Faculty:
Nancy Davis, Ph.D.
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Campus/Time:
Thursday, 5:45 – 9:00 PM, 14 E. Jackson, Room 604

Course Details:
6 credit hours; L8 and L9 combined

Prerequisite:
LL 260 (Essay Writing or Writing to Competence), LL 270 (Critical Thinking or DCM 310 or LL105 or PLA L5, LL 205 (Recommended)

Course Description:
The primary focus of this course is to develop one’s research and writing skills, an appreciation for research and an understanding of the primary concepts and theories that govern research endeavors. Students will be asked to produce a research proposal that is grounded in a stimulating question, supported by a thorough definition of terms, a brief review essay, and an approach to answering one’s question. Students can address any number of topics that can be developed using various research instruments. The course material introduces you to research methods and their application across liberal and professional studies as preparation for lifelong inquiry. A basic research proposal in your area of interest is the primary document produced and assessed in Research Methods. Readings and class discussion will help to guide students through this process.

Competencies:
L-8: Can pose questions and use methods of formal inquiry to answer questions and solve problems.
  - Identifies focused and appropriate questions within a specified context.
  - Reviews existing knowledge about the question and determines directions for additional inquiry.
  - Designs methods of gathering and interpreting information to advance knowledge relevant to the question.
  - Constructs a proposed research model.

L-9: (Written by the student with assistance from the instructor.)

Course Resources:
To buy your books, go to http:// depaul-loop.bncollege.com.
Required Textbook:

Outcomes: At the completion of this course students should be able to:

- Develop an understanding of research and basic qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
- Discuss the concept and language of research (e.g., hypotheses, variables, types of data, and analysis).
- Produce a short analytic review of relevant literature that identifies key issues, theories and gaps in understanding in your area of inquiry.
- Examine and discuss the personal meaningfulness of one’s research question.
- Articulate a systematic design for a research project.
- Justify the selection of a research methodology that you select to explore your research question.
- Determine the various threats to research study findings and, where appropriate, to confirm cause-effect relationships in your own proposed research.
- Understand the value and justification for the ethical treatment of human subjects.
- Communicate proposed research to an audience following a presentation rubric.
- Synthesize the components of research methods into a research proposal.

Course Requirements:

1. Active participation in class discussions that reflects an understanding of the week’s readings and their application to the course deliverables.

2. Completion of all assigned readings, quizzes and related questions.

3. Completion of all components of the research proposal (including the topic, question & hypothesis, definition of terms, annotated bibliography, literature review, problem statement, and research proposal).

Grading and Evaluation:

Research Methods is a graded course. You have the option of receiving a pass/fail grade. Students are required to submit their request via email by **Week 4 (January 30th)**.

Incomplete Policy: Receiving an IN is at the discretion of the instructor. If you cannot complete the course in the 11-week time frame, you may request an incomplete by **Week 8 (February 27th)**. Approval is based on submission of the following materials and the expectations listed below. Materials that should have been submitted include the following: research question, definition of terms, problem statement, and literature review essay draft. Students who fail to submit requisite assignments will receive a failing grade.
Additional Expectations: In order to qualify, the student should have…

1. Maintained a satisfactory record in the work already completed in the course;
2. Encountered unusual or unforeseeable circumstances, which prevent him or her from completing the course requirements before the end of the term; and
3. Applied to the instructor for permission to receive the IN.

The incomplete will expire at the end of two regular quarters, per university policy. If the work is not complete, the student will receive a failing grade. Students can consult the following web resources for further information: [https://scps.depaul.edu/student-resources/graduate-resources/Pages/grades-and-grading.aspx](https://scps.depaul.edu/student-resources/graduate-resources/Pages/grades-and-grading.aspx) and [https://catalog.depaul.edu/student-handbooks/undergraduate/undergraduate-academic-policies/grades-incomplete-and-research-expiration-policy/](https://catalog.depaul.edu/student-handbooks/undergraduate/undergraduate-academic-policies/grades-incomplete-and-research-expiration-policy/).

**DePaul University Rubric for Letter Grades**

< 60% Unacceptable

A The instructor judged the student to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course in an EXCELLENT manner.

B The instructor judged the student to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course in a VERY GOOD manner.

C The instructor judged the student to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course in a SATISFACTORY manner.

D The instructor judged the student to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course in a POOR manner.

F The instructor judged the student NOT to have accomplished the stated objectives of the course.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

| Research Question/Hypothesis/Problem Statement | 10% |
| Literature Review | 25% |
| Definition of Terms | 10% |
| Research Proposal (Design, Internal & External Validity) | 25% |
| Annotated Bibliography | 10% |
| Class Participation/Homework/Quizzes | 20% |
Workload and Attendance:

Research Methods requires extensive work. One should anticipate spending roughly 9 to 12 hours per week to complete course requirements. In this course, the student is expected to assume charge of his or her learning, which includes the investigative process. Attendance in class is highly recommended. (Students can access the d2l site for course notes and/or obtain them from classmates.) The reading materials, along with class lectures, are essential to understanding how to complete each component of the course. Failure to read and communicate ideas and concepts expressed in the course text (and additional readings) will certainly prevent one from understanding how to complete each course component.

Faculty Profile:

Nancy Davis is an Associate Professor at DePaul University. She received her undergraduate degree in History at Bryn Mawr College and holds a M.A and Ph.D. in History from the University of Michigan. Her research studies include African American history and contemporary life, urban studies, and the history of religion and race in the United States.

Academic Integrity:

Please review DePaul's Academic Integrity policy, available online at https://offices.depaul.edu/oaa/faculty-resources/teaching/academic-integrity/for-students/Pages/default.aspx. The site discusses in full the range of actions that constitute violations of the university’s academic integrity policy. Please note that plagiarism represents a serious abuse and is defined as follows: 1) the direct copying of other’s words whether they be words culled from books, articles, magazines, computer files, websites, video programs or other sources without attribution 2) copying the words of others with only slight modifications with or without acknowledging the source, 3) submission as one's own an essay, research paper, report, exam or any other assignment that has been prepared by someone else, 4) paraphrasing one’s work without proper acknowledgement. Academic integrity violations will be submitted to the appropriate university office.

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<th>Week Due</th>
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<td>Wk. 2 - Jan. 16th</td>
<td>Research Topic</td>
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<td>Wk. 4 - Jan. 30th</td>
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Each component will be thoroughly discussed in class. Brief descriptions can be found below.

**Research Topic** – Investigate a topic that interest you! But remember, your research proposal is framed around a question and therefore your topic/area of interest must be connected to a ‘researchable’ question. The research question can be related to your Advanced Project. However, these two questions (and thus the final products) are never identical. It is due on January 16th.

**Question & Hypothesis** – The research question is usually a ‘relational’ one (this will be discussed in class). The question and your hypothesis are described in chapters 1 & 2 of the text. The RM question is distinct from (but can be related to) the question that drives the advanced project (the latter is usually a practical one and your job is to answer it). So, the two (the RM and AP research questions) can be related but are not identical. The hypothesis is essentially what you posit to be the relationship between the variables that form the essential part of the research question. Please submit your research question and hypothesis on January 23rd.

**Problem Statement** – The problem statement is a clear articulation of the dilemma that drives the question. It should be one paragraph in length and composed with sufficient clarity. (For more information, check out “How to write the problem statement for your research proposal, manuscript or thesis” at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y022M8.9Vdq](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y022M8.9Vdq).) The problem statement is due on February 6th.

**Definition of Terms** - There are terms that are embedded in your research question. Your job is to carefully define and delimit them. In some cases, the terms are words that must be defined (i.e. via the use of a dictionary). In all cases, the term must be fully explained. You must also provide the reader a sense of how one defines this term in the context of this study (operational definitions…think parameters… described in the text). These are due on February 6th.

**Review of Literature Essay (5 pages)** – Drawn from a range of sources, the review of literature is a central component of your research seminar portfolio and summarizes and analyzes how scholars
address the issues, positions, and evidence that impact your research question. In other words, you are explaining here what scholars have to say about your research question and the relationship of the variables that make up your question. Thus the sources must directly relate to your research question/hypothesis. The literature review, a minimum of 5 pages, can be organized into sub-topics (referred to as sub-problems) or by individual sources and is discussed in chapter 3 of the text. A draft of your literature review is due week 7 (February 20th). The final copy is submitted as part of your research proposal on March 19th.

Annotated Bibliography (6 sources) – Students are required to produce a summary/evaluation of at least 6 sources that are directly related to the student’s question. The sources should be listed in alphabetical order and followed by a paragraph that summarizes the major issues/questions addressed by the author as well as their relevance to your research topic. These sources should reflect broad inquiry methods and include books or articles. The annotated bibliography should be submitted by week 6 (the week of February 10th - 14th); they are to be brought to your individual meeting.

Research Proposal – All of the work completed in Research Methods, that which is described above, prepares one to design a research study that potentially will answer your question. So after completing a short literature review essay, wherein you have demonstrated familiarity with a body of literature that addresses your particular question, students are asked to complete the following assignments, which are key ingredients of a research proposal. In the course of doing so, you will demonstrate that you not only understand but can use many of the research principles and concepts reviewed in the course.

1. Research Design or Method – Please select either a qualitative (chap. 3), experimental (chap. 9) or quasi-experimental (chap. 9) research design and describe how you will use this methodology to answer your research question. That design should carefully identify your methodology (content analysis, ethnography, case study, longitudinal study, among others), describe the participants, means of gathering data.

