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**SOCIOLOGY HONOURS**  
**DEVELOPMENT STUDIES HONOURS**  
**INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY HONOURS**

## 2026: Term 1

## ADVANCED SOCIAL RESEARCH



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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Honours module in social research! Generally, research refers to the systematic and organised effort to investigate a specific problem that needs a solution. In contrast, social research specifically involves research that draws on the social sciences for conceptual and theoretical guidance. Through conclusions drawn from purposefully collected evidence or data, social research engages with social theory or ideas from the social sciences to address various social phenomena. Over time, the knowledge produced through social research has proven to serve multiple functions, such as advancing our understanding of social events and problems, challenging existing knowledge or theories, and influencing social policies. Therefore, knowing how to conduct social research has become a highly valuable skill for graduate students.

The primary purpose of this module is to develop students' knowledge of social research methodology and techniques, enhancing their capacity as researchers. In turn, the knowledge gained from this module should help students complete their honours research essay. In the six weeks of term 1, this module will take students through the theory and practice of social research in sociology. This module will introduce students to the *what*, *why*, and *how* of doing social research.

Social research is a vast area of study with various components. Consequently, we cannot cover all aspects in a six-week module. Therefore, this module is organised around three themes that are deemed necessary to equip students with sufficient knowledge and skills to complete the honours research essay. The first theme is *preparing to do research*: in this section, we study why social research is important in the social sciences, provide a general overview of the research proposal and the research design, explain how to formulate the research problem and the questions of the research and analyse the influence of different paradigms and perspectives in social science. In addition, we explore the concepts of theory, epistemology, and ontology; we outline the different theories used in social research and apply these theories to various case studies. Next, we outline the requirements for a literature review, highlighting the different sources to search for relevant literature. We also show how to formulate the main and subsidiary research objectives and consider the ethics and politics of social research.

The second theme is *social research methods*: in this section, we study the nature of social research; qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods; how to investigate and analyse secondary data, particularly, the historical-archive method; how to write an interview schedule and a questionnaire; and we explore the different sampling methods and techniques, and the importance of choosing a sample according to the problem and goals of the research. The third theme is *data analysis*: in this section, we investigate both qualitative data analysis (how to analyse the data, identify themes and codes, and interpret the data) and quantitative data analysis (how to create a matrix, how to read cross-tabulation tables, and interpret the data). A brief introduction and exemplification of NVivo (a qualitative programme) and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) will be provided.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The learning objectives for this module are as follows:

- Develop an understanding of the necessary steps to write a compelling research proposal.
- Gain an independent, critical capacity to analyse the relevant literature and to write a literature review (with an appropriate theoretical framework).
- Acquire the knowledge to construct a suitable research design, including the interview schedule or questionnaire.
- Develop an understanding of how to analyse the data collected during the fieldwork.
- Obtain the knowledge and skills to write a research report.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

The requirements for this module are as follows:

- Participation and reflection on the readings for each seminar.
- Different oral presentations per student.
- Participation in all the class exercises as a group or individually.
- Submission of three assignments.
- Submission of the final research proposal.
- An examination.

This module will be taught in the first term of 2026. The first term starts on Monday, 9 February and ends on Friday, 20 March (6 weeks). This module is structured around a seminar format, every Monday and Thursday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm (approximately). The venue is Eden Grove, seminar room 2. Attendance is compulsory at all seminars. Students must prepare for all sessions. A leave of absence form must be completed prior to the class by students who are unable to attend the seminar. In week seven (from March 23 to 27), students will be working on finalising the research proposals.

Please email me to set up a suitable consultation date and time.

The bulk of the readings for this module consist of book chapters (see the list in the module structure below), but also you will require to read some journal articles. Some readings are compulsory, while others are recommended. You are encouraged to read extensively on each topic.

## ASSESSMENT & ASSIGNMENTS

All submissions (assignments, proposals) must include the official cover page (contained in the Sociology Handbook).

- Course marks = 50%.
- Examination = 50 %.

