URP6203 Syllabus Planning Research Design

Summer C 2023 academic term | 3 credits

Instructor

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Office Hours: Virtual office hours will be held by appointment via phone or Zoom.

Class Meeting Times and Location: Asynchronous online delivery with weekly check-ins

Course Description

Emphasizes research design and literature research; student presentations at appropriate stages in thesis work.

Purpose of Course

Asking and answering questions about the world around us is at the core of planning as an applied social science. Research is a tool that planners use, and the goal of this course is to equip students with the tools necessary to conduct and analyze research as part of their academic and professional practice. The course focuses on defining planning problems and suitable research questions, the development of simple conceptual models, understanding the types of study designs and data collection methodologies available to understand problems, and the overall strategies for the design and conduct of research. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Frame research questions,
- Identify steps in the research process,
- Evaluate social science study designs and data collection methodologies,
- Conceptualize relationships within the research question,
- Evaluate and select an appropriate study design, and
- Write research proposals.

Required Text

- Zina O'Leary. (2017). The essential guide doing your research project, 3rd Edition. SAGE Publications, Inc. ISBN: 978-1-4739-5208-9 *The text is available for sale through Amazon, the UF Bookstore, and other vendors. The Kindle version of the book is acceptable.*

In addition to readings from the course textbook, supplemental readings will be assigned. Supplemental readings are posted to the course's Canvas webpage. Students should complete all readings in preparation for each class meeting.

Recommended Texts

- Howard S. Becker. (2007). Writing for social scientists, 2nd Edition. The University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0-226-04132-2.

- Lawrence A. Machi and Brenda T. McEvoy. (2012.) The literature review, 2nd Edition. SAGE Publications, Inc. ISBN: 978-1-4522-4088-6.

- Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup. (2016). Style: lessons in clarity and grace, 12th Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 978-0-1340-8041-3.

  o It is strongly recommended that you purchase a style guide. This is the one I recommend.

How This Course Relates to the Student Learning Outcomes in the Urban Planning Program

As required course in the graduate program, Planning Research Design relates to three important department student learning outcomes:

- To assemble and analyze ideas and information from prior practice and scholarship, and from primary and secondary sources.
- To prepare clear, accurate, and compelling text, graphics, and maps for use in documents and presentations.
- To develop research design proposals that uphold the ethical and normative principles used to guide planning research in a democratic society.

Course Communications

It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for announcements related to the course. Readings and changes to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas with appropriate notice.

If you are new to Canvas or have any problems using Canvas, please contact the Help Desk at 392-HELP.

I will answer your email as quickly as possible but please allow up to 24 hours for a reply during the week, and 48 hours for a reply on weekends.   Proper email etiquette is expected.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy

This course is delivered asynchronously, online. We will have weekly check-in meetings. The times and days for these meetings will be based on the results of a poll given at the beginning of the semester. Attendance at these meetings is not required, but it is strongly encouraged.

Assignment Policy

Assignments will be posted on Canvas well in advance of their due dates. ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY THE POSTED DUE DATES IN CANVAS. Assignments must be submitted by posting on Canvas. Late work will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments have been successfully uploaded to Canvas. See the Note on Computer or Canvas Problems below.

Make-up Policy

Missed deadlines for unexcused reasons will result in a zero. Examples of unexcused reasons include, but are not limited to, forgetting to do an assignment, being too busy with other coursework, or going on a family vacation. If you are sick or have an emergency that prevents you from submitting an assignment at the scheduled time, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible. Documentation of the illness or emergency may be required. If you need to schedule an extension, please email me with a detailed explanation and attach documentation. Extensions will be given at my discretion. Scheduling extensions is the responsibility of the student.

All assignment deadlines are posted on the syllabus and in Canvas at the beginning of the semester. If you know that you will have excused absences (for example, illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, jury duty/subpoena), it is your responsibility to communicate any deadline conflicts well in advance, per UF Attendance Policies.

Course Technology

Students are required to have access to a computer, including a web camera, and consistently reliable internet access for the duration of the course. The types of software used for the course include, but are not limited to, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, VPN access, and bibliographic management software, such as RefWorks or EndNote (available from the UF Libraries). Many software applications are available to UF students at UF Apps: https://appsufl.edu/. For assistance with UF Apps, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at http://helpdesk.ufl.edu or (352) 392-HELP - select option 2.

