

Analytical Techniques for Public Service
MPA 2nd Year Core – General Cohort
Fall 2012
6-10p Thursdays
6-10p Monday, Oct 8 & Monday, October 29

Lecture: (Room TBA)

Seminar: (Baldwin, Room TBA), (King, Room TBA), (Swetkis, Room TBA)

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”-- Mohandas K. Gandhi

Faculty	Email/phone	Office Hours
Marc Baldwin	baldwinm@evergreen.edu 360-742-6637	by appointment
Doreen Swetkis	swetkisd@evergreen.edu 360-867-5320	by appointment
Cheryl Simrell King	kingcs@evergreen.edu 360-867-5541	by appointment

TESC MPA MISSION STATEMENT

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analytical Techniques for Public Service is a two-quarter long Core program for second-year MPA students. While we will focus each quarter on specific approaches to applied public service research, the intent is that the learning objectives of the program will be achieved across both quarters. The learning objectives include:

- Understand research methodology; understand *why* we do research in public service;
- Become competent in quantitative and quantitative data collection and analysis;
- Understand analytical techniques in practice (public policy; budgeting and finance; performance measurement and management; evaluation research; etc);
- Be able to situate analytical techniques in management/public policy (the context); understand the importance of these techniques;
- Become facile with the critiques of analytical techniques;
- Develop skills in communicating about data (displaying data; presentations) and writing research reports; and
- Become a savvy and sophisticated consumer of research.

In the Fall quarter, we focus specifically on questions of research design and deployment and the application of analytical techniques in public service.

BOOKS (required)

Dodson, Lisa (2011). *The Moral Underground: How Ordinary Americans Subvert an Unfair Economy*. The New Press. ISBN: 978-1595586421

McIntyre, Alice (2008). *Participatory Action Research*. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1412953665.

Morgan, David L (1998). *The Focus Group Guidebook (Focus Group Kit 1)*. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-0761908180

Rea, Louis and Parker, Richard A (2005) *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide (3rd Edition)*. Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 978-0787975463.

Wilson, Shawn (2009). *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Publishing. ISBN: 978-1552662816.

Yanow, Dvora (1999). *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-0761908272.

Yin, Robert K. (2008). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (4th Edition)*. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1412960991

EXPECTATIONS

Human Subjects Review (HSR) is part of your research project. Proceeding with data collection for your research project is dependent upon the Human Subjects Review application being reviewed and approved by TESC IRB. Any major changes to your research tool or sample respondents must also be cleared. (<http://www.evergreen.edu/deans/humansubjectsreviewapp.htm>).

Format of Assignment Submissions: All papers will be submitted via the Moodle website and all communication/feedback regarding submissions will be conducted via Moodle. Therefore, it is imperative that you regularly check email and the Moodle site. All papers must meet assignment parameters and cite works using the American Psychological Association (APA) citation format (<http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/>). All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. If you require it, please request resource writing assistance from faculty and/or contact the MPA Writing Assistant. Check assignment details for each submission.

Late assignments: Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. If you have a need to turn in an assignment late you must contact your seminar faculty no later than the original assignment due date to discuss options. Parameters are left to the discretion of the faculty on a situation-by-situation basis. Late assignments must be completed by the end of the quarter the assignment was originally due to ensure course credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, speaking in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, seminar faculty must be notified *prior* to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case. Makeup work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question to course credit.

Use of Electronic Devices: this course is Moodle-based and mostly paperless. We understand, and expect, that you will need to use electronic devices in class. However, the class is also participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class.

This means that electronic devices should not be used for anything other than for specific class activities (where we say you need your laptop or a reader for seminar materials). We don't expect to see people on their devices, looking down, when there is no reason to be on the device. And if we see you, we'll let you know.

Credit: Students will receive 6 graduate credits at the completion of each quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Incompletes may be offered on case-by-case basis. Refer to MPA student handbook. Credit denial decisions are made by the faculty team. Denial of credit for two terms of core may result in expulsion from the MPA program. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of total credit. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning goals that will be assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification.

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and a seminar faculty evaluation are required for credit at the end of each quarter, along with faculty evaluations of students. Evaluations are due at the end of Week 10. Students may elect to submit faculty evaluations directly to Program Secretaries, Lab II, lab2support@evergreen.edu

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students work toward weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, seminar and group projects.

Learning Styles: Faculty endeavor to provide information in multiple formats: auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc. However, style applications are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. Consult your seminar faculty to discuss learning style options or personal challenges.

Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through a working relationship with Access Services, the Writing Center and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy: <http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/g-studentada.htm>

Other Expectations of Students and Faculty: We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; and discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the social contract (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=174-121-010>), the student conduct code (<http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct.htm>) and the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC (<http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/g-nondiscr.htm>).

