DPLS 720 Principles of Research

Summer 2010 3 Credits
Professor: Chris Francovich, Ed.D.
Office Phone: 509-313-3592
E-mail: francovich@gonzaga.edu
Office hours: Please call for an appointment
Meeting Logistics - Wednesdays
We meet on 6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/16, 7/21, 7/28

Course Overview
Why do we ask questions? What is our 'search' in research about? Certainly it is good to think of research as involving 'truth' and 'meaning' but it is also important to recognize that it is done for purposes that involve commerce and trade, gain, status, or survival. We have become a species that does research for very clear and pragmatic reasons. Companies hire brilliant scientists to discover new ways to make things grow, kill things, change things, make things taste better, make people believe certain things, or a host of other reasons. The systematic and logical processes that underlie these activities are part of what this course is about. This element of the 'principles of research' are shared and practiced by many disciplines and many different constituencies.

Research is also about another thing. That 'thing' is (in my view) the most problematic aspect of research and continues to bedevil theorists on all sides of political debates, religious divides, ideological divides, and cultural divides. That 'thing' is called by various names. Some of the names are: perspective, point of view, paradigm, belief system, or outlook. It is in this part of our analysis that the work we do in leadership studies becomes acutely relevant. These perspectives and the questions they suggest cannot be sidestepped, minimized, or rationalized. This element of research requires deep thinking and deep participation in whichever community one is in.

This course is about these 'two' things being understood as necessary aspects of human consciousness and part of the general conversation around social justice, human rights, post-humanist values (including ecological sustainability), and the purposes of human activity. In this course we will be doing a lot of talking about perception, belief, meaning, and reality. These are 'heady' concepts but ones I trust will make increasing sense as we navigate the literature and work on the problems we encounter.

This class includes a discussion of basic premises regarding how we learn and how this learning process influences and is influenced by research. Different ways of knowing become apparent through analyzing multiple social science research paradigms. These research paradigms provide a framework for reviewing various research methods and related theory development. The primary component of this course is student reflections about concepts presented in class discussions, assignments, and readings, and the "meanings" students assign to these concepts. This course is designed to honor the pursuit of truth.
Course Assignments

Pre-Course assignment (see below) (~ 10% of Grade)

Worksheets - Beginning with our second meeting we will meet in workgroups to discuss the structure and content of worksheet assignments that have been part of the Principles of Research course for many years. These work sheets represent a progressive template to build a research paper of doctoral level quality. The ultimate content of the worksheets is up to each individual and will be informed by course readings and discussions. Each worksheet will be available on the Blackboard site the day following each course meeting. Please navigate to the Course Documents > Meeting # Folder > Worksheet area of Blackboard. (~ 20% of Grade)

Group Presentations - See Blackboard > Assignments for structure & criteria of group assignments. Note on the Announcement area of Blackboard you will be part of two groups for the course - a presentation group and a work group. Your presentation group will do the group presentation. (~ 20 % of Grade)

Reflections - After each class meeting you are to post a meeting reflection on Blackboard in the Discussion Area. Please post your reflection under the Discussion thread with your name on it. This meeting reflection should be brief and capture the basic ‘take-aways’, insights, questions, or concerns that the readings and/or discussions for this meeting provided. You are also expected to respond to at least two of your colleagues' reflections. (~ 20% of Grade)

Final Project - At the end of the course you will have completed numerous worksheets that serve as project templates. You are expected to integrate relevant elements from these worksheets, from the text, and/or from outside resources to complete a research proposal. Please see the Assignments > Research Proposal area on Blackboard for specific criteria. This proposal is due via email on August 9, 2010 (~ 30% of Grade)

Intentions & aims for the course:

- Better understand how we learn (gain new meanings) from research;
- Explore and understand social science research paradigms, their underlying assumptions, and how they impact what we learn from research;
- Discuss and demonstrate general principles of making positivist, interpretivist, critical, etc. observations in research;
- Understand and practice sampling and the sampling procedures used for positivist, interpretivist, critical, etc., research designs;
- Think and write about the purpose and procedures of various research methods: survey, quantitative, experimental, qualitative, and unobtrusive;
- Survey and talk about the general methods of analyzing data for positivist, interpretivist, critical, etc., research designs; and
- Explore and discuss ethical issues associated with positivist, interpretivist, critical, etc., research designs.

