PPPA 6085: Mixed Methods*

The George Washington University
Trachtenberg School of Public Policy & Public Administration (TSPPPA)

*Syllabus is subject to change.
#In the future, this course will be offered as “PPPA 8023: Mixed Methods in Research Design”. This course can be used to satisfy PPPA 8023 requirements.

Professor:
Sanjay K. Pandey, PhD, Shapiro Professor of Public Policy and Public Administration

Email:
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Meeting Time and Location:
Thursday 6:10 to 8:00 PM, MPA 601Z

Office location:
601R, MPA Building, 805 21st Street NW

Office phone:
202-994-1084

Office hours:
Thursday 3-5 PM and by Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & COURSE GOALS
In some ways, the “war of the worlds” between qualitative and quantitative approaches is over. Enlightened opinion in social sciences has moved to exploring the synergies of these two approaches. Whereas there is broad recognition of the value of mixed-methods research designs in public affairs scholarship, published studies using mixed methods research design are still uncommon. The course explores historical and philosophical foundations of mixed method research design, reviews “canonical” designs, and provides opportunities to develop and hone skills to implement mixed methods research designs. The overarching goal of this course is to provide students a foundation that will give them both the capacity and the courage to undertake and implement mixed method research designs, learn and use it in conjunction with other approaches such as experiments.

Specifically, the course goals are to:

1. Develop an understanding and appreciation of mixed methods research design
2. Provide a historical overview of theoretical and philosophical foundations of mixed methods research
3. Provide working knowledge of major mixed methods research designs
4. Provide opportunities to write and present mixed methods research for a scholarly audience
READINGS

There is no assigned text for this course. Most readings are drawn from peer-reviewed articles.

If you would like a textbook account, any one of the following books will suffice (note I am not requiring you to buy any book).


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course will be conducted in a seminar and workshop format.

There are 4 key requirements for completing the course. These are listed below and will be clarified further in class. One of my goals is to make these assignments meaningful and useful to you and so we will discuss how your learning needs can be met best and make appropriate adjustments.

For all written material you submit or share in this course, be sure to use quotation marks to denote exact quotations and provide the page number(s). Failure to attribute sources correctly may constitute plagiarism and result in a grade of F for the course.

1) Readings and Participation (30% of the grade)
You are expected to come prepared for class, having read and reflected over the readings carefully. To the extent possible, in doing the readings you should consider how you might apply what you are learning. In addition to constructive, thoughtful, and informed participation, you will be preparing numerous reports (both written and oral) that will typically be assigned one week in advance. The syllabus lays out an ambitious and demanding schedule – every effort will be made to keep to this schedule but if necessary the instructor may make adjustments that will be communicated in class.

2) Understanding and Appreciating (U&A) the Mixed Method Research Context Exercise #1-- (15% of the grade) review and annotated bibliography of qualitative studies; a cross-study comparison must be made.

3) Understanding and Appreciating (U&A) the Mixed Method Research Context Exercise #2-- (15% of the grade) – review and annotated bibliography of mixed method studies; a cross-study comparison must be made.

4) Major Project (40% of the grade)

You will have several options for the major project. For example:

1. Select a published study that uses a single method and write a research proposal to convert it to a mixed-method study.
2. Undertake a pilot project, employing a qualitative approach
3. Write a research proposal for a mixed methods study.
4. Develop the protocol for a mixed method study using an embedded design and experiments.

The expectation is that you will develop a proposal for major project early in the semester in consultation with the instructor – you are expected to have two 15-30 minute individual meetings with the instructor in the first 4 weeks of the semester to develop an initial idea and implementation plan. You are also encouraged to take advantage of time set aside later in the semester for individual consultations for the major project.
COURSE CALENDAR*
*This is subject to change. Additional readings from a supplemental reading may also be used.

Week 1 (01/14)  Introduction & Overview

Week 2 (01/21)  Emergence of the Mixed Methods Paradigm
• U&A Exercise #1 and Exercise #2 Workshop


Week 3 (01/28)  Understanding “Mixing”


Week 4 (02/04)  “Canonical” Mixed Methods Designs


• DUE – U&A Exercise #1

Week 5 (02/11)  Designing Experiments


• DUE – U&A Exercise #2
**Week 6 (02/18)  Convergent Parallel Design**


**Week 7 (02/25)  Explanatory Sequential Design**


**Week 8 (03/03)  Exploratory Sequential Design**


**Week 9 (03/10)  **Major Project Consultation**

*****Spring Break from March 14 to March 19*****
Week 10 (03/24)  Embedded Design with Experiments


Week 11 (03/31)  Disciplinary/Field-wide Assessments of Impact of Mixed Method Studies

Week 12 (04/07)  **Major Project Consultation**

Week 13 (04/14)  Review Session

Week 14 (04/21)  Major Project Presentation

•  DUE Major Project Report
Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy: Assignments turned in late will be assessed a penalty: a half-letter grade for anything from 1 – 12 hours late, a full-letter grade for 12-24 hours. Students will not receive credit for any assignments turned in after 24 hours.

Professor Pandey’s Policy on grading concerns: The professor will not consider any verbal or oral statement of concerns about grading. If the student has a grading concern, the student must write a detailed memo to the professor explaining how his/her work for a specific assignment or the course deserves a better grade.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Blackboard: This syllabus and most readings will be made available through BlackBoard. Assignments need to be submitted in hard copy on due dates indicated.

Laptop, cellphone, and other electronic technology usage: If you use a laptop during class to take notes, please only take notes. The class is a cellphone-free zone. In the case of an emergency, please step out of the classroom discreetly and without distracting others. Any use of technology to distract one’s self or others in the class may lead to suspension of the privilege to use technology during class.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Attendance and Participation Policy: There are no points for attendance but attendance is expected in every class. Excused absences must be communicated with the Professor before class. More than 2 absences (excused or unexcused) will result in a letter grade reduction to the final grade. Further, there are no additional points for class participation and class presentations; every student is expected to participate and present. Failure to participate and present will also result in a letter grade reduction.

Professionalism Policy: Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to step outside the classroom so that the learning environment is not disrupted.

Please arrive on time for all class meetings, particularly those where we have a guest speaker. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned, will result in a letter grade reduction to their final grade.
Policies in The Trachtenberg School Courses

1. Incompletes: A student must consult with the instructor to obtain a grade of I (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes in a semester. At that time, the student and instructor will both sign the CCAS contract for incompletes and submit a copy to the School Director. Please consult the TSPPPA Student Handbook or visit our website for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes.

2. Submission of Written Work Products Outside of the Classroom: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an instructor receives each written assignment. Students can submit written work electronically only with the express permission of the instructor.

3. Submission of Written Work Products after Due Date: Policy on Late Work: All work must be turned in by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit for that assignment, unless an exception is expressly made by the instructor.

4. Academic Honesty: Please consult the “policies” section of the GW student handbook for the university code of academic integrity. Note especially the definition of plagiarism: “intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.” All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. See the GW Academic Integrity Code (http://www.gwu.edu/~integrity).

5. Changing Grades After Completion of Course: No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

6. The Syllabus: This syllabus is a guide to the course for the student. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may therefore, at her/his discretion, change content and requirements during the semester. Excused absences will be given for absences due to religious holidays as per the university schedule, but please advise the instructor ahead of time.

7. Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/
Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Policies:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I personally support the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASS ROOM

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small groups), and referrals

http://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/

SECURITY

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.