

# **UCLA**

## **Publications**

### **Title**

Syllabus for PhD Seminar on Research Methods and Design, Winter 2014, UCLA Information Studies

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**IS 291b**  
**PhD SEMINAR ON RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN**

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**Course overview**

This is the core course in social science research methods and research design for PhD students in information studies. It follows 291A, Theoretical Traditions In Information Studies. Graduate students in Information Studies or related fields (education, communication, public policy, management, psychology, etc.) who have not taken 291A but who have extensive background in epistemology or research methods may enroll with instructor’s permission. Also prerequisite is at least one course in descriptive and inferential statistics.

The course is conducted as a workshop, drawing upon students’ research projects as cases. We will survey quantitative and qualitative research designs and address research ethics and the protection of human subjects. The first week of the course will provide a

brief review of epistemological issues, basic concepts of research design, and a refresher in statistical concepts. The course is intended to prepare students for further study on specific methods and to assist in preparation for the PhD qualifying exams.

Students will begin to build their personal libraries on research methods via the course readings. Materials include popular textbooks on social science research methods and the primary publication manual for social science research.

Students will develop a research project and will present an analysis of research reported in a journal article in class.

### ***Learning outcomes:***

1. Students will become conversant with a range of research methods used in social settings, including experimental, quasi-experimental, and qualitative methods.
2. Students will identify and describe the elements of reliable and valid research and means to reduce bias in research.
3. Students will present critiques of published research using appropriate concepts in research design.
4. Students will develop a research design on a topic of their choosing, using an appropriate method.

### ***Assignments and Grading***

- Reading assignments weekly, to be completed prior to class sessions
- Major project 50%
- Short assignment: selection, analysis, and presentation of a research article 25%
- Class participation and mastery of readings 25%
- Grading policy: Late papers will be accepted only with instructor permission *in advance*. They will be marked down 2 points per day late.

### ***Office Hours***

Office hour time is essential for developing your term papers and for selecting journal articles for the article critique assignment. Students are expected to meet individually with the instructor at least twice during the term.

Office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays, 5-6pm and by appointment. Please sign up in advance by Doodle. While you are welcome to stop by during office hours, most slots

fill up in advance. If you are not able to keep an appointment, please cancel it on the Doodle as early as possible so that someone else may have the slot.

### **Course Materials**

One of the objectives of this course is to assist students in building a personal library on research methods and design. The texts are classics that will assist you in your research career (and in writing your seminar paper). Other assigned readings will be available via CCLE, the course management system. Bring your texts and other readings to class with you (in print or digital form) on days they are assigned, as we will be referring to them.

As discussed in the CCLE forum prior to the start of term, the Babbie 13<sup>th</sup> ed, APA manual, and Shadish, Cook, and Campbell are available in LuValle bookstore. You are welcome to acquire these elsewhere, but be sure you get the correct editions. The Lofland book is available free online.

#### *Required:*

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Manual of the APA, 5th ed.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Babbie, E. (2012). *The Practice of Social Research, 13th ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. *NB: This edition is required because we will be referring to it together in class.*

Lofland, J.; & Lofland, L.H. (1995). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis. 3rd ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Available online.

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D. & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference.* Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0395615569

#### *Recommended:*

Silverman, D. (2007). *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.

Lofland, J., Snow, D., Anderson, L. & Lofland, L. H. (2006). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis* Belmont, CA, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. [I prefer the earlier edition but it is out of print. The later one dropped some important material and is expensive.]

## Schedule of Course Topics and Activities

This is the revised final set of course topics and meeting times, based on January 6 discussion in class. All readings are to be completed in advance of the class meeting. Students are graded on class participation and mastery of readings (see assignments and grading). Bring your assigned reading to class (books and articles; latter can be in print or on your laptop/pad). The assignments are explained in documents separate from this syllabus.

### **Course Activities**

Week 1 (January 6):	Topic 1: Course introduction and overview; Discuss scheduling of topics
Week 2 (January 13):	Topic 2: Ethics in research; human subjects protection Make journal article topic assignments
Week 3 (January 20):	Week 3 (January 20): holiday; Term project proposal due
Week 4 (January 27):	Topic 3: Reliability, validity, bias; Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
Week 5 (Feb 3):	No class meeting: Prof. Borgman in Australia
Week 6 (Feb 10):	Topic 4: Research designs; operationalization Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
Week 7 (Feb 17):	Holiday
Week 8 (Feb 24):	<b>Meet 9am-noon;</b> room TBD. Topic 5: Experimental and quasi-experimental research. Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
Week 9 (March 3):	Topic 6: Randomization and sampling; Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
Week 9 (March 7):	<b>Friday, 1:30-5pm,</b> room TBD. Topic 7: Survey research; Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles

- Week 10 (March 10): Topic 8: Qualitative field research; Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; others introduce next articles
- Exam week (March 17): Topic 9: Data analysis; Workshop 1 or 2 student term paper topics; 1 or 2 students present journal articles; Term papers due Monday, March 17, 5pm (on paper to instructor's mailbox and by PDF upload to CCLE site)

**Jan 6, Topic 1: Course introduction, overview and review**

The course will begin with a general overview of topics and a review of basic statistics.