Expectations, Assignments, & Grading

The central expectation for this course is that everyone do all the reading. I also think it is critical that everyone show up for class and be fully present in your group work and conversations about
research. It is also important that you complete each worksheet in a timely manner and interact with your workgroup in a mutually beneficial way.

**Assessment**
Assessment & grading in this course will be based on participation, completed assignments & worksheets, group presentation, reflection notes, and your final project.

**Required Texts**
*Foundations of Social Research*
Author: Crotty  
Publisher: SAGE;

*Research Methods in the Social Sciences*
Authors: Somekh & Lewin  
ISBN: 0-761-94402-7 (paperback)  
Publisher: SAGE;

*The Practice of Social Research*
Author: Babbie  
ISBN: 0-495-59841-0  
Publisher: Wadsworth Publishing; Edition: 12th

Other Readings will be provided via hardcopy and on Blackboard

**Course Structure**
Pre-Class Reading & Assignment:
Crotty: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-17)  
Somekh & Lewin (S&L): Part 1 (pp. 1-15)  
Babbie: Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-64)  
See Presentation Assignment Information on Blackboard

Please email to me at francovich@ Gonzaga.edu and bring to class a short essay (less than or equal to 4 pages) describing your perspective and point of view regarding knowledge and definition of what is true or real. Please make sure that you have done the course reading prior to writing your essay and be as honest and authentic in your response as possible. This essay is not meant to write about a 'correct', 'sophisticated', or 'preferred' mode of thinking and knowing but your 'default' mode of thinking and knowing.

We will be sharing these essays in small groups and talking about the implications of your perspectives on your research - eventually on your dissertation.

**First Meeting: Foundations**
Paradigms & Point of View: What is it to know?  
Overview of Readings  
Group Work - (Discuss Essays)
Readings for 2nd Meeting:
  • Crotty: Chapter 2-3 (pp. 18-65)
  • Babbie: Chapters 3 (pp. 64 - 91)
  • S&L: Chapter 6 (pp. 56-63)

Second Meeting: A World Upside Down
Overview
Group Work (Respond to Questions - create Questions)
Readings for 3rd Meeting:
  • Babbie: Chapters 4-7 (pp. 92 - 245)

Third Meeting: Research Design
Overview
Group Work (Worksheet discussions)
Presentations (Chapters 4-7 in Babbie)
Readings for 4th Meeting:
  • Babbie: Chapters 8-12 (pp. 246-417)

Fourth Meeting: Design & Emergence
Overview
Group Work (Worksheet discussions)
Presentations (Chapters 8-12 in Babbie)
Readings for 5th Meeting:
  • Crotty: Chapter 4-7 (pp. 65-159)
  • Babbie: Chapters 13 (pp. 418-446)
  • S&L Chapters 1 - 5; 7; 13 - 17

Fifth Meeting: More Emergence
Overview
Group Work (Worksheet discussions)
Presentations (Chapter 13 in Babbie & S&L Chapters 1-5; 7; 13-17)
Readings for 6th Meeting:
  • Crotty: Chapter 8-10 (pp. 160-217)
  • Babbie: Chapters 14 (pp. 448-473)
  • S&L: Chapters 23-33 (pp.197-282)

Sixth Meeting: Making the Emergent Concrete
Overview
Group Work (Worksheet discussions)
Presentations (Chapter 14 in Babbie & S&L Chapters 23-33)
Readings for 7th Meeting:
  • Babbie: Chapters 15 (pp. 476-502)
Seventh Meeting:
Overview & Wrap Up
Group Work (Worksheet discussions)
Project Due