - Reformatting citations you already have (e.g., converting to Chicago/APA) if you verify accuracy.
   - Creating outlines based on your existing draft and notes.
3. Study support
   - Practice questions, flashcards, concept explanations, and mock debates for exam prep.

5) Prohibited uses (not allowed)

You may not use GenAI to:

1. Write original text for submission

- No AI-generated paragraphs/sentences for introductions, literature reviews, theory sections, analysis, results, discussion, or conclusions.
- No "write my paper/section" prompting, even if you later lightly edit it.
2. Generate your ideas or analysis
   - No AI-produced thesis statements, argumentation, interpretation of evidence, causal claims, or synthesis presented as your own.
   - No AI-generated "findings" or "implications."
3. Create or fabricate sources, quotations, data, or citations
   - AI hallucinations count as falsification. Any invented citation or misrepresented source is a serious violation.
4. Bypass assignment objectives
   - If an assignment is explicitly designed to assess your writing, reasoning, or coding skill, AI assistance beyond what is stated is not permitted.

6) Disclosure requirement (always required if you used GenAI)

If you use GenAI in any way beyond basic spellcheck/grammar tools, you must include an AI Use Statement at the end of your submission.

Use this template:

AI Use Statement:
Tool(s) used: [Name/version if known]
What I used it for: [e.g., brainstormed keywords; edited grammar and clarity]
What I did NOT use it for: [e.g., generating original prose, arguments, or analysis]
Verification: I verified all factual claims and citations against primary sources.

Examples:

- "Used ChatGPT to suggest search terms for JSTOR and to edit grammar on my own draft. No AI-generated text was submitted verbatim."
- "Used Claude to summarize two PDFs I provided, then I wrote my own summaries after checking against the PDFs."

Failure to disclose AI use is treated as an academic integrity issue.

7) Source and fact-checking standards

You are responsible for:

- Verifying every factual claim with reliable sources.
- Providing real, retrievable citations for all sources.
- Quoting only from sources you personally accessed.
- Never citing an AI tool as a substitute for a scholarly source.

8) Violations

Potential outcomes include:

- Required revision with penalty

- A zero on the assignment
- Referral under the university academic integrity process
  Severity depends on intent, extent, and whether fabrication occurred.