All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

Guest Policy: Guests are welcome to visit during class time and seminar meetings with discretionary approval from course faculty in advance of the requested visit.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with television, web pages, and radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since

many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel program meeting even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-program email by 3:00 pm.

Communicating with Each Other: Email and Moodle are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking your Evergreen email and Moodle regularly.

ASSIGNMENTS

Week 2	(Individual) Overview/Abstract of idea for research
Week 3	(Individual) Literature Review (any topic)
Week 4	(Project) Overview/Abstract of idea for research
Week 6	(Project) Literature Review/Research Question/Proposed Method
Week 7	(Individual) Methodology analysis/essay
Week 8	(Project) Draft: Full proposal including data collection/analysis plan & HSR
Week 9	(Individual) Cumulative Seminar Paper
Week 10	(Project) Final: Full proposal including data collection/analysis plan & HSR

The primary goal for both quarters of ATPS is to give you direct experience with applied primary research. You will, soup to nuts, design and deploy a research project that informs a public, policy, organizational or social/cultural question or challenge. In other words, it's real. We will work on defining and narrowing research questions, designing instruments to collect qualitative and quantitative data, ensuring the privacy and safety of research participants, collecting and analyzing data and reporting your findings. These projects will be done in groups of three people; only under exceptional circumstances will we approve a larger or smaller group, or an individual project. You must include a survey as part of your research method, as well as one qualitative method of collecting data (focus groups, interviews, ethnographic methods, etc.).

For this quarter, some assignments are project-based (done in research teams); other assignments are individual assignments (done individually).

Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by 6:00 PM on class day, in the weeks noted below. All assignments are to be submitted via Moodle.

(Week 2) Overview/Abstract Idea for Research (Individual): This is the beginning of your process of identifying the research question you'd like to pursue. This work product will help you frame your question, inform your classmates about a possible research group, and help instructors begin thinking about how to support your effort. What do we need to know? What is the topic, debate in the field, or issue that you want to explore? You may not have a specific research strategy, but you may be able to provide thoughts on how you might answer your question or what kind of questions you will need to ask to address the issue. Your overview can be a paragraph at least and **a page at most**. When you are done, ask yourself, "does my description give my colleagues enough information to know whether they would want to explore this with me for a year?" For "Marketplace" during Week 2, be prepared to "sell" your topic to your colleagues and the faculty team. By the way, also be ready to let your topic go if you can't "sell" it to others or if another topic catches your interests.

(Week 3) Literature Review – Any Topic (Individual): This assignment will demonstrate your individual ability to find and critically utilize existing research about a question or issue germane in public policy or public/nonprofit administration. The topic may be one of your choosing, but should be

culturally relevant and timely – it may, or may not, be the same as your group research project. Choose a minimum of three (3) peer-reviewed articles or papers on your topic, as well as a few non-peer-reviewed pieces, and write a literature review.

A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researcher. Most often, it is part of the introduction to an essay, research report, or thesis. In writing the literature review, your purpose is to convey to your reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. As a piece of writing, the literature review must be defined by a guiding concept (e.g., your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing or your argumentative thesis). It is not just a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries.

A literature review must do these things: a) be organized around and related directly to a thesis or research question you are developing; b) synthesize results into a summary of what is and is not known; c) identify areas of controversy in the literature; and, d) formulate questions that need further research. Your literature review should be no more than five (5) pages. There are helpful weblinks in Moodle. You can also find additional resources on the web..

(Week 4) Overview/Abstract Idea for Research (Group): At this point, topics have been chosen and teams formed. Everyone who is going to work together on the project is involved. The overview is becoming more specific. The questions from Week 2 apply, but you should be able to more clearly define your research idea. Papers are again one paragraph to one page in length. You will be required to respond to this round of submissions by conducting a “peer-review” of each others’ work.

(Week 6) Research Question/Literature Review/Proposed Method (Group): This week’s assignment is a big leap forward for your research project. First, you should very clearly define your research question by beginning with a very specific problem statement (including answering the “so what?” question). Further clarify the research question, context, history, existing research, and other elements that frame your project, being sure to use scholarly/peer-reviewed source material to situate your research question in the literature. Finally, provide a brief overview of your research method. What information will help answer your question? What gap in the literature will you be filling? This paper should be 8 -10 pages long with appropriate academic citations.

(Week 7) Methodology & Methods Analysis (Individual): You will use your developing research “chops” to critically evaluate two pieces of research: 1) a peer-reviewed, scholarly/academic research article of which you are fond and 2) a “white paper” or advocacy-based report. Using what you’ve learned so far, critically deconstruct the research *methodology* and *methods* (methodology = philosophy, paradigm, meta-narrative, grand narrative; method = data gathering techniques). In your essay, be sure to address the following questions: From which methodological perspective was the research approached? What are the underlying values/perspectives of the research? What are the social/political implications of approaching the research from the perspective chosen? Could the research be improved/changed by approaching it from another methodological perspective? Do the methods appropriately follow the methodology? Comparing and contrasting. Be sure that you don’t spend all your space on telling what the articles said; that’s not the point.