The course mark for this module (50%) is constituted as follows:

- Seminar presentations on the readings (20% – quantity of presentations is related to the number of students)
- Assignments (40%).
- Research proposal (40%).

*Seminar presentations:* will be graded on the quality of the content and verbal presentation – please do not read from your notes. You may include illustrations, maps, graphics, cartoons, etc. An electronic copy of your seminar presentation must be emailed to the lecturer the night before the seminar. Use Microsoft PowerPoint for your class presentation. At least *two students* will present in each seminar. You need to prepare the presentation together by engaging in a critical debate.

*Class exercises:* Students need to participate actively in all class exercises. The exercises involve exploring theories and paradigms that can be applied to your research, searching for literature and secondary data, formulating research questions and objectives, explaining the research design (unit of analysis; sampling frame, size and type; what methods and techniques are the most appropriate), completing the ethics form, constructing the questionnaire or interview schedule, analysing the data and writing an abstract and a research essay.

*Assignments:* You need to write three short essays for this module. Each assignment question will be explained in class (please refer to the assignments on page 22). Note that a *comprehensive, logical and critical argument* is expected for graduate work. Each essay should be between 1500 to 2000 words, excluding the title page and bibliography. The number of words in each assignment will vary according to the topic question. It must be referenced in accordance with the department's guidelines (see the Sociology Handbook for details). You must submit a hard copy of the essays to the secretary of the Department of Sociology, Mrs Nolvuyo Sakata and to RUConnected.

*Research proposal:* Follow the prescribed steps and criteria contained in the Honours Research Essay guidelines and requirements when writing your research proposal. The research proposal should be written under the guidance of your supervisor. Students should present their proposal write-up at the seminars. You must upload your proposal to RUConnected and submit a hard copy to Mrs Sakata on *Friday, 27 March, by 12:00 p.m.* You must also send a copy to your supervisor.

## **SOCIOLOGY HANDBOOK**

Please consult the *Sociology Handbook* for an outline of the University's policy on plagiarism, guidelines on the formatting and writing of assignments, the departmental rules regarding citations and references, and the criteria for assessing written work. A copy of the Assignment Cover Sheet, which must accompany all assignments submitted to the Department, is also available in the Handbook.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

As a department, we are committed to reflecting on our teaching practices and module content to strengthen our courses. Towards the end of the term, you will be asked to participate in a module evaluation process. Please take this seriously and evaluate the module honestly and comprehensively. Your input will be highly appreciated and will make a real contribution to enhancing teaching and learning in the department.

## **BOOKS ON WRITING A PROPOSAL**

Bell, J. & Waters, S. (2018). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers* (seventh edition). London: McGraw-Hill Education.

Brown Urban, J. & Van Eeden-Moorefield, B.M. (2018). *Designing and proposing your research project*. Washington, DC.: American Psychological Association.

Dawson, C. (2007). *A practical guide to research methods: A user-friendly manual for mastering research techniques and projects* (third edition). Oxford: How to Books.

Phillips, R. & Kara, E. (2021). *Creative writing for social research: A practical guide*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Terrell, SR. (2023). *Writing a proposal for your dissertation: Guidelines and examples* (second edition). New York: The Guilford Press.

## **USEFUL MATERIAL FOR PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

The lecturer will upload research proposals from honours students from previous years to RUConnected. Additionally, the lecturer will upload research essays from students of previous years. These will allow you to familiarise yourself with different research areas/topics, theories, literature, methods and data analysis.

## THEME ONE: PREPARING FOR RESEARCH

### SEMINAR 1: RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES [Monday, 9 February]

This seminar explores the significance of social research, examining the nature of research in the social sciences, various approaches to knowledge, and the role of methodology. It will focus on the significance of reflexivity and the dialogical co-production of knowledge in social science research. It also briefly explains some of the scholarly debates on the complex and dialogical relationship between object and subject in social science research.

#### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D. & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 1 – The scientific approach, pp. 3-22]

Laher, S., Fynn, A. & Kramer, S. (eds.) (2019). *Transforming research methods in social sciences: Case study from South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. [Chapter 24 – Trends in social science research in Africa: rigour, relevance and responsibility, pp. 393-412]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter A1 – What is research, pp. 7-14]

Sayer, A. (2010). *Method in social science: A realist approach* (revised second edition). Oxford and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 1 – Knowledge in context, pp. 8-30]

Whitaker, M.E. & Atkinson, P. (2022). *Reflexivity in social research*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan. [Chapter 1 – Variety of reflexivity, pp. 1-16]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 1 – How and why we study society]

Mouton, J., Muller, J., Franks, P. & Sono, T. (eds.) (1998). *Theory and method in South African human sciences research: Advances and innovations*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council. [Introduction – Tracking trends in theory and methods]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapters 1 – Why do research]

Smith, L.T. (2021). *Decolonising methodologies: Research and indigenous people* (third edition). London: Zed Books. [Chapter 3 – Colonising knowledges; Chapter 11 – Toward developing indigenous methodologies; Chapter 13 – Indigenous activism, indigenous research]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 1 – Research: the search for knowledge]

## **SEMINAR 2: RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND DESIGN [Thursday, 12 February]**

This seminar deals with the research proposal and research design. A compelling research proposal is a critical step in conducting research, as it sets the direction of the study regarding the research questions, goals, theoretical lens, timeframe, and methods. In addition, a research design explains the key elements of a research proposal prescribed by Rhodes University's Higher Degrees Committee. Finally, this seminar will outline the ways to ensure the quality, reliability and validity of the research process.

### **❖ Prescribed Readings**

Davies, M.B. (2007). *Doing a successful research project*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [Chapter 5 – crafting a research proposal, pp. 72-81]

Denscombe, M. (2020) *Research proposals: A practical guide* (second edition). London: Open International Publishing. [Part II – Seven steps to writing a good research proposal – Chapters 4-7; pp. 35-92]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 6 – Choosing a research design, pp. 112-128]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapters B3 – Research design, pp. 110-139; chapter B6 – Research proposal, pp. 175-178]

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapter 17 – Research design, pp. 107-113]

Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II chapter 4 – Research strategy and design, pp. 36-49; Chapter 20 – Writing a research proposal, pp. 186-192]

### **❖ Recommended Readings**

Bordens, K.S. & Abbott, B.B. (2018). *Research design and methods: A process approach* (tenth edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education. [Chapter 4 – Choosing a research design; research design, validity]

Lune, H. & Berg, B. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (ninth edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 2 – Designing qualitative research]

Mouton, J. & Marais, H.C. (1996). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (fifth edition). Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 3 – Research design]

O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 1 – research as a creative and strategic thinking process; chapter 7 – Methodological design]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 7 – Planning and writing a research proposal]

Vanderstoep, S.W. & Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons. [Chapter 1 – Understanding research]

### **SEMINAR 3: RESEARCH PROBLEM, QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESIS [Monday, 16 February]**

This seminar assists students in identifying the research problem (s) and the question (s) or hypothesis underpinning the phenomenon or phenomena to be studied; how to conceptualise the problem and formulate the question/hypothesis; and how to choose the research methods and answer the research question or prove or disprove the hypothesis. It helps students differentiate between research questions and objectives. Additionally, the seminar outlines how to formulate both the main objectives and the subsidiary objectives.

