Course Description

The purposes of the course are to introduce to students key concepts in research methods, and to help them develop skills in the design of empirical research used in the analysis of policy problems. Specific emphasis will be on the use of quasi-experimental designs in policy research, as well as on their potentials and limitations.

Upon completion of the course, students should 1) understand the logic of policy research on causal relationship; 2) have a working knowledge on key research designs for generalized causal inference, with a good understanding of their potentials and limitations; 3) be able to put together a research proposal on a given research topic in their chosen fields; and 4) gain practical experience in conducting policy research.

Required Textbooks


Assessment and Grading Criteria

Details for each assignment will be provided in class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #1</td>
<td>(Week 6)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2</td>
<td>(Week 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>(Week 13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Discussion</td>
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Course Outline and Readings

Please note that this outline may be subject to change to adapt to students’ needs along the way.

Week 1 (February 10): Fundamental Concepts in Policy Research

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapters 1


- Chapter 2. Inquiry, Theory and Paradigms (pp. 44-61)

- Chapter 4. Research Designs

Week 2 (February 17): Theoretical and Practical Impacts of Policy Research


Week 3 and 4 (February 24 and March 3) Dimensions of Rigor in Research (1)

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapters 2.


Week 5 (March 10): Dimensions of Rigor in Research (2)

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapters 3.


Week 6 (March 17): Experimental Designs

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapter 8, 9, 10.


**Week 7 (March 24): Quasi-Experimental Designs (1)**

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapter 5.


**Week 8 (March 31): Quasi-Experimental Designs (2)**

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapters 6 and 7


Keys, B., T. Mukherjee, A. Seru, and V. Vig. Did Securitization Lead to Lax Screening? Evidence from Subprime Loans," December 2008


**Week 9 (April 7): Non-Experimental Designs**

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapter 4


**Week 10 (April 14) Qualitative Research Designs (1)**

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapter 4


**Week 11 (April 21) Qualitative Research Designs (2)**


Ho, Selina, Qian, Neng and Yan, Yifei (2019) The role of ideas in the China-India water dispute. *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 12 (2). 263 - 294. ISSN 1750-8916

**Week 12 (April 28) Big Data and Data Analytics for Policy Research**


**Week 13 (May 5) Generalized Causal Inference**

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14


**May 12: Presentations**

During this session, students will present their research proposals