

ADGR 770301: Research Methods and Data Analysis
Fall 2015, 3 Credits

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Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation’s finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
This course introduces students to basic social science research methods. The primary objective is for students to learn to read and evaluate research as well as create contributions to their chosen profession or field of research. By the end of the course, students will be more knowledgeable of basic research design and statistical methods. Additionally, students will better understand how to use research findings to improve and enhance their professional roles.

Course Objectives
1. Students will gain a basic understanding of research as it relates to the fields of social science. Through class discussions, written assignments, and practical projects, students will learn skills required to 1) consume research, 2) apply research, and 3) create contributions to the chosen profession or field of research. To accomplish this objective, we will study various research methodologies in the social sciences.

2. By the end of the course, students will be more knowledgeable of basic research design and statistical methods. Additionally, students will better understand how to use research findings to improve and enhance their professional roles.

3. This is a writing and reading intensive course. An important competency for individuals obtaining a graduate degree is the ability to express ideas and knowledge in writing. This course will focus on mastery of the American Psychological Association’s Publication Manual (i.e., APA Style).

4. Students will demonstrate knowledge and skill across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in research as demonstrated by class participation, analysis of existing research, and considerate contributions of novel research.
5. Students will demonstrate ethical knowledge and skill pertaining to research as demonstrated by class participation, analysis of existing research, considerate contributions of novel research, and completion of CITI Training.

**Grading**

Final grades will be determined as follows:

**Annotations (Five in total, each worth 7% of final grade)**

In preparation for your research proposal that is due at the end of the semester, you will prepare an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography helps a researcher to become familiar with literature related to their topic of interest. Your annotated bibliography is to contain a total of six annotations. An annotation is a summary and evaluation of the content of a book, journal article, or other media material. For this assignment, you will read five peer reviewed journal articles and write a 150-175 word paragraph that includes a summary of the content and an evaluation of the article’s usefulness / relevance to your topic. Each annotation should end with at least one question you have after reading the article.

**Research Proposal (35% of final grade)**

Students will identify an area of research relevant to their professional interests and design a research proposal. You will develop a research question, conduct a literature review, and propose a research design to test your hypotheses. The project does not need to be feasible in terms of funding or time. However, please be considerate of ethical and cultural issues that often arise in research. This is an opportunity for you to become familiar with applying research findings to professional practice.

The body of your final proposal should be 10-12 pages. Adherence to APA Style and proper grammar and mechanics are integral to this assignment.

**Presentation (20% of final grade)**

A key aspect of the research process is presentation of findings. In order to improve oral presentation skills, each student will present the rationale, hypotheses, and proposed methods included in their research proposal. Presentations should last approximately 10 minutes and be accompanied by a handout that includes your abstract, full annotated bibliography, and complete references.

**CITI Training (10% of final grade)**

Students are required to become certified in human subjects research through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). This training will provide an overview of 1) History and Ethical Principals, 2) Basic Institutional Review Board (IRB) Regulations and Review Process, 3) HIPPA and Human Subjects, 4) Assessing Risk in Social and Behavioral Sciences, and 5) Informed Consent. Go to www.citiprogram.org and register as a new user at Boston College. Take the Social Science course. Note that you can take each quiz multiple times if you do not pass. Once you have passed the training, a certificate of completion will be generated.

**WCAS Grading System**

The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories:  A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.
Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

Text(s)/Readings (Required)

Important Policies
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html

Written Work
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, the student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate’s notes and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, points are given for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class.

Consistent with BC’s commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, every reasonable effort should be made to allow
members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class. The attendance policy is the following: 1 class missed is 0% off your final grade (this is your excused absence for whatever comes up this semester that is not covered by sporting event or religious holiday). 2 classes missed is 3% off your final grade. 3 classes missed is 6% off your final grade. A fourth class is 15% off your final grade. A fifth class is 30% points off. A sixth class is an automatic failure. These deductions in your grade do not include points that can also be lost for not turning in an assignment or participating in class the day you miss.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the Summer Session Office at 617-552-3800 for consultation.

**Class Preparation and Participation:**
Students are expected to have read the assigned materials due that day before class. You should take notes as you read, paying particular attention to ideas you find interesting, questions you are left pondering, and criticisms that arise in your minds. Class participation is defined as attentiveness, raising questions, and making insightful comments and connections.

No cell phone or electronic device usage is permitted in class. The exception is that you can use a laptop computer to take notes only. If you do use a laptop to take notes, internet usage for non-class items is prohibited. Please turn off the sound of your cell phones before class. Also, do not engage in side conversations during class. Any form of repeated distraction will be noted and will impact my qualitative assessment of your participation at the end of the semester.

I evaluate class participation based upon the following qualitative criteria:
Frequent Distraction and/or inattention: Can substantially hurt grade pending severity of problem
Completely silent but attentive and non-distractive = No grade change
Regular class participation that is engaged, asks good questions, makes highly relevant comments, and brings in helpful ideas learned from other classes/sources to supplement discussion = up to 4% point increase pending overall contribution.

**Deadlines**
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.
Course Schedule

*****Course Schedule will be revised as the semester progresses*****

09/02- Review of Syllabus & Introductions
Getting Started in Social Sciences Research
**Reading Due: Chapter 1**

09/09- Ethical Issues in Research
Multicultural Issues in Research
**Reading Due Chapter 8**

09/16- Developing a Research Question, The Research Hypothesis
Library Instruction
  Conducting a Literature Search, Library Resources, Online Resources
  (Google Scholar PSYCH Info, ERIC)

**CITI Training Due**

09/23- Introduction to APA Style
Reading a Journal Article
How to prepare an Annotated Bibliography

09/30- Writing an Introduction

10/07- NO CLASS

10/14- Research Design I: Controlling for Bias, Sampling Procedures
**Reading Due: Chapter 3**

10/21- Research Design II: Choosing a Research Design
**Reading Due: Chapter 5**

**Second Annotation Due**

10/28- Research Design III: Selecting Measures- Psychometric Theory
**Reading Due: Chapter 4 and 6**

**Third Annotation Due**

11/04- Analyzing Data-Basic Introduction to Descriptive Statistics
**Reading Due: Chapter 7**

**Fourth Annotation Due**

11/11- Analyzing Data-Basic Introduction to Inferential Statistics
**Fifth Annotation Due**

11/18- Introduction to Qualitative Research Designs
Movie: Kinsey

11/25- NO CLASS

12/02- Presenting Your Research Findings
**Reading Due: Chapter 9**

12/09- Philosophy of Science: Limitations & Alternatives to Truth

12/16 **FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

**Final Papers Due**