The Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg
Research Methods I (CMPSY 519)
Fall 2006

Professor: Dr. Neil Boyd

Texts:
Punch, K. (2005). Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative & Qualitative
        Approaches. (2nd edition). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA

Salkind, N. J. (2004). *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics*. (2nd
        edition). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Carver, R. H, & Nash, J. G. (2006). *Doing Data Analysis with SPSS version 14.0*.
        Thomson-Brooks/Cole: Belmont, CA.

Course Description: This semester we will explore the world of research methods in the social sciences. There are various forms of research methods, but perhaps the two most common forms by definition are *qualitative* and *quantitative*.   Quantitative research methods focus on designs that require data to be measured numerically, and subsequently statistics to be calculated in order to support empirical observations. On the other hand, qualitative research methods do not require that data be collected in a numerical form. Neither approach is necessarily better than the other, although some scholars (and most scholars historically) consider quantitative research methods to be a more valid method of ascertaining the truth. Many scholars consider quantitative research methods to be superior primarily because they are assumed to be more "objective." However, within the boundaries of this course, we will assume that both qualitative and quantitative research forms are valid, and that each has their place and time for utilization. Our focus will be on both research forms, and as such, we will learn to develop research questions, conceptual maps, and testable hypotheses. In addition, we will learn how to design and apply specific research designs, and we will learn how to statistically evaluate data. Finally, we will learn how to prepare research reports in a similar form, although in microcosm, to articles prepared for publication in empirical peer-reviewed academic journals.

Student Tasks:
        Students are required to read every assigned chapter from the reading prior to class and be ready to discuss the issues from the chapters in class (see the course schedule on pages three, four, and five).
        Students will be evaluated on this material via a series of group projects, and via short in-class writing exercises.
        Students will be required to present research articles to the class that relate to specific chapter material that we are covering, and integrate research into applied Community Psychology settings.

Beyond the general learning of the content of research methods, students will be required to create a research project that will require several steps including: (1) finding a topic of interest, (2) conducting a literature review, (3) creating a research question, (4) developing testable hypotheses, (5) designing a research study, (6) implementing a research study, (7) statistically analyzing the data from the study, and (8) writing a research report. The class will work on all phases of the research project collaboratively in consultation with Dr. Boyd. Individual student research reports will conform to the A.P.A. style.

Attendance: Attendance for this class is imperative given the nature of our process, and thus attendance will be collected during the term. If a student misses more than 1 class a letter grade deduction will be assigned. For each successive class that is missed an additional letter grade deduction will be assigned. In addition, each student is required to actively participate, and share your knowledge with the professor and other classmates.

GRADING:

Group Projects:	40%
Group Article Presentation:	10%
In-class writing assignments:	20%
Group Research Project/Report:	30%

Academic Integrity

Students are required to uphold academic integrity in all courses at Penn State University. In short, students are not allowed to cheat or plagiarize any work. **Please see the policy at : http://www.psu.edu/bsed/integrity.pdf**

Also, please see the academic integrity policy at:
http://www.psu.edu/dept/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20

And, see the academic integrity procedure at:
http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html

Notice Regarding Classroom Accommodations

It is Penn State's policy not to discriminate against qualified students with documented disabilities in its educational programs. If you have a disability related need for modifications in this course, contact your instructor and the Disability Service Coordinator in the Student Assistance Center (W117, Olmsted, ext. 6024). Instructors should be notified during the first week of classes.

Grading Scale

94+ = A, 90-93.5 = A-, 87.7-89.9 = B+, 83.33-87.6 = B, 80-83.32 = B-, 77-79.9 = C+, 70-76.9 = C, 60-69.9 = D, Below 60 = F

Semester Schedule

(S) = Salkind
(CN) = Carver & Nash
(P)= Punch

Week 1 (Sept 7th)	Introduction; Review Syllabus Data Types, Frequency and Relative Frequency Distributions Introduction to SPSS **Read**: Chapters 1 and 4 (S) **Complete**: Sessions 1 and 2 (CN)
Week 2 (Sept 14th)	Measures of Central Tendency & Variability **Read**: Chapter 2 & 3 (S) **Complete**: Sessions 3 & 4 (CN)
Week 3 (Sept 21th)	Distributions, Percentiles, and Z-Scores **Read:** Chapter 7 (S) Begin Hypothesis Testing **Read**: Chapter 6 (S) 　　　Chapter 8 (S)
Week 4 (Sept 28th)	Correlation **Read**: Chapter 5 and 13 (S) **Complete**: Session 5 (CN) Linear Regression **Read**: Chapter 14 (S) **Complete**: Sessions 15 & 16 (CN) Multiple Regression **Read**: pp. 255-256 (S) & Chapter 17 (S) **Complete**: Session 17 (CN)
Week 5 (Oct 5th)	Begin T-testing **Read**: Chapters 9 & 10 (S) **Complete**: Sessions 11 & 12 (CN) Analysis of Variance **Read**: Chapter 11 (S) and p. 298 (S) **Complete**: Session 13 (CN) Non-Parametric tests – Chi Square

Read: Chapter 15 (S)
Complete: Session 20 (CN)

Week 6
(Oct 12th)   Introduction (P)
                 Why a handbook of Applied Social Research (BR)
                 Applied Research Design: A Practical Approach
                 Read: Preface & Chapter 1 (P)

                 Some Central Issues
                 Read: Chapter 2 (P)

                 Research Questions
                 Read: Chapter 3 (P)

Week 7   From Research Questions to Data
(Oct 19th)   **Read**: Chapter 4 (P)

                 Quantitative Research Design
                 Read: Chapter 5 (P)

Week 8   Collecting Quantitative Data
(Oct 26th)   **Read**: Chapter 6 (P)

                 The Analysis of Quantitative Data
                 Read: Chapter 7 (P)

Week 9   Design in Qualitative Research
(Nov 2nd)   **Read**: Chapter 8 (P)

                 Collecting Qualitative Data
                 Read: Chapter 9 (P)

Week 10   The Analysis of Qualitative Data
(Nov 9th)   **Read**: Chapter 10 (P)

                 Mixed Methods and Evaluative Criteria
                 Read: Chapter 11 (P)

Week 11
(Nov 16th)   Designing a Study

Week 12   Designing a Study & Running of the Study

(Nov 30th)

Week 13   Designing a Study & Running of the Study
(Dec 7th)

Week 14   Analyzing Data from Your Research Study
(Dec 14th)   Review Organization of Research Paper
                 Read: Chapter 12 (P)

Week 15   Research Report Due (Electronic Submission to ANGEL)
(Final Exam Period)