Readings:

Babbie:

- Preface, xv-xxi
- Part 1, An introduction to inquiry
  - 1: Human inquiry and science
  - 2: Paradigms, theory, and social research
- Ch 16: Statistical analyses

**Jan 13, Topic 2: Ethics in research; human subjects protection**

Prior to class: take CITI course on Social and Behavioral Research: (allow at least 2 hours): <http://training.arc.ucla.edu/ucla/> (bring your certificate to class)

Babbie, Ch 3: The ethics and politics of social research

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chap. 9, Practical Problems 1: Ethics, participant recruitment, and random assignment

The Belmont Report, Office of the Secretary, Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research, The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, April 18, 1979.

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm>

Ethics Guide: Association of Internet Researchers. (2012). Retrieved from <http://aoir.org/documents/ethics-guide/>

Shea, C. (2000). Don't Talk to the Humans: The Crackdown on Social Science Research. *Lingua Franca*, 10(6). <http://www.linguafranca.com/print/0009/humans.html> <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~roos/Courses/grstat502/shea.pdf>. The original link is dead but the second one works (or use Google Scholar to look elsewhere).

UCLA OHRPP (Office of Human Subjects Research Protection Program) Guidance, Procedures, and Policies (Read intro, skim through rest)

<http://ohrpp.research.ucla.edu/pages/policies-guidance>

*Recommended:*

*Proposed Revisions to the Common Rule: Perspectives of Social and Behavioral Scientists: Workshop Summary.* (2013). Retrieved from

[http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=18383](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18383)

### **Jan 27, Topic 3: Reliability, Validity, and Bias**

Babbie, Part 2: The structuring of inquiry, overview

4: Research design (discussions of causality)

5: Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement

Shadish, Cook and Campbell,

Chap 1, Experiments and generalized causal inference

Chap 2, Statistical conclusion validity and internal validity

Chap 3, Construct validity and internal validity

Chap. 9, Practical Problems 1: Ethics, participant recruitment, and random assignment

Gould, Stephen Jay. 1996, 1981. *The Mismeasure of Man*. Norton. Introduction (pp. 51-61). <http://books.wwnorton.com/books/detail-inside.aspx?ID=13131&CTYPE=G>

Kuhn, Thomas. 1987. "The Function of Dogma in Science." In *Scientific Knowledge: Basic Issues in the Philosophy of Science*, ed. By J. Kourany.

<http://strangebeautiful.com/other-texts/kuhn-function-dogma.pdf>

*Recommended:*

Popper, Karl. 1989. "Conjectural Knowledge." In *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*. Norton. (pp. 1-31). (Download available on CCLE)

**Feb 10, Topic 4: Research design and operationalization of concepts**

Babbie (continuing discussion from topic 3)

Part 2, The structuring of inquiry, overview

4: Research design

5: Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement

Shadish, Cook and Campbell

Chap 2, Statistical conclusion validity and internal validity

Chap 3, Construct validity and internal validity

**Feb 24, 9-12, Topic 5: Experimental and quasi-experimental research**

Babbie

Part 3, Modes of observation, overview

8: Experiments

Shadish, Cook and Campbell,

Chap. 4, Quasi-experimental designs that either lack a control group or lack pretest observations on the outcome

Chap 5, Quasi-experimental designs that use both control groups and pretests

Chap 6, Quasi-experiments: interrupted time-series designs

Campbell, Donald T. and H. Laurence Ross. 1968. "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis." *Law & Society Review* 3: 33-54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3052794>

**Mar 3, Topic 6: Randomization and sampling**

Note: Be prepared to explain the differences among indexes, scales, and typologies, and to outline a sampling plan for your research project.

Babbie

Part 2, The structuring of inquiry

6: Indexes, scales, and typologies

7: The logic of sampling

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chap. 8, Randomized experiments: Rationale, designs, and conditions conducive to doing them

Rosenthal, Robert. 1963. "On the Social Psychology of the Psychological Experiment: The Experimenter's Hypothesis As Unintended Determinant of Experimental Results." *American Scientist* 51: 268-283. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27838693>



*Recommended:*

Bookstein, Abraham. 1983. "Sampling From Card Files." *Library Quarterly*: 53: 307-312. (Download available on CCLE)

Orne, Martin T. "On the Social Psychology of the Psychological Experiment: With Particular Reference to Demand Characteristics and Their Implications." *American Psychologist* 17 (1962): 776-783.

<http://www.psych.upenn.edu/history/orne/orne1962amerpsychol776783.html>

***Mar 7, Friday, Topic 7: Survey research***

Babbie

- Part 2, The structure of inquiry
  - 6: Indexes, scales, and typologies (continued)
- Part 3, Modes of observation, overview
  - 9: Survey research

***Mar 10, Topic 8: Qualitative field research***

Lofland & Lofland, Introduction, Part I, Part II (p1-178)

Geertz Clifford. 1973. "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture" (pp. 3-30) and "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" (pp. 412-453). *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books. [\[chap. 1\]](#) [\[chap. 15\]](#)

*Recommended*

Babbie

- Part 3, Modes of observation
  - 10: Qualitative field research

Heider, Karl G. "The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree." *American Anthropologist* 90, no. 1 (March, 1988): 73-82.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/678455>

***Mar 17, Topic 9: Data analysis***

Babbie

- Part 3, Modes of observation
  - 11: Unobtrusive research
  - 15: The elaboration model

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chap. 11, Generalized Causal Inference: A Grounded Theory

Lofland & Lofland, Part II (p179-230)

*Recommended:*

Babbie: Ch 13: Qualitative data analysis

Ericsson, K. Anders and Herbert Simon. 1980. "Verbal Reports as Data." Psychological Review 87: 215- 251.

<http://duncker.cogdevelopment.com/lib/simon,%20ericsson.pdf>