#### **❖ Prescribed Readings**

Andrews, R. (2003). *Research questions*. London and New York: Continuum. [Chapter 2 – How questions emerge from topic areas or problems, pp. 9-22; Chapter 3 – Formulating research questions, pp. 23-32; Chapter 4 – Distinguishing main from subsidiary questions, pp. 33-44]

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (third edition). Los Angeles and London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 7 – Research questions and hypothesis, pp. 129-144]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 4 – Creating research questions, pp. 72-90]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter A4 – Research questions, hypotheses and operational definitions, pp. 56-69]

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapter 15 – formulating the research problem, pp. 91-100; Chapter 16 – Research objectives, pp. 101-106]

Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II Chapter 6 – Defining the research problem, pp. 66-74]

#### **❖ Recommended Readings**

Efron, E.S. & Ravin, R. (2019). *Writing a literature review: A practical guide*. New York and London: The Guildford Press. [Chapter 3 – Choosing a review topic and formulating a research question]



Mouton, J. & Marais H.C. (1996). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (fifth edition). Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 2 – Problem formulation]

Bordens, K.S. & Abbott, B.B. (2018). *Research design and methods: A process approach* (tenth edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education. [Chapter 3 – Getting ideas for research: Developing questions, literature]

O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 3 – Research questions]

Vanderstoep, S.W. & Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons. [Chapter 2 – The who, how and why]

#### **SEMINAR 4: PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND PARADIGMS [Thursday, 19 February]**

This seminar examines how social research is underpinned by philosophical assumptions embedded in approaches or knowledge traditions encapsulated under the three philosophies of social sciences: empiricism (positivism, objectivism), idealism (rationalism, subjectivism, interpretivism) and realism. These approaches can be distinguished through an understanding of their ontological and epistemological assumptions. In addition, it examines the concept of science and scientific method in social research, different models of science and discuss the claim if Marxism is a science.

##### **❖ Prescribed Readings**

Brown, A., Fleetwood, S. & Roberts, J. (2003). *The marriage of critical realism and Marxism: Happy, unhappy or on the rocks?* London: Taylor Francis. [Chapter 1 – Critical realism and Marxism, pp. 1-30]

Burawoy, M. (1990). Marxism as science: Historical challenges and theoretical growth. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 55, pp. 775-793.

Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social research: Theory, methods and techniques*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 1 – Paradigms of social science, pp. 18-37]

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (eds) (2008). *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 2 – Epistemology and philosophy of social sciences, pp. 19-39]

Giddens, A. (1993). *New rules of sociological method: A positive critique of interpretative sociology* (second edition). Stanford: Stanford University Press. [Chapter 4 – The form of explanatory accounts, pp. 136-162]

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapters 3 – Scientific knowledge, pp. 13-16]

Rose, G. (2025). Does Marx have a method? *Thesis Eleven*, Vol. 186 (1), pp. 3-12.

### ❖ Recommended Readings

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (eds.) (2008). *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 5 – Constructivism; chapter 6 – culture and social sciences]

Giddens, A. (1993). *New rules of sociological method: A positive critique of interpretative sociology* (second edition). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. [Chapter - Conclusion: some new rules of sociological method]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter A2 – Knowledge, theories, paradigms and perspectives]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 4 – The meaning of methodology, pp. 92-124]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 2 – Philosophy of research, pp. 33-48]

### **SEMINAR 5: THEORY, ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY [Monday, 23 February]**

In this seminar, we briefly discuss what theory is and how it relates to epistemology and ontology. We also outline various social theories underpinning knowledge in social science studies, as well as the differences between theory and ideology. In addition, we highlight the different levels of theoretical abstractions, the selection of theoretical concepts and concept formation, and how to use theory in social research. We will explore Marx and Foucault's social ontology and its relationship with theoretical concepts.

### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Al-Amoudi, I. (2007). Redrawing's Foucault social ontology. *Organization*, Vol. 14 (4), pp. 543-563.

Cook, M.L. (1994). Method as ruse: Foucault and research method. *Mid-American Review of Sociology*, Vol. XVIII (1), pp. 47-65.

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (eds.) (2008). *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 2 – How many approaches in social sciences: an epistemological approach, pp. 19-39; Chapter 10 - Concepts and concepts formations, pp. 177-197]

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D. & De Waard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 2 – Conceptual foundations of research, pp. 23-43]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter A2 – Knowledge, theory and paradigms, pp. 17-41]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 3 – Theory and research, pp. 55-90]

Smith, V.R. (1984). Marx's social ontology, his critical method and contemporary social economics. *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. 42 (2), pp. 143-169.

Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II Chapter 2 – Theoretical background, pp. 14-28]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

Bordens, K.S. & Abbott, B.B. (2018). *Research design and methods: A process approach* (tenth edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education. [Chapter 2 – Developing and evaluating theories of behaviour]

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (third edition). London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 3 – The use of theory]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 2 – Methods and methodology in social sciences]

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapter 6 – epistemological dimension; Chapter 7 – methodological dimension; Chapter 8 – the sociological dimension; Chapter 9 – the ontological dimension; Chapter 18 – Conceptualisation: defining key concepts]

### SEMINAR 6: APPLIED SOCIAL THEORIES [Thursday, 26 February]

This seminar deals with applied social theories. Some case studies will be discussed to explain the role of theory in the social sciences. It also briefly explores the relationship between agency and the rationalisation of action, the relationship between structure and agency, and the relationship between order, power and conflict. Finally, it explores reflexivity in social theory and sociological reflexivity in social research.

#### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Bastalich, W. (2009). Reading Foucault: Genealogy and social research methodology and ethics. *Sociological Research Online*, Vol. 14 (2), pp. 1-10.

Ferreira Neto, J.L. (2018). Michel Foucault and qualitative research in human and social science. *Forum Qualitative: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol. 19 (3), pp. 1-18.

Flick, U., von Kardorff, E. & Steinke, I. (eds) (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 3.1 – Phenomenological life-world analysis, pp. 67-71; Chapter 3.3 - Symbolic interactionism, pp. 81-87; Chapter 3.4 – Constructivism, pp. 88-94; Chapter 3.9 - Cultural studies, pp. 118-122; Chapter 3.10 – Gender studies, pp. 123-128]

Giddens, A. (1993). *New rules of sociological method: A positive critique of interpretative sociology* (second edition). Stanford: Stanford University Press. [Chapter 2 – Agency, act identifications and communicative intent, pp. 77-99]

Sayer, A. (2010). *Method in social science: A realist approach* (revised second edition). Oxford and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 3 – Theory and method: structure, abstraction and cause, pp. 58-79]

Seale, C. (ed.) (2004). *Social research methods: A reader*. London and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 29 – Concepts and theory formation in social science, pp 211-217; Chapter 51 – Foucault and discourse, pp. 345-349; Chapter 56 – Toward a reflexive sociology, pp. 381-384]

Whitaker, M.E. & Atkinson, P. (2022). *Reflexivity in social research*. Cham: Palgrave, MacMillan. [Chapter 2 – Epistemic and disciplinary reflexivity (Bourdieu and beyond), pp. 17-35]

### ❖ Recommended Readings

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (eds.) (2008). *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 12 – Case studies and process tracing: theory and practice]

Flick, U., von Kardorff, E. & Steinke, I. (eds.) (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 2.2 – Erving Goffman]

Giddens, A. (1993). *New rules of sociological method: A positive critique of interpretative sociology* (second edition). Stanford: Stanford University Press. [Chapter 3 – The production and reproduction of social life]

Mouton, J. & Marais H.C. (1996). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (fifth edition). Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 6 – Concepts, paradigms]

Mouton, J., Muller, J., Franks, P. & Sono, T. (eds.) (1998). *Theory and method in South African human sciences research: Advances and innovations*. Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 3 – post-colonialism in South African social sciences; Chapter 12 – Action research and participatory research]

## SEMINAR 7: LITERATURE REVIEW [Monday, 2 March]

This seminar deals with the literature review component of the research process. Working with existing literature in the chosen area of research is a fundamental aspect of conducting any type of social research. Doing a thorough literature review will help you contextualise not only the direction of your study but also its contribution to existing scholarship in your chosen field of research.

### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (third edition). London: SAGE Publication. [Chapter 2 – Review of the literature, pp. 23-48]

Efron, E.S. & Ravin, R. (2019). *Writing a literature review: A practical guide*. New York, London: The