Analytical Techniques for Public Service (ATPS) I
Fall, 2017

Lecture meets in SEM 2 D1105
See Canvas for seminar rooms
See Canvas for up-to-date schedule and assignment information

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TESC MPA MISSION STATEMENT

"Be the Change"

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 AND OBJECTIVES

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 are achieved across both quarters. The learning objectives include:

- Understand research methodology; understand *why* we do research in public service;
- Understand how various approaches can be used to maintain the status quo and/or as instruments of positive social/economic/political change.
- Be able to situate analytic techniques in management/public policy (the context); understand the importance of these techniques;
- Understand analytic techniques in practice (public policy; budgeting and finance; performance measurement and management; evaluation research; etc);
- Become facile with the critiques of analytic techniques;
- Become competent in quantitative and quantitative data collection and analysis;
- 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.

EXPECTATIONS

Review Assignment Requirements Thoroughly Before Drafting Submissions: This may sound obvious, but it is vitally important that you read and understand assignments before you begin to write. The pressure to just start writing can be irresistible at times. Don't! Canvas is used for course documents specifically because it enables changes as the course evolves during the quarter. Some assignments have very specific requirements. Some are intentionally a bit more open to interpretation and creative responses. Clear understanding of your goals is important to avoiding frustration – yours and the faculty's.

Format of Assignment Submissions: All papers will be submitted as requested by your seminar faculty member. All papers must meet assignment parameters and cite works using the American Psychological Association style (http://www.apastyle.org/) All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. If you require it, please contact the Graduate Writing Assistant. Sometimes your faculty will ask you to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant; if so, you are required to do so to the satisfaction of your faculty member.

Late assignments: Are not accepted without prior (to deadline) approval by your seminar faculty member. Multiple late assignments put you at risk for no credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged 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, *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.* Make-up work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question for course credit. Multiple absences put you at risk for no credit.

Use of Electronic Devices: The class is participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class. Research shows that using electronic devices can be distracting and deleterious to the learning experience and to the learning community. Further, research suggests that typing notes on a keyboard rather than writing out longhand results in shallower processing of the concepts. Yet we acknowledge the limited, key situations where these devices are necessary. These situations include: accessing the Canvas site when course materials are being explained; workshops where laptops help teams track requirements and output; practical exercises in class where spreadsheets or other templates are needed; and individual situations were accommodation must be made through technology. In short, put away your devices (laptops, phones, tablets) except when otherwise instructed (we recognize that some may be accessing readings electronically and will use a device in seminar). If an emergency requires you to track activity on your phone, please inform a faculty member.

Teamwork: The expectations of students as individuals applies to expectations of individuals in project teams as well. Each team member is expected to behave as part of a learning community. The division of labor in teams should respect differences among members while ensuring maximum participation of all team members. Conflicts with the team should be resolved by team members to the greatest extent possible. It is not the role of faculty to adjudicate conflicts within teams unless they involve violations of college policies.

Credit: This MPA Core course is taught a bit differently than other Cores: students will receive 12 graduate credits at the completion of the Winter quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Academic dishonesty and

plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own, see MPA Handbook for more), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of credit and/or dismissal from the MPA program. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress toward the learning goals, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the term.

Evaluation: As noted above, ATPS is a two quarter course. Successful completion occurs at the end of the second quarter of the course, for 12 credits. Seminar groups will be assigned to faculty on the basis of research group participation. Faculty advisors will meet with research groups as groups during the evaluation period, but will not submit written evaluations. Faculty advisors will hold brief evaluation conversations with individual team members at that time to share thoughts on individual student progress. Written self-evaluations are required at the end of each quarter. Evaluations are considered "submitted" only when posted through the College portal.

Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through Access Services, the Graduate Writing Assistant, 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 is regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy here.

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; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the social contract, the student conduct code and the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC. See the college's Student Conduct webpage for more.

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: *This is being reviewed program-wide and will be updated shortly.*

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 class even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-class email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies here.

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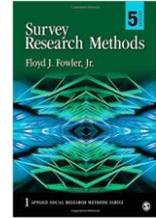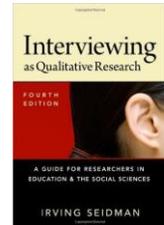
READINGS

Fall and Winter Quarters:

- *Research Methods: The Basics*
  (Nicolas Walliman)
  Paperback: 208 pages
  Publisher: Routledge (December 20, 2010) **ISBN-13:** 978-0415489942. **Buy:** ~$25
  Type of book: overview of research

- *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research (Second Edition)*
  (Daryl Morgan)
  Paperback: 88 pages
  Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc; 2nd edition (October 23, 1996)
  ISBN-13: 978-0761903437. **Buy:** ~$25
  Type of book: research techniques

- *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Context*
   (Margaret Kovach)
  Paperback: 216 pages
  Publisher: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division.
  ISBN-13: 978-1442612112. **Buy:** ~$20
  Type of book: research approaches and techniques

- *The Silo Effect: The Peril of Expertise and the Promise of Breaking Down Barriers*
  (Gillian Tett)
  Paperback: 304 pages
  Publisher: Simon & Schuster; Reprint edition (September 27, 2016)
  ISBN-13: 978-1451644746. **Buy:** ~$13
  Type of book: example of research (cultural anthropology) and telling the research story

