

Research Methodology and Project Desing

Course Syllabus 2023

Lecturers: Dr. Jerónimo Montero Bressán and MSc. Joaquín Carrascosa

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From: 15/08/2023

To: 28/11/2023

Credit Hours (total): 30
hours

Time: Tuesdays from 10 am to 12 am

1. GROUNDWORK

Scientific research is, for most novices and students, a huge challenge. In certain disciplinary fields, the practice of research and development of academic reports is not a commonly used skill, which deepens these challenges. As Wainerman and Sautu (2001) claim, the research practice requires an experiential approach. That is, learning to research requires the practice of research itself. Therefore, groupwork during seminars and workshops are always important and valuable for students who face the challenge of writing a post-graduate thesis. For this reason, the pedagogical approach of the seminar takes a practical approach on academic research.

The seminar provides a theoretical grounding in the fundamental elements of scientific research and research methodology. It will introduce students to the practicalities of research by giving them experience in: a) formulating a problem statement, b) developing research objectives, c) developing an appropriate and relevant theoretical framework, and d) making and explaining design choices around methodology, data collection and data analysis.

The seminar is aimed at students of Global Studies Programme, based at FLACSO Argentina, interested in developing specific strategies and skills for developing their final thesis project. It is not intended to prepare the Draft Mandatory Thesis but offer students the necessary methodological tools that will collaborate in developing the final thesis project, which will be held in conjunction with his/her/their thesis advisor.

Theoretical and methodological readings, and the analysis of relevant literature through practical exercises will introduce students to the central issues of research methodology in Social Sciences and linked disciplinary fields. As part of this global program, our proposal will emphasize a Latin American

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perspective and an approach to Argentine problems. The selection of literature, especially the empirical, presents a broad criterion of study areas and methodological approaches and will allow a closer approach to local realities. This will enable students to develop strategies for tackling their final research projects. Through critical analysis of other research in their area, students will learn about common research mistakes.

The seminar also seeks to provide students with the necessary tools to formulate an academic research project and design a future work plan. At the end of the seminar students are expected to be capable of recognizing and managing different tools and methodologies, enabling them to make their own personal and creative contribution to scientific knowledge.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 General objectives

- a) To train post-graduate candidates to formally pose a research problem based on both personal interests and academic/scientific relevance to the Social Sciences and related disciplines.
- b) To provide students with the necessary measures to solve their research problems and disseminate their findings according to the guidelines accepted by the scientific community.

2.2 Learning goals

- a) Students learn, reflect, and discuss the concept of scientific knowledge and its evolution, as well as its limitations and the advantages and disadvantages of its application.
- b) Students acquire and apply various strategies for choosing and formulating a research problem.
- c) Students can write, in a clear, accurate and relevant mode, different research objectives related to the selected topic.
- d) Students know how to properly apply methodological argumentation strategies and designs that allow them to realize their research goals, finding models and data, to complete the post-graduate research scope activities.

3. TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Classes will assume the dynamic of both seminar and workshop. The meetings will be divided into two sections: the first part will be devoted to in-depth theoretical treatment of the methodological aspects essential for conducting scientific research; the second will have a workshop format. The seminar will be organized in a single course -with the presence of both teachers at unison-. The workshop format will be divided into two separate groups according to thematic criteria.

The bibliography of the seminar is mainly referential. There are many sources available that students may use for the development of each individual research proposal.

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The workshop parts of the classes will be based on the discussion of research papers of methodological relevance, and on the individual or group work on the student's projects. These classes will seek to advance thinking, analysis and practice of techniques and strategies for the development of a research project.

4. PROGRAMMATIC UNITS

UNIT 1 – Scientific research. Concept of science. Evolution of scientific knowledge. General presentation of the stages of the investigation. Topic selection and definition of the problem situation. The literature reviews and background. Developing and determining the theoretical framework. Definition of design (exploratory-descriptive-explanatory-experimental). The survey data (choice of instrument collection- organization for the survey-data collection). Data processing. Data analysis. The interpretation of the data and the preparation of progress reports and final report.

UNIT 2 - Research contexts. Levels of research: descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, and experimental studies. Relationship between objectives and design. Formulating research objectives. Identification of research variables and their operationalization. Methodological perspectives: quantitative and qualitative types. The features and substantial differences between different methodological approaches. The formulation of hypotheses (types and functions).

UNIT 3 – Universe and sample. Sample requirements. Sample types. Most commonly used data collection instruments in Social Sciences disciplines. Data analysis techniques. Documentary analysis. The preparation of charts and graphs of self-realization. The use of primary and secondary sources of information.

UNIT 4 – Case studies. The extended case. Building theory from cases. Develop theories from data. The comparative method. Comparison of methodological strategies. Methodological triangulation and mixed-method strategies.

UNIT 5 - The drafting process. Formal aspects of the presentation. Academic writing style. References and citations. Common academic referencing styles. Time management strategies. Preparation of schedules of activities.

5. EVALUATION MODE, PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITION FOR APPROVAL

The evaluation of the course is based on the active participation in class, the submission of two formative tasks, the submission of one formal task, and the research project and its oral presentation.

- The active participation in class and the presentation of the formative tasks are worth **10 %** of the final grade.
- The **Formal Task** consists of a draft research proposal and is worth **30 %** of the final grade. Submission deadline: **31st October**.
- The research project is worth **50 %** of the final grade. Submission deadline: **5 December**. At 23:59. Late submissions will be penalized.

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presentation of the research project is worth **10 %** of the final grade.

It is necessary to pass the research project in order to finish the course successfully.

