LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This is an introductory doctoral seminar on social science research methods in management. We will examine basic issues involved in conducting empirical research for publication in scholarly management journals. These issues include the framing of research questions, theory development, the initial choices involved in research design, and basic concerns in empirical testing. We will consider these issues in the context of different modes of empirical research (including experimental, survey, qualitative, and archival). We will discuss readings that address the underlying fundamentals of these modes as well as studies that illustrate how management scholars have used them in their work, mostly separately but sometimes in combination.

At the end of this course, you should have a broad understanding of how social science research is conducted in management and some of its subfields. The course requirements are also intended to provide you with opportunities to develop your own research ideas and abilities, which requires that you engage productively with the current literature. While we will not address data analysis techniques in detail, what you learn in this course should allow you to place techniques you learn in other courses in context. The hope is that this seminar will be engaging, thought-provoking, and useful for you. Accordingly, your suggestions and feedback about class requirements, readings, and procedures are welcome at any time.

FORMAT

The course will follow a traditional seminar format. Students are expected to come to each session having studied the assigned materials, completed any other assignments for the week and prepared to engage in vigorous discussion. Students may be assigned from time to time to lead discussions on particular papers or topics. The course is co-taught by Chao Chen, Oliver Sheldon and Ted Baker (along with two guest professors in weeks 7 and 8). Most weeks, only one faculty member will be present in the seminar, but during weeks 1 and 14 each of us will participate.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are responsible for understanding the RU Academic Integrity Policy (http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf). We will strongly enforce this Policy and pursue all violations. By remaining in this course, you are agreeing to adhere to the
RU Honor Policy: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination or assignment.” Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. See business.rutgers.edu/ai for more details.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973)353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contactingodsnewark@rutgers.edu.

If you are a military veteran or are on active military duty, you can obtain support through the Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services: http://veterans.rutgers.edu/

If you are in need of mental health services, please use our readily available services: Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center: http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/

If you are in need of physical health services, please use our readily available services: [Rutgers Health Services – Newark: http://health.newark.rutgers.edu/]

If you are in need of legal services, please use our readily available services: http://rusls.rutgers.edu/

TEXTBOOKS AND READING MATERIALS

There is one required text:


Other readings (i.e., journal articles and book chapters) will be make available through Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Class Preparation:

For most class sessions, you will be provided with advance discussion questions and/or other preparatory work, in addition to assigned readings, to help you better understand and grapple with the
session’s material. These will be posted on Blackboard at the latest a week ahead of time. For each discussion question, you are expected to compose and turn in (at the beginning of the relevant class) a 1-2 paragraph response. These responses and other assigned preparatory work will be graded by the faculty member leading the session, and collectively, will count toward 15% of your overall grade.

In-Class Participation:

Your contributions in class itself will also be evaluated, and specifically, will count toward 10% of your overall grade. Contributions are made both through the questions you ask (as a discussion leader or class participant) and the answers you provide. As much as we faculty members love to hear the sound of our own voices, it’s important that you also actively participate in the conversation. Participation in intellectual conversation is an important part of your grade and more importantly, your education. Take the opportunity to further your understanding of the issues. The questions you ask will likely help the other students in class. In order to contribute, you need to show up regularly and on time to class and not leave early. Attendance problems will keep you from doing well. To prepare for our in-class discussions, you’ll also obviously need to read the assigned materials. Read to get the big picture. Ask questions to fill in the small pictures that make up the big one. Read with applications in mind.

Written Assignments:

Finally, there will be three formal written assignments over the course of the semester, each of which will count toward 25% of your overall grade (and which will collectively make up 75% of your overall grade). The first of these will be a theory-building assignment (Theory Assignment), due at the beginning of our week 5 session and graded by Prof Chen. The second will be a methods-specification assignment (Methods Assignment), due at the beginning of our week 8 session and graded by Prof Sheldon. Finally, the third will involve constructing an introduction to an academic paper (Writing Assignment), due at the beginning of our week 12 session. This will be graded by Prof Baker. Further details regarding these three assignments will be provided in class.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Week 1: 9/6**  
(Profs. Chen, Sheldon, & Baker) | Introduction to Social Science Research and Course Overview  
- What is science? What is research?  
- What’s interesting?  
- Where do research ideas come from?  
- What are we doing this semester? What are the goals for this course? |
| **Week 2: 9/13**  
(Prof. Chen) | Theory Development  
- What is theory? What is not theory?  
- What are components of a theory?  
- What are the attributes of a good theory? |
| **Week 3: 9/20**  
(Prof. Chen) | Research Design Choices  
- How do we test our theories?  
- How do we match our questions, theories and methods?  
- Units and levels of analysis |
| **Week 4: 9/27**  
(Prof. Chen) | Empirical Concerns in Quantitative and Qualitative Research  
- Causal Inference  
- Selection bias, measurement error, omitted variables, endogeneity  
- Construct validity, reliability, and measurement  
- Mediators and moderators |
| **Week 5: 10/4**  
(Prof. Chen) | Varieties of Research Design I: Surveys  
- Survey sampling, survey design, survey measures  
- Internet samples |
| **Week 6: 10/11**  
(Prof. Sheldon) | Varieties of Research Design II: Laboratory Experiments  
- Laboratory research  
- Judgement Tasks  
- Limitations of the lab |
| **Week 7: 10/18**  
(Profs. Taussig & Sheldon) | Varieties of Research Design III: Field & Quasi Experiments  
- Field-experiments and quasi-experimental research |
| **Week 8: 10/25**  
(Prof. Peer) | Varieties of Research Design IV: Archival Methods  
- Modes of archival research  
- Levels, materials, methods |
| **Week 9: 11/1**  
(Prof. Baker) | Varieties of Research Design V: Qualitative Research I  
- Three leading approaching to doing qualitative research |
| Week 10: 11/8 (Prof. Baker) | Varieties of Research Design VI: Qualitative Research II  
|                           | • The messy reality of having “no template.” |
| Week 11: 11/15 (Prof. Sheldon) | Ethics in Social Science Research  
|                               | • Maintaining high ethical standards  
|                               | • Avoiding questionable research practices |
| Week 12: 11/20 (Tuesday) (Prof. Baker) | Writing and Publishing in the Social Sciences I:  
|                                      | • Framing papers through the introduction.  
|                                      | • The writing process. |
| Week 13: 11/29 (Prof. Baker) | Writing and Publishing in the Social Sciences II:  
|                               | • Constructing your contribution in the discussion.  
|                               | • The review and publication process. |
| Week 14: 12/6 (Profs Chen, Sheldon, & Baker) | Wrap-Up Discussion and Concluding Thoughts |
Week 1
Introduction to Social Science Research and Course Overview

