

SPL 502

Research Methods for Social Policy Researchers



Instructor: Volkan Yılmaz
Spring 2018, Tuesdays btw. 14:00-17:00
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Office hours: By appointment.

Course overview

This is a graduate level qualitative research methods course for social policy researchers. The course takes a hands-on approach to qualitative methods and approaches to social research. Topics covered include research design, sampling, questionnaire construction, interviewing, official statistics, use of large data sets, document and content analysis and ethical issues.

Organization of classes

I will lecture around 40-50 minutes in the beginning of the class, which will be followed by in-class practical exercises.

Recommended reading

Saul Becker and Alan Bryman (2004). Understanding research for social policy and practice. Policy Press. & Erdoğan, N. (2002) Yoksulluk Halleri. İletişim Yayınları.

You are expected to read research articles that will be sent you by the instructor. These articles will be used in in-class exercises. You are also required to make a reading list on your thesis topic and read them throughout the academic term.

Requirements

Analysis papers will constitute 40 per cent (5 each) of your final grade. All students are expected to write analysis papers on the topics stated in the course plan and submit them via email (vyilmaz@boun.edu.tr) on time.

Preparing your thesis-reading list will constitute 10 per cent of your final grade.

Presentation will constitute 10 per cent of your final grade.

Thesis proposal will constitute 40 per cent of your final grade. All students are expected to write a thesis proposal. All students should discuss their thesis topics with me beforehand. Proposals are due May 13.

Grading scale: 90-100: AA; 80-89 BA; 75-79 BB; 70-74 CB; 65-69 CC; 60-64 DC; 55-59 DD; 50-54 F; 49-0

Date	Theme
Feb-06	The basics of social research
Due Feb-13	<i>Analyze the research design of the selected study</i>
Feb-13	Sampling and qualitative interview techniques
Due Feb-25	<i>Explain your sampling decisions, conduct an interview and transcribe it</i>
Feb-27	Coding and thematic content analysis
Mar-06	NVIVO training
Mar-13	Bringing theory back in
Due Mar-20	<i>Analyze competing theoretical and methodological perspectives</i>
Mar-20	Comparative research design and case studies
Due Mar-27	<i>Compare selected country cases</i>
Mar-27	Using policy documents and administrative data
Due Apr-03	<i>Analyze policy documents and administrative data</i>
Apr-03	Using law & legal texts
Due Apr-10	<i>Conduct legislative analysis</i>
Apr-10	Ethics & ethical board applications
Due Apr-24	<i>Complete the ethics review application</i>
Apr-24	Thesis structure and making an original contribution to the literature
May-08	Thesis proposal presentations