

POS 4734: Research Methods
Professor Leslie Anderson

Tuesday Period 5-6 11:45 am-1:40 pm
Thursday Period 6 12:50 pm-1:40 pm
Office hours TBD on zoom

Note: This course has the designation POS 4734 and that is the course number used for course reserves in the library. However, for some reason the university and textbook adoption sites have given it the incorrect number POS 4931. Look for it under either number.

Purpose of the Course

This class fulfills the research seminar requirements for undergraduate students who are writing an honors thesis. We will learn to use three methods of collecting qualitative data: in-depth interviews, participant observation and focus groups. The reading (7 books in all) is a combination of works on the research methods themselves and other books that exemplify the use of these methods. This is a chance to learn what doing research looks like and at least one undergraduate student got a summer job doing research based on having taken this course!

Requirements

You are expected to do all of the required reading and attend class. I expect a high level of participation from each of you. You will do a research assignment related to your honors thesis. You may use any one of these three methods for your research assignment or do another qualitative method not taught in this class (such as archival research). The bulk of the work in this class is not in the reading but in the research. The more you put into the research, the better you will do and the more you will learn. If the class is progressing well and students need a research day for travel, a focus group or extensive interviews we can accommodate those needs by cancelling class for a day or two. This would come in the second half of October or early November.

Grading:

60% of your grade is based upon your research assignments, upon class attendance, and upon participation. You will have a final paper on your project, which is worth 40% of your grade.

books

These books are available for purchase at the UF book store and are on reserve at the main library. You can also buy them online.

Flick, Uwe, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*

Rubin, Herbert and Rubin, Irene, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* 3rd edition

Monroe, Kristen, *The Hand of Compassion*

Anderson, Leslie, *The Political Ecology of the Modern Peasant*

Press, Andrea and Cole, Elizabeth, *Speaking of Abortion*

Tsing, Anna, *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen*

A resource for you is a series of free subscriptions that you have as a member of the UF community. One is to the New York Times, one to the Wall Street Journal and one is to The Economist. Use this link, if you wish to access a free subscription to the Economist.

<https://businesslibrary.uflib.ufl.edu/wsj/nyt/economist/freesubs>

Class date

August 24

Reading

first class: pass out syllabus In this first class I want to talk about how students have coped with the requirements of this class and the restrictions of the Coronavirus. There are many disadvantages imposed on researchers by the virus but as it turns out, my students have also been incredible creative and resourceful so that the restricted circumstances of our lives has actually played to their advantage in other ways. Yes, you can do exciting research in the age of the coronavirus and I will tell you how.

Part I: In-depth Interviews

August 26

Rubin and Rubin, Chaps 1, 2, 3
(In these early weeks, start thinking about your project)

August 31- September 7

Monroe, entire book

September 8-16

Rubin and Rubin, Chaps 4 and 5

September 21-28

Anderson, entire book,

Part II: Participant Observation

September 30

Rubin and Rubin, Chap 8

October 5-7

Flick, Chap 12, 13;

October 12-19

Tsing, entire book

Part III: Focus Groups

October 21

Flick, Chap 10

October 26-28

Press and Cole, entire book

Part IV: Individual Projects

Beginning November 1

Individual project discussion and presentation

Part V: Assessing Qualitative Research

November 30-December 2 Gerring, Chaps 1, 2, 7; Flick Chaps 20 and 22
discuss final projects, overview of research methods

December 7 Final paper