Topics Covered

- What is science? What is research?
- Where do research ideas come from?
- Roles of theory, data, practice
- Rigor and relevance
- What are we doing this semester? What are the goals for this course?

Required Reading

1. DSS, Chapters 1 and 2
Week 2
Theory Development

Topics Covered

- What is theory? What is not theory?
- What are components of a theory?
- What are the attributes of a good theory?
- What’s interesting?

Required Reading


Recommended Reading

Topics Covered

- How do we test our theories?
- How do we match our questions, theories and methods?
- Units and levels of analysis

Required Reading

1. **DSS, Chapter 4**

Recommended Reading

Week 4
Empirical Concerns in Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Topics Covered

- Causal Inference
- Selection bias, measurement error, omitted variables, endogeneity
- Construct validity, reliability, and measurement
- Mediators and moderators

Required Reading

1. DSS, Chapters 5 and 6

Recommended Reading

Week 5
Varieties of Research Design IV: Surveys

Topics Covered

- Survey sampling, survey design, survey measures
- Internet samples

Required Reading

1. DSS, Chapter 8

Recommended Reading


Due

Theory Assignment
Topics Covered

- Laboratory research
- Judgement tasks and vignette studies
- Limitations of the lab

Required Reading

1. **DSS, Chapter 7** (for students who will not rely heavily on experimental methods in their own research)

Recommended Reading

Week 7
Varieties of Research Design III: Field & Quasi Experiments

Topics Covered

- Field-experiments
- Quasi-experimental research

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Week 8
Varieties of Research Design V: Archival Methods

Topics

- Modes of archival research
- Levels, materials, methods

Required Reading

1. DSS, Chapter 10 (pp.288-327)

Recommended Reading


Due

Methods Assignment
Week 9  
Varieties of Research Design I: Qualitative Research I

Topics Covered

- Three leading approaches to doing qualitative research

Required Reading

5. DSS, Chapter 9 (Skim)
Week 10  
Varieties of Research Design I: Qualitative Research II

Topics Covered

• The messy reality of having “no template.”

Required Reading

1. DSS, Chapter 13 (Skim)
4. Read the methods section and examine the figure depicting the main theoretical model in each of the following three papers:
5. Choose and read a high quality journal article that uses qualitative methods and is important to your own research interests. Compare and contrast its methods section and model to those in the first three papers.
Week 11
Ethics in Social Science Research

Topics Covered

- Maintaining high ethical standards
- Avoiding questionable research practices

Required Reading

(Most of these are short.)

1. DSS, Chapter 3 (pp.39-59)

Recommended Reading

Week 12
Writing and Publishing in the Social Sciences I

Topics Covered

- Framing papers through the introduction.
- The writing process.

Required Reading

(Most of these are short.)

6. DSS Chapter 14 (skim 435-445)
7. Writing blog. [https://projectscrib.org/](https://projectscrib.org/) … read at least 5 “interviews” from here.
8. My template for 3-5 paragraph introduction

Due

Writing Assignment
Week 13  
Writing and Publishing in the Social Sciences II

Topics Covered

- Constructing your contribution in the discussion.
- The review and publication process.

Required Reading


Class Preparation

Analyze your favorite paper on a topic close to your own interests in terms of:

- a. How the authors discuss the implications.
- b. How they have attended to their readers as sensemakers
- c. How their discussion section bookends in combination with the introduction.
- d. What you think they might have done better in crafting the discussion.
Week 14
Wrap-Up Discussion and Concluding Thoughts