- *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*
  (John Creswell)
  Paperback: 472 pages
  Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc; 3rd edition (March 14, 2012)
  ISBN-13: 978-1412995306. **Buy used or rent:** ~$20-$40
  Type of book: research approaches and techniques
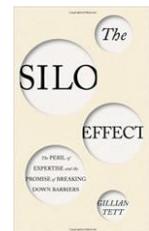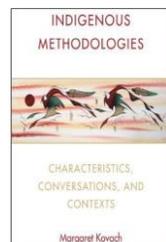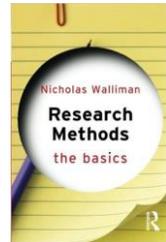
- *Survey Research Methods (Fifth Edition)*
  (Floyd Fowler)
  Paperback: 184 pages
  Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc; 5th edition (September 18, 2013)
  ISBN-13: 978-1452259000. **Buy used or rent:** ~$20-$50
  Type of book: research techniques

- *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*
  (Irving Seidman)
  Paperback: 178 pages
  Publisher: Teachers College Press; 4 edition (December 21, 2012)
  ISBN-13: 978-0807754047. **Buy:** ~$30
  Type of book: research techniques

Other readings posted to Canvas, TBA

ASSIGNMENTS

Week 2	(Project) Paragraph description of research
Week 3	(Individual) Seminar paper
Week 5	(Individual) Seminar paper (Group) Overview or research topic
Week 6	(Individual) Opportunities and challenges paper
Week 7	(Project) Proposal outline
Week 8	(Project) Draft Human Subjects Review (HSR) with instruments
Week 9	(Individual) Seminar paper
Week 10	(Project) Final: Full proposal including 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 group. You must include a survey as part of your data collection methods, 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 project 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 on the schedule (posted separately). All assignments are to be submitted via Canvas.

(Week 2) Paragraph on Research (Project): Week one you formed teams and began discussing your work together. This work product will help you frame your question, inform your classmates, and help instructors begin thinking about how to support your effort. Here are questions to address in your overview: What is the topic, debate in the field, or issue that you want to explore? How will you learn what you hope to know? Look ahead to week 5 assignment to see how the level of detail will be increasing over the quarter.

(Weeks 3, 5, 9) Seminar Papers. Write seminar papers following the format used in First Year Core. Use the guiding questions from "Learning from Discussion," as you did last quarter or as defined by your seminar leader. We will relax this requirements soon and talk about different formats in seminar groups. Maximum of 2 pages, doubled-spaced.

(Week 5) Overview/Abstract Idea for Research (Project): The overview is a much more specific explication of your research project. Include: research topic, brief review of the literature, research question(s), and a brief description of proposed data collection methods. Papers are **two to three pages in length.**

(Week 6) Opportunities and Challenges Paper (Individual). At this point in the quarter, you've grappled with many of the sticky questions about research and using data to inform decisions, have

considered the multiple ways research and data are defined and designed, and the limitations to these definitions/designs. For this paper, reflect on the state of doing research/using data in the field/endeavor of public administration. What opportunities exist? What are the challenges? How might these challenges be addressed by researchers and practitioners?"

(Week 7) Proposal outline (Project). This assignment is the first time you will share the full picture of your proposed research. Your proposal outline needs to include and overview of all the expected sections of the proposal: introduction, literature review, research questions, data collection (qualitatative and quantitative), and key aspects of your data dictionary.You will have time to adapt your proposal to lessons from the nuts-and-bolts lectures that are happening around the time of this assignment. But you should be prepared to provide a basic overview of your project by week 7. 2-4 pages, single spaced.

(Week 8) Draft Human Subjects Review (Project). As you will learn in class, the HSR process is a key ethical and practical threshold for original research. Your HSR documentation includes detailed accounts of your survey instrument and essential aspects of your qualitative approach. The scale of your HSR depends upon the specifics of your proposal.

***(Week 10) Research Proposal and HSR Application (Project)*:** Your Research Proposal should contain:

1)   Problem Statement. A) Identify and define the problem you are going to research. Why is this a problem? B) Craft a research question that will drive your research. C) So What Statement: why does the research matter, who should care, who is the audience? D) What approach(es) will you draw from and why?

2)   Annotated bibliography of about 20 resources (journals, gov reports, newspapers, etc.). If it's helpful, provide a relevancy/usefulness scale. (This is early in the list of work to do, but can be an appendix to your proposal).

3)   Craft a literature review, using selected resources from your annotated bibliography. This will summarize the background of your research problem and narrow down to your particular research question. Define all key terms used in your guiding research question. Define your sample (potential subjects/respondents) and sampling approach.

4)   Methods. Identify and discuss the approach(es) your team selected. Select one or more appropriate methods (survey, plus qualitative data: interviews, focus group, or combination). What is your research going to measure? List and define your potential measures/variables.

5)   Survey. Provide a research plan (limitations, assumptions, how you will physically collect the data, access, contact lists, tentative schedule, location, delivery method, feasibility: who, when, what, how). Prepare a data dictionary and/or coding scheme to accompany data collection instruments. The final version of your proposal should include a draft of the survey instrument that you will pilot test over winter break.

6)   Focus Groups/Interviews. Describe the details of your qualitative data collection process. Who you will talk with, tentatively when and where, and a draft of the questions you will ask.

7)   HSR application.

8)   Team work plan. This project will be a team effort, but clarify who will be responsible for which sections and develop team due dates for drafts of the various sections, and who will pull them together.

NOTE: Do not launch your research project when this is done! You must have HSR approval and we will be talking about how to pilot your research efforts over break.