6. **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Agee, J. (2009) Developing qualitative research questions. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22:4, 431-447

Babbie, B. (2012) *The Practice of Social Research*. Canada: Wadsworth Publishing Company

Creswell, J. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications. pp 204-244 and 252-260

Neuman, L. W. (2002). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Flick, U. (2007) *Designing qualitative research*. London: SAGE. Chapter 9.

Grant, C., & Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, Selecting, and Integrating a Theoretical Framework in Dissertation Research. *Administrative Issues Journal*, 4(2), 12-26.

Maxwell, J. A. (2008). *Designing a qualitative study*. The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods

Maxwell, J. A. (2013) *Qualitative Research design*. London: Sage.

Taylor, S.; Bogdan, R.; De Vault, M. (2016) *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*. Wiley.

Walliman, N. (2011). *Research Methods. The basics*. London: Routledge

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7.

CLASSES SCHEDULE

Class	Themes	Bibliography	Workshop Activities
1 15/08	<p>Presentation of Seminar. Reading and explanation of the program: content, objectives, methodology of teaching and learning. Evaluations.</p> <p>Introduction to scientific research. Typologies. The stages of research.</p>	<p>Babbie, B. (2012) <i>The Practice of Social Research</i>. Canada: Wadsworth Publishing Company Chapter 4</p> <p>Neuman, L. W. (2002). <i>Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches</i>. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited Chapters 2</p>	Students' presentations research background and interests
2 22/08	<p>Research Project design. Maxwell's interactive model. Introduction to research questions, goals, conceptual framework, methods and validity.</p>	<p>Maxwell, J. A. (2013) <i>Qualitative Research design</i>. London: Sage. Chapter 1.</p> <p>Walliman, N. (2011). <i>Research Methods. The basics</i>. London: Routledge Chapter 3 - 'Structuring the research project'</p> <p>Maxwell, J. A. (2008). <i>Designing a qualitative study. The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods</i>. chapter 7</p>	Groups discussion on research papers Session 1
3 29/08	<p>The research questions, goals and objectives. Common problems and possible solutions</p>	<p>Maxwell, J. (2013) <i>Qualitative Research design</i>. Chapter 4.</p> <p>Agee, J. (2009) Developing qualitative research questions. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 22:4, 431-447</p>	Students' projects discussion. Definition of the research topic.
4 5/09	<p>The research problem. The formulation of the research problem. Concept, criteria, elements.</p>	<p>Walliman, N. (2011). <i>Research Methods. The basics</i>. London: Routledge pages 29-36.</p>	Groups discussion on research papers Session 2

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Class	Themes	Bibliography	Workshop Activities
	Justification. Criteria for evaluating the potential value of research. Literature review.	Neuman, L. (2002) <i>Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches</i> . Harlow: Pearson Education Limited Chapters 5 and 6 Maxwell, J. A. (2008). <i>Designing a qualitative study. The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods</i> chapter 7	Submission Formative Task 1
5 12/09	Scientific research Process. Characteristics, process and benefits of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Comparison of quantitative and qualitative approaches in the overall process of research. Mix methods.	Neuman, L. W. (2002). <i>Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches</i> . Harlow: Pearson Education Limited Chapter 6 Creswell, J. (2017). <i>Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches</i> . Sage publications. pp 204-244 and 252-260	Student's Projects discussion
6 19/09	Theoretical/conceptual framework. The two stages in building the framework: review of the previous literature and choosing a theory. Sources and databases, management and systematization of information.	Grant, C., &Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, Selecting, and Integrating a Theoretical Framework in Dissertation Research. <i>Administrative Issues Journal</i> , 4(2), 12-26. Maxwell, J. A. (2008). <i>Designing a qualitative study. The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods</i> . chapter 7	Groups discussion on researchpapers Session 3 Submissionformative task 2
7 26/09	Methodology. Stages for developing the methodology: research design, sampling in qualitative research, data collection, data analysis.	Maxwell, J. (2013) <i>Qualitative Research design</i> . Chapter 5. Maxwell, J. A. (2008). <i>Designing a qualitative</i>	Student's Projects discussion

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Class	Themes	Bibliography	Workshop Activities
		study. <i>The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods</i> chapter 7	
8 03/10	Practical workshop on research projects (with guest researchers)		
10/10	Spring BREAK		
9 17/10	Components of the research project. Format. Time dimension. Hypotheses. Purposes and research questions in qualitative research.	Maxwell, J. A. (2008). Designing a qualitative study. <i>The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods</i> chapter 7 Walliman, N. (2011). <i>Research Methods. The basics</i> . London: Routledge Chapter 3 - 'Structuring the research project'	Student's Projects discussion
10 24/10	Data collection instruments. Part I. Participant observation.	Flick, U. (2007) <i>Designing qualitative research</i> . London: SAGE. Chapter 9. Taylor, S.; Bogdan, R.; De Vault, M. (2016) <i>Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods</i> . Wiley. Chapter 3.	Student's Projects discussion
11 31/10	Data collection instruments. Part II. Interviewing.	Taylor, S.; Bogdan, R.; De Vault, M. (2016) <i>Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods</i> . Wiley. Chapter 4.	Interview guides Student's Projects discussion SUBMISSION FORMAL TASK
12 7/11	Data analysis, validity and ethics	Maxwell, J. (2013) <i>Qualitative Research design</i> . Chapter 6. Maxwell, J. A. (2008). Designing a qualitative	Student's Projects discussion

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Class	Themes	Bibliography	Workshop Activities
		study. The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods. Chapter 7	
13 14/11	Final proposal presentations		Teachers and Student's feedback
14 21/11	Final proposal presentations		Teachers and Student's feedback
15 28/11	Final proposal presentations		Teachers and Student's feedback
5/12	FINAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION		Online submission of the final research proposal by 23:59