

GEOG 701.54 - Geographic Research Design - Spring 2017
Thursday, 1735 to 2025 - HN 1004 (conference room)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30, Thursday 3:30-4:30 or by appointment

Course Description

The course is designed to be a graduate-level exposure to the process of doing geographic research. Basic epistemological and ontological approaches will be reviewed through the use of readings on research methodologies and selected readings from the geography literature. Class discussion will focus on the identification of research problems, construction of hypotheses, and development of research design. The course is designed to have the students learn from the instructor, other faculty, the reading material, and from each other. The course is divided into three major sections.

- Section 1: Introduction to the process of scientific research - questions of epistemology and ontology, research methods in Geography, conceptualization of the research problem.
- Section 2: Research operationalization - introduction to basic methods, choosing a research method, positivist and non-positivist approaches, qualitative and quantitative approaches
- Section 3: Critique and evaluation of research methods - review of current research within Geography, and student presentation of research proposals.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes

The course is designed to facilitate a set of learning outcomes for students. The key outcomes include the following:

1. Translate concepts into operationally measured variables and indicators
2. Understand the connections between different epistemologies and ontologies and different research design protocols
3. Define criteria to evaluate research proposal
4. Practice a variety of data gathering techniques
5. Gain facility with different types of data – qualitative and quantitative
6. Develop and detail a research proposal

Grading

Your grade will be based on following set of assignments and responsibilities.

	<u>% of Grade</u>	
Assignment 1	10	- census and archival data search
Assignment 2	10	- questionnaire and survey
Assignment 3	15	- index and scales; field work
Research Proposal	30	- final draft of your proposal
Proposal Presentation	5	- public presentation of your proposal
Participation	30	- involvement in class discussion; submission of 1-2 page comment papers

There will be no exams in the class. Three assignments will be given out during the course of the semester. Each assignment will focus on a different topic and have associated supplemental readings. The research proposal will include the submission of a single page introductory outline sheet, an annotated bibliography, a rough draft, and a final draft. Research topics and paper drafts will be critically reviewed during class discussions. You also will be expected to publicly present your research proposal before your classmates. The final draft of the proposal is expected to be a polished piece of writing - complete and coherent from beginning to end. You will work on this project throughout the semester. Half-digested treatments will receive poor grades. It is expected that each of you will work closely with a faculty member(s) in the department who define themselves as an expert on the topic of your proposal.

Class attendance and class participation are a critical part of the semester grade. This means that you must be prepared to discuss the readings assigned for the day. Other specifics as to the nature of the assignments, term paper and the participation grade will be discussed in class. Late assignments will receive a reduction in grade. No grades of "incomplete" will be given except in cases of extreme circumstances.

Academic Honesty

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures. Plagiarism, dishonest, or cheating in any portion of the work required for this course will be punished to the full extent allowed according to Hunter College regulations.

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230. If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this course, please let me know.

Required Text

Daniel Montello and Paul Sutton. 2013. *An Introduction to Scientific Research Methods in Geography and Environmental Studies*. 2nd Ed. ISBN: 978-1-446200759. Paperback.

Optional Text

Basil Gomez and John Paul Jones. 2010. *Research Methods in Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN: 978-1-4051-0711-2.

The books are available at the Hunter College bookstore, or can be purchased online.

Other readings are available via email from the instructor or via the Hunter College blackboard. The readings are to be read for the week they are listed. Additional readings might be assigned on a weekly

basis.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1	Feb. 2	Introduction to Inquiry and Writing Research
2	Feb. 9	Ethics and Politics of Research
3	Feb. 16	Theory and Research
4	Feb. 23	Epistemology in Geography
5	Feb. 27	Research Design - Conceptualization
6	Mar. 2	Research Design – Operationalization
7	Mar. 9	Indexes and Sampling
8	Mar. 16	Quantitative Research
9	Mar. 23	Unobtrusive Research
10	Mar. 30	Creating New Data: Survey Methods
11	April 6	Creating New Data: Really Getting Out There - Field Research
	April 13	Spring Recess
	April 20	Classes as Monday
12	April 27	Qualitative Data Analysis
13	May 4	Evaluation and Assessment Research
14	May 11	Student Presentations
15	May 18	Student Presentations