2. External Validity (1 page) - Your response should begin by explaining in your own words external validity and its importance in research studies. Additionally, you should consider referencing the 'sampling model' or the 'proximal similarity model' and when these approaches are appropriate. See chapter 4 pp. 83-85 for a more detailed discussion.

3. Internal Validity (1 page) – Once you have landed on a research methodology, please discuss in no less than one page the following: a definition of internal validity (in your won words), potential threats to the latter (single-group or multi-group threats or social interaction threats) and how you will attempt to strengthen the internal validity of your study. Each of these can be addressed in a separate paragraph. Internal validity is addressed in chapter 8 of the Trochim et al. text (sec. 8.2b).

4. Ethical Considerations (1 page) – All researchers must indicate how they will attend to ethical issues that impact nearly every research endeavor. In a page, please explain in very basic terms how you will protect the human rights of your research participants. These issues are noted in chapter 2 of the Trochim text.
Reading Assignments by Week

**Week 1 – Thursday, January 9th**
Introductions and Discussion of Course Requirements
Videos: ‘What is Research I & 2’ & the ‘Nature of Research’
**Homework for Week 2:** Chapter 1, Trochim, ‘Foundations of Research Methods’; select a research topic.

**Session 2 – Thursday, January 16th**
**Library Workshop (begins at 5:45pm)**
What is Research? Concepts and Language of Research: Research question, hypotheses, variables, types of data and analysis/research methods and their application to address questions and problems/basic discovery research to research that has a direct impact on society/research topics, validity and the nature of research including three key forms: exploratory research, descriptive research and explanatory research. The Scientific Method:
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKGtkzgKfkc&t=35s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKGtkzgKfkc&t=35s)
**Homework for Week 3:** Read Chapter 2, Trochim (Ethics); identify your research question and hypothesis. Written submission: In about 50 words and using one of the ethics ‘mini cases’ at the link below, describe the case’s ethical dilemma and how you would approach it.

**Week 3 – Thursday, January 23rd**
Research Questions and Hypotheses
Ethical Issues in Research
Videos: ‘A Public Documentary on the History of Research Ethics’ (20 Minutes), Belmont Report (3 min), Medical Research Example (6 Minutes)
**Homework for Week 4:** Read chapter 3 Trochim, ‘Qualitative Approaches to Research,’ pp. 55-74; Written submission: In about 75-100 words, describe a qualitative research approach that may be useful to apply to your research area and question. Be sure to consider both the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research in your discussion.

**Week 4 – Thursday, January 30th**
Qualitative Research Methodologies
Problem Statements
Defining and Delimiting Terms
Videos: ‘Overview of Qualitative Research Methods’ (12 Minutes); Video ‘Types of Qualitative Data Collection, Part I and Part II’, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKl2pdRmwc4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKl2pdRmwc4)
The Structure of the Literature Review Essay
**Homework for Week 5:** Read chap. 4 Trochim, pp, 79-92 (4.1 – 4.5), 103-4 (4.8 - 4.9); Submit Problem Statement and Definition of Terms.

**Week 5 – Thursday, February 6th**
What’s an Annotated Bibliography?
Research & Statistics
Writing a Literature Review
Video: “Introduction to Statistics”
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=289&v=MXaJ7sa7q-8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=289&v=MXaJ7sa7q-8)
**Homework for Week 6:** Read Trochim, chap. 7, 171-181, 185-187 (if interviewing, pp. 193-
In about 100 words, discuss one issue regarding surveys (i.e. population, sampling, questions, content, bias or administrative considerations (p.176-181)). Please try to relate the 'issue' to your research. (Annotations and survey discussion are brought to the individual meetings.)

**Week 6 – February 10th – 14th (Individual Meetings – No Class)**

**Homework for Week 7:** Read portions of chapters 9 & 10 in Trochim, (pps. 229-237, 252, 257-263); Review video on the literature review ("The Literature Review": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKL2pdRmwc4); Submit a draft of your literature review.

**Week 7 – Thursday, February 20th**

Surveys, Interviews and Questionnaires

Literature Review Essay Progress

Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research Designs

The Essential Elements of the Research Proposal

**Week 8 – Thursday, February 27th**

Literature Review Feedback

The Research Plan

Selecting a Research Methodology

**Homework for Week 9:** Read Trochim, chap. 8, pp. 205-221. Write a 1-page essay on internal validity and strategies for addressing it; Submit a draft of your research proposal.

**Week 9 – Thursday, March 5th**


Internal Validity & Research Threats

Overview of Quantitative Research Methods, Center for Research Quality (22 min.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEVRUOdKtQ

**Homework for Week 10:** Compose L-12 Competence Statement

**Week 10 – Thursday, March 12th**

Use of Interviews and Questionnaires

Refining Our Understanding of Research

Future Questions

**Final Work:** Complete Research Proposal

**Week 11 – Thursday, March 19th, Final Work Submitted**

Submit Research Proposal Portfolio!