Your paper should be between 4-6 single-spaced pages. Include a copy, or link, of the research report/articles with your paper.

In Week 8, we’ll ask you to bring these reports to seminar, for BYOR seminar.

(Week 8) Draft of Full Research Proposal (Group): Building on the Week 6 assignment, continue defining/delimiting your problem statement and research questions. At this point, answer the following questions: Why does the research matter, who should care, who is the audience and what is the most

effective means of communicating the results to them (report, pamphlet, video, presentation, poster, media release, etc.)? What research paradigm(s) or traditions will you draw from and how do the methodological assumptions of your work inform the research question(s)/problems? Clearly state your research question(s).

Define your potential research participants/respondents (called “subjects” in traditional research parlance). What specific methods will you use to answer your research question? What are you going to measure and how? Define key terms used in your research question(s).

Provide a research plan (limitations, assumptions, how you will physically collect the data, access, contact lists, schedule, location, delivery method, feasibility: who, when, what, how). Include a draft instrument (survey, interview, or focus group questions plus protocols, cover letter and informed consent). Include a draft Human Subjects Review (HSR) application. Provide a draft team work plan for next quarter.

Be prepared to have your draft proposal reviewed by others (peer-review) and expect to review proposals by other teams. 7-9 pages, not including citations, tables/figures and HSR.

(Week 9) Cumulative Seminar Paper (Individual): This is your final individual assignment. Reflect upon all the seminar readings and write an overall description of your learning for this quarter, with an emphasis on analytic techniques. Identify at least three major take-aways from the reading. What have you learned that will inform your work? How will you read research papers or approach research differently in the future? Maximum five (5) pages, with citations.

(Week 10) Final Research Proposal (Group): Based upon feedback, revise your draft research proposal producing your final document and research plan. Pre-test your data collection instruments. Review your work plan and add detail. 8-10 pages, not including citations, tables/figures and HSR.

SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITIES	READINGS	DUE
Week 1 Thursday 9/27 (all)	<i>Intro to Course</i> <i>Overview of Applied Research I</i> Lecture: What is Research? What are Research Questions? What is a Literature Review?	Lecture: see Moodle (Newman chapter and weblinks, TBA) Lit reviews help here Lit reviews help here Seminar: research proposals from previous second year students (posted on Moodle, TBA)	
Week 2 Thursday 10/4 (csk)	Research Methodologies and Methods Lecture & Marketplace	Lecture & Seminar: see Moodle and web-links (Newman chapter and weblinks, TBA)	(Individual) Overview/abstract of research idea
Week 3 - Monday 10/8 (mb)	<i>Ethics and Research</i> Ethical research Introduction to HSR Film: Day after Trinity	Lecture: see Moodle & weblinks (TBA) Seminar: no seminar, film debrief	
Week 3 - Thursday 10/11 (csk)	<i>Participatory Action Research</i>	Lecture & Seminar: McIntyre (all) Dodson(all)	(Individual) Literature Review
Week 4 Thursday 10/18 (ds)	<i>Case Studies</i>	Lecture & Seminar: Yin (all) PAR example/reading	(Project) Overview/abstract of research idea

Week 5 Thursday 10/25 (mb)	Data - Nuts and Bolts Introduction to Measurement, Sampling, Etc Marc - quant Cheryl - qual Guest Speaker	Lecture: Rea & Parker (Parts 2&3); other readings— Newman?? Seminar: no seminar	
Week 6 - Monday 10/29 (ds)	Survey Research	Lecture & Workshop: Rea & Parker (Part 1) Seminar: no seminar	
Week 6 Thursday 11/1 (csk)	Focus Groups/Interviewing	Lecture & Workshop: Morgan (all) & example reading Seminar: Yanow	(Project) Lit Review, etc
Week 7 Thursday 11/8 (all)	Other Methods/Methodologies Film: Kitchen Stories	Lecture: see Moodle Seminar: Wilson & film	(Individual) Methodology & Methods Analysis
Week 8 Thursday 11/15 (ds)	Technology: Nuts and Bolts Guest? Dylan Houston SurveyMonkey and other online survey tools Intro to Excel	Lecture: Neuman, Chap 16 Seminar: BYOR	(Project) Draft Full proposal including data collection/analysis plan & HSR
Week of 11/19-11/23	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY		
Week 9 Thursday 11/29 (mb & csk)	Data -nuts and bolts Introduction to Analysis Quant (mb) Qual (csk)	Lecture: see Moodle Seminar: no seminar	(Individual) Cumulative Seminar Paper
Week 10 Thursday 12/6	Presentations - where did you start, where did you end, what happened along the way?		(Project) Final - Full proposal including data collection/analysis plan & HSR
Evaluation Week (M-W)			