

KELLY JOYCE, PH.D.

OFFICE: 3101 Market Street, Room 220

EMAIL: kaj68@drexel.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 5:15-6:15 PM, Wednesdays, 2-3 PM and by appt

SCTS502: RESEARCH METHODS

TUESDAYS, 6:30-9:20 PM

DESCRIPTION

This seminar will provide an in-depth exploration of many of the research methods used by social scientists. Participants will learn how to define a meaningful research question and to identify which methods will best answer that question. They will also learn how to design interview guides and conduct interviews, surveys, focus groups, fieldwork, content analysis, experiments and archival research. Strategies for analyzing data will also be addressed. A thorough understanding of research design and methodologies is crucial to the social science toolkit.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kristin Esterberg. 2001. *Qualitative Methods in Social Research*. New York: McGraw Hill Companies.

Kristen Luker. 2008. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Association for Internet Researchers (AoIR) Ethics Guide,
<http://aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf>

Guillemin, M. 2004. Understanding illness: using drawings as a research method,
Qualitative Health Research, 14, 272-289.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a thorough understanding of the variety of research methodologies used by social scientists.
2. Improve one's understanding of research design.
3. Improve one's ability to conduct social scientific research.
4. Improve one's ability to design interview guides.
5. Improve one's ability to participate in a seminar discussion, which includes raising one's own ideas as well as responding to others in a thoughtful manner.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Participation (20%)

Attendance is mandatory. A large amount of information will be presented and/or discussed each week in class. It is very important to arrive prepared and on time. In this course, participation requires engaging all of the class materials in a thoughtful, careful manner. Participants should always bring hard copies of the assigned reading to class, and be prepared to discuss key points from the texts as well as their own evaluation of each. Any unexcused missed classes will significantly impact one's class participation grade.

2. *Literature Review Assignment (10%)*

Pick a topic that you are interested in exploring. It could relate to your master's research project or to a topic that you are interested in. Explain how you conducted the literature review in 2 paragraphs (e.g., which search engines and search terms that you used) and include a bibliography of 12 peer reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and books. This assignment is due in class on October 11th.

3. *Conduct Participant Observation and Write Up Fieldnotes (20%)*

Each student will choose a site to conduct participant observation and then conduct 2 hours of participant observation at that site. Students will write up their field notes in a 3-5 page document. This document is due in class on November 1. Late field notes will be marked down one grade for each late day.

4. *Design an In-depth Interview or Focus Group Guide and Conduct the Guide (20%)*

Each student will design an interview or focus group guide and then use it to conduct a one-on-one interview. Each student will transcribe the first half hour of the interview. The interview guide and transcription are due in the beginning of class on November 15th. Late assignments will be marked down one grade for each late day.

5. *A 8-10 page paper (30%)*

In this assignment, students will compare the strengths and limitations of two research methods addressed in the course. Each paper will be graded. A hardcopy of the paper is due by 5 PM on December 9th in Prof. Joyce's office, 3600 Market Street, Room 730.

GRADING

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation	20%
Literature Review	10%
Interview/Focus Group	20%
Fieldwork	20%
8-10 page paper	30%

I do not accept late assignments, except for excused, documented absences such as a student's personal medical emergency. Leaving town for work, having a busy week, etc. do not count. It will be your responsibility to ensure that I receive a hard copy of any excused absence documentation.

Course Schedule

- Sept 20 **Introduction to Research Methods**
- Sept 27 **Salsa Dancing? In the Social Sciences?**
Luker, pp.1-50.
Esterberg, Chapter 1 What is Social Research?
- Oct 4 **Formulating a Research Question**
Luker, pp.51-98.
Esterberg, Chapter 2 Strategies for Beginning Research.
- Oct 11 **Research Ethics and Human Subjects**
Esterberg, Chapter 3 Ethical Issues.
Association for Internet Researchers (AoIR) Ethics Guide
Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment (documentary)
Literature Review Assignment due in class.
- Oct 18 **Sampling, Operationalization and Generalization**
Luker, pp.99-154
Complete and turn in CITI Group 2 and Responsible Conduct of
Research Modules See: <http://drexel.edu/research/human-research/humanSubjects/humansubjectstraining/>
- Oct 25 **Field Methods and Content Analysis**
Luker, pp.155-189
Esterberg, Chapter 4 Observation: Participant and Otherwise
- Nov 1 **Interview Design**
Susan Sibley, "Designing Qualitative Research Projects"
Susan Sibley, "Problematic Interview Technique"
Esterberg, Chapter 5 Interviews.
Fieldwork assignment due in class.
- Nov 8 **Data Analysis**
Luker, pp.198-243
Esterberg, Chapter 8 Making Sense of Data.
Esterberg, Chapter 10 Writing.
- Nov 15 **Historical-Comparative Methods**
Luker, pp.190-8.
Esterberg, Chapter 6 Unobtrusive Measures: Analyzing Texts
and Material Artifacts.
Guillemin, M. 2004. Understanding illness.
Guest Lecture: Chris Jones, 6-7:30 PM
Interview/Focus Group assignment due in class.

Nov 22

Thanksgiving

Nov 29

Social Network Analysis

Note earlier start date: Workshop will run 4-9 PM

Dec 9

8-10 Page Paper Due by 5 PM

DREXEL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Drexel University Policy on Plagiarism

(See http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp#plagiarism)

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. By placing his/her name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Plagiarism covers unpublished as well as published sources.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Quoting another person's actual words, complete sentences or paragraphs, or an entire piece of written work without acknowledgment of the source
- Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in one's own words without acknowledgment of the source
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials that are not clearly common knowledge without acknowledgment of the source
- Copying another student's essay test answers
- Copying, or allowing another student to copy, a computer file that contains another student's assignment, and submitting it, in part or in its entirety, as one's own
- Working together on an assignment, sharing the computer files and programs involved, and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work

Students are urged to consult with individual faculty members, academic departments, or recognized handbooks in their field if in doubt regarding issues of plagiarism.

Drexel University Policy on Cheating

(See http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp#cheating)

Cheating is an act or an attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper
- Allowing another student to copy from a test paper
- Unauthorized use of course textbook or other materials, such as a notebook to complete a test or other assignment from the faculty member
- Collaborating on a test, quiz, or other project with any other person(s) without authorization
- Using or processing specifically prepared materials during a test such as notes, formula lists, notes written on the students clothing, etc. that are not authorized
- Taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you

Disability Statement: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations and services at Drexel University need to present a current accommodation verification letter (AVL) to faculty before accommodations can be made. This must be done prior to the midterm exam. AVL's are issued by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). For additional information, contact ODS at www.drexel.edu/edt/disability, 3201 Arch St., Suite 210, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 215.895.1401 (V) or 215