SC510 Approaches to Mixed Methods Research

Wednesdays 3-5:20
Room: Mc Guinn 415
Fall Semester 2009

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30 - 4:30

COURSE OVERVIEW

The goals of this course are multiple:
(1) To introduce you to different mixed methods research approaches.
(2) To analyze the underlying epistemological and paradigmatic implications of specific mixed method designs.
(3) To assist you with designing your own mixed methods research project and/or reviewing and critiquing a specific research area that uses a mixed methods approach.
(4) Peer reviewing of work. You will learn how to give constructive feedback to your peers in terms of constructively critiquing their work.

This is a graduate-level seminar and that means that on several given weeks, you will be asked to lead class discussion of the readings. You will be expected to present a critical overview of and provide commentary on the week's readings and, with the class, examine and critique the readings.

Students enrolling in this course should have taken at least ONE undergraduate and/or graduate research methods course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance is Mandatory.
2. Classroom Participation means engaging specifically with the week’s readings. Please bring articles/chapters to each class.
3. Reading Responses: You are expected to hand in a written response (2 page maximum, typed, single-spaced) to the weekly readings for SIX out of the fourteen weeks in which readings are

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Part of this syllabus was adapted from Kai A. Schafft’s, Spring 2007 Mixed Methods course syllabus from Penn State University.
assigned. Your paper is due at the beginning of the class of your chosen week. You should provide a critical analysis of the week’s readings. I don’t expect summaries, but your reflections on a particular issue/point that is presented in the readings.

4. Final Paper: A final paper will be due at the end of the class. The length should be 15-20 pages (double–spaced, not including tables, figures and references). The paper should be one of the following:
   a. A research proposal that employs a mixed methods design. This may be a project you would like to work on or a future topic of interest to you.
   b. A review of the (emerging) use of mixed methods in a particular discipline or one that is inter-disciplinary.
   c. An alternative to options (a) and (b) that is selected in consultation with me.

One-page paper proposals, along with a short literature review, will be due in class on OCTOBER 7th.

You will be asked to select a research buddy with whom you will discuss your proposal during the course of the semester. Try to do this the second week of class if possible. If you would like me to assign you a buddy, please let me know. I am also open to folks wanting to form larger research buddy groups as well, depending on your particular interests.

You are expected to make a brief presentation your paper at the end of the semester.

Final papers in their written form will be due and handed in at the beginning of class on Wednesday December 2nd. Papers should follow the APA template (I will give this handout in class).

GRADING

My assumption is that EVERYONE will succeed in this class. However, I will use the following breakdown to determine final grades.

Class Participation: 10% Class participation is based on your informed discussion of the readings. That means that you must bring the readings to class and be prepared to engaged in a analytical discussion regarding the week’s readings.

Weekly Response Papers (6 total): 45%

Final Presentation 5%

Final Paper: 40%

REQUIRED READINGS

There are three books ordered for this course.

- Other readings are available on Blackboard.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Trends in Mixed Methods Research: 
  http://www.npi.ucla.edu/qualquant/ This site provides an annotated bibliography of a variety of mixed methods research approaches as well as some applications of mixed methods designs.

- http://obssr.od.nih.gov/Documents/Publications/Qualitative.PDF (Provides tips on writing your proposal with a special segment on mixed methods research)

- http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/start.htm (guide for conducting mixed methods for evaluation research projects, with an emphasis on mixing methods in social science research)

- http://mmr.sagepub.com/ (The leading mixed methods journal: Journal of Mixed Methods Research. I am on the advisory board for this journal and I am hope you will submit your future articles to this journal!)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: I reserve the right to tweak the syllabus as per the interests of the class and the general direction things are going given all of your diverse interests.

PART I. Paradigm Wars and the Advent of Age of Mixed Methods Research

WEEK ONE: September 9th. Welcome and Course Introduction and Overview: What are Mixed Methods? Why is mixed methods important?

WEEK TWO: September 16th. Philosophical Issues in Mixing Methods: “The Paradigm Wars” / The End of the “Paradigm Wars?” What’s Next?


Creswell, J.W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [Chapter 1: Understanding mixed methods research (pp. 1-19); Chapter 2, Examining preliminary considerations (pp. 20-37)]


WEEK THREE: September 23rd The importance of centering the research question. Mixed Methods sampling. The Political & Ethical Implications of Mixed Method Inquiry


PART II. Mixed Methods Research Designs

WEEK FOUR: September 30th. Classifying Mixed Method Design Types and the continued prominence of Triangulation Designs


Examples of Triangulation Mixed Methods Designs:


WEEK FIVE: October 7th. General Qualitative Approaches to Mixed Methods Design and the Embedded Mixed Methods Design

General Qualitative Approaches and mixed Methods Designs: Hesse-Biber, Chapter 3. A Qualitative Approach to Mixed Methods Design, Analysis, Interpretation, Writing Up, and Validity

Example of Embedded Mixed Methods Design:


WEEK SIX: October 14th. The Explanatory and Exploratory Mixed Methods Designs


Examples of Explanatory Designs:


Example of an Exploratory Design

Karen Kroman Myers and John G. Oetzel “Exploring the Dimensions of Organizational Assimilation.” [Note: This section appears in Creswell & Plano Clark (2007), pp 239-256]

PART IV. Collecting, Analyzing, Interpreting and Writing up Mixed Methods Research.

WEEK SEVEN: October 21st. Data Collection, Sampling, and validity in Mixed Methods

Hesse-Biber, Chapter 3 (concentrate on data collection, sampling, literature and validity sections)


Edith de Leeuw and Joop Hox 2007. “Mixing Data Collection Methods: Lessons form social Survey Research in Max Bergmann Book


WEEK EIGHT: October 28th. Analysis and Interpretation of Mixed Methods Data


WEEK NINE: November 4th. Writing Up Mixed Methods Research

Hesse-Biber, Chapter 3 (concentrate on writing up section).


Peruse this Resource: Preparing a Dissertation Proposal: Mixed Methods Version (I will send you the pdf file for this week).

WEEK TEN: November 11th. Putting it all together: Designing your Research Proposal

Hesse-Biber, S. Chapter 7. Entire chapter.


http://obssr.od.nih.gov/Documents/Publications/Qualitative.PDF (Guide for proposal writing: READ: section on mixed methods projects)

PART IV. Specific Mixed Methods Approaches

WEEK ELEVEN: November 18th. Mixed Methods Transformative-Emancipatory Perspectives


**WEEK TWELVE**: November 25th. Thanksgiving Day Week. NO CLASS

**WEEK THIRTEEN**: December 2nd. Mixed Methods Interpretative Perspectives

Hesse-Biber, Chapter 4 Entire Chapter


**WEEK FOURTEEN**: December 9th. Mixed Methods Feminist Perspectives

Hesse-Biber, Chapter 5. Entire Chapter


WEEK FIFTEEN: Final Paper Presentations & Course Wrap-Up