Canvas Problems Policy

If you have Canvas problems that prevent you from submitting an assignment, you have the ability to receive an extension if you follow these steps:

- Immediately contact the Help Desk (392-HELP (4357) or helpdesk@ufl.edu) to report the problem and receive a ticket to document the problem. I can only extend the submittal deadline if you have contacted the Help Desk ahead of the assignment deadline and received a ticket. The Help Desk is available by phone and email 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- After contacting the HelpDesk and receiving a ticket, contact me, prior to the assignment due time, and let me know there is a problem.
- If Canvas or the UF Network is experiencing an outage that prevents you from submitting an assignment on time, I will receive a notice from UF IT about the outage.

The assignment deadline will be revised accordingly. Students will not be penalized for system or network outages.

UF POLICIES

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.disability.ufl.edu) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Students submitting an accommodation letter must also schedule a meeting with me to discuss and develop a plan to ensure that access needs are met.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student Honor Code."

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community. On all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

You will complete all work independently unless given explicit permission to collaborate on course assignments. We will be using TurnItIn, a plagiarism detection program. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in an honor code violation and potential failure of the course. Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information, please read the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Netiquette: Communication Courtesy

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Please read the UF Netiquette Guide for Online Course.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at

https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/."

Complaints

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course, please visit https://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/ to submit a complaint.

Materials and Supplies Fee: None

OTHER RESOURCES

Resources available for online students include the following:

- Counseling and Wellness Center
- Disability Resource Center
- Dean of Students Office
- Online Library Help Desk

Please find information about Getting Help at https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/

GRADING POLICIES

Grades will be based on evidence that students have completed assigned reading, participated actively in all activities, completed all assignments, and completed class activities throughout the semester. All completed tasks will be evaluated based on content, critical thinking, and communication. Details of each assignment, including rubrics, are posted on the Canvas site. Please note that "A" grades require performance beyond the minimum or average – e.g., quality, depth, synthesis of ideas, originality, or creativity.

This is a graduate-level course. As such, it is expected that for each credit hour, you will spend between 3 to 4 hours (or 9 to 12 hours per week for a 3-credit hour class) reading materials, watching lectures, and completing assignments. Please plan accordingly.

Information on current UF grading policies may be found at:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/#text

The following table outlines the point-accruing components of the course. The total points earned will be summed and divided by the total points in the course: 1,000. Please check Canvas for deadlines, instructions, and order of assignments.

Assignment	Points	Approx. % of Final Grade
Introduce Yourself Discussion	10	1%
Academic Integrity Module	10	1%
Thesis or MRP Evaluation	50	6%
IRB-02 Training and Certification	50	6%
Identify a Research Topic	50	6%
Refine a Research Topic	50	6%
Midterm Reflection	10	1%
Strategize the Literature Review	50	6%
Write a Preliminary Research Question	50	6%
Conceptualizing a Research Design	100	12%
Data Collection Strategy	50	6%
Research Proposal	300	35%
MRP Committee Survey	20	2%
Reading Quizzes (5 quizzes at 10 points each)	50	6%
Total	850	100%

Grading Scale

All grades will be posted directly into the Canvas gradebook. Any discrepancies with points displayed in the gradebook should be pointed out to me. There is no curve for this course and grades will not be rounded up. Any requests for extra credit (beyond that given in class) or special exceptions to these grading policies will be interpreted as an honor code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94% - 100%
A-	90% - 93%
B+	88% - 89%
B	83% - 87%
B-	80% - 82%
C+	78% - 79%
C	73% - 77%
C-	70% - 72%
D+	68% - 69%
D	63% - 67%
D-	60% - 62%
E	Below 60%

Study and Success Tips

- Read the material and listen to lectures. Take notes. Interact with your notes and materials early and often.
- Engage your classmates and study as actively as possible.
- Do not fall behind or procrastinate your studies. You cannot cram the night before and expect to do well.
- Check Canvas announcements/emails daily. I will post important and helpful information as announcements or emails.
- Have a positive attitude! Planning is an exciting and dynamic profession! You are learning knowledge and skills that will help you be a more engaged member of your community.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introduction to Research

Module 1: "Start Here" and The Research Process (2 weeks)

Module 2: Ethical Issues in Research

Deciding What to Research

Module 3: Identifying a Topic

Module 4: Reviewing the Literature

Module 5: Formulating a Research Problem

Summer Break

Module 6: Identifying Variables & Constructing a Research Question

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Deciding How to Research

Module 7: Selecting a Research Design (2 weeks)

Modules 8: Selecting a Sample & Data Collection Instruments

Module 9: Writing a Research Proposal (1.5 weeks)

Module 10: Moving to MRP (0.5 weeks)

Summer C Holidays

- Memorial Day – May 29, 2023
- Summer Break – June 26 – 30, 2023
- Independence Day – July 4, 2023

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity.