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 examines the logic of research design and explores how data are approached, collected and analyzed in an interactive information age. Practical applications across disciplines introduce both the electronic and traditional tools and techniques necessary to interpret and utilize findings. Cases and presentations prepare students to analyze, evaluate and challenge specific applications and to suggest alternative interpretations. Online databases, the WWW and the internet expand options.

Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more - all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click here.

Course Objectives
1. The student will gain a broader personal understanding of and appreciation for research techniques and processes as demonstrated by the content, design and overall scope of the course.
2. The student will learn to apply course material through the lens of personal experience as demonstrated by the design and intent of course deliverables.
3. The student will demonstrate an awareness across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age on aspects of the research process as demonstrated by data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation.
4. The student will demonstrate ethical understanding pertaining to the research process as demonstrated by way of examination of the ethical implications involved at each step.
Course Deliverables

Class Assignments
Throughout the semester, there will be numerous opportunities for students to engage with the material via hands-on activities, short-answer questions, assessments, quizzes, and the like. Students will be responsible for completing and submitting these deliverables as they are assigned. The majority of these assignments will be done in class, but some may require work outside of class.

Attendance/Participation
Students are expected to attend each class meeting during the semester. The professor should be notified in advance of any planned absences. Missing class for any reason will have an adverse impact on your grade. Students should also be actively engaged in the class discussions. Participation will not be based on ‘air time,’ but rather on the quality of individual contributions (of various forms) to the class environment.

Individual Field Study
This assignment is designed to give you the opportunity to observe people in a public setting in order to gather observational data. You are free to choose what to observe, but some examples include sporting events, live music (band), restaurant staff, and corporate workplace settings.

You will be responsible for the following deliverable for this assignment:

1. One (1) Paper, no more than 4 pages (single-spaced). Papers should follow APA writing guidelines (helpful resource: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)). If necessary, any raw observational data should be included in an ‘Appendix’ section. Proper use of headings is essential.
2. One (1) Oral Presentation, no more than 2 minutes, including a very brief overview of your study, any potential bias(es), and what you learned via conducting the field study.

Individual Field Study:

- MUST take place in REAL TIME (live, in-person & must provide evidence).
- MUST be well-written, grammatically correct, proofread and professionally presented. Overall grade will weigh heavily upon this aspect.
- MUST overall demonstrate your understanding of the selected material.
- MUST include the following sections: Summary; Analysis; Recommended Actions (i.e., based on what you observed, what recommendations would you make?).

Research Design Memo
Through working on this assignment, students will develop first-hand knowledge of the research design process, with the overall goal to develop an emerging set of ideas about a research topic of interest. Students will define a topical area, develop possible research question(s), create theoretical scaffolding and framework based on guiding bodies of literature, provide a brief discussion on proposed research design & methods, and lastly provide a timeline for conducting the research.

Research Design Memos should be no more than 3 pages (of content) in length, and should follow APA writing guidelines (helpful resource: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)). If necessary, any figures, tables or other similar items should be included in an ‘Appendix’ section. Students should use the following sections as headings:

- Topic/Setting – discuss your target population.
- Possible Research Question(s) – only one research question is required, but it may prove useful to generate more than one question.
Goals of the Study – What do you want to accomplish with this research (aside from fulfilling the requirements of this assignment, of course)?

Bodies of literature to guide the study/Theoretical Framework (should provide at least 4 sources)

Methods/design overview – Qualitative/Quantitative components; Types of Data Collection

Timeline – should provide specific action items for conducting the research.

Final Team Exam
During the final class meeting, teams will be responsible for creating a full research plan for a randomly-assigned scenario. The exam will make use of all material covered in the course. Notes will be allowed.

In addition to the four hours of assignments each week, students will be responsible for responding to an in-depth reflection poll after selected class sessions.

Grading
Class Assignments 20%
Attendance/Participation 10%
Individual Field Study 20%
Research Design Memo 30%
Final Team Exam 20%

Grading Scale
A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00)
B- (2.67), passing but does not count toward degree
C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit
F (0.00)

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)
None. All course materials will be made available in class.

Text(s)/Readings (Recommended)
Although not required for this course, the following is a highly-recommended go-to guide for research techniques and processes, particularly in the area of qualitative research:


Important Policies
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html
Written Work
Woods College students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.

Attendance
Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Many instructors grade for participation; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

Accommodation and Accessibility
Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Woods College courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility.

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
Students in Woods College courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material 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. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information.

### Class Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change upon the discretion of the professor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK/DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC(S)</th>
<th>ITEMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 8/29</td>
<td>Introductions/Class Overview</td>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 9/5</td>
<td>Research Fundamentals</td>
<td>Terms, Citations &amp; Formatting Library and Research Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 9/12</td>
<td>Perception, Decision-Making &amp; Bias</td>
<td>Visual Analysis; Class Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 9/19</td>
<td>Research Methods &amp; Designs</td>
<td>Class Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 9/26</td>
<td>Primary &amp; Secondary Research</td>
<td>In-Class Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 10/3</td>
<td>Field Studies Overview / Developing Research Questions</td>
<td>Observation Activity Research Question Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 10/10</td>
<td>NO CLASS (MONDAY MAKE-UP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 10/17</td>
<td>Research Question(s) Discussion</td>
<td>RESEARCH QUESTION(s) DUE Action Learning Exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 10/24</td>
<td>Observational Field Study Presentations / Conducting Qualitative Interviews</td>
<td>OBSERVATIONAL FIELD STUDY DUE In-Class Assignment; Self-Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 10/31</td>
<td>From Data to Information</td>
<td>Content Analysis Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 11/7</td>
<td>From Information to Application</td>
<td>Group Field Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 11/14</td>
<td>Reporting and Discussion of Findings / Ethical Implications and Limitations</td>
<td>Class Activity Case Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 11/21</td>
<td>Assessment Center Simulation</td>
<td>RESEARCH DESIGN MEMO DUE Experiential Learning Class Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 11/28</td>
<td>Individual Learning Reflection</td>
<td>Reflective Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 12/5</td>
<td>FINAL TEAM EXAM</td>
<td>FINAL TEAM EXAM (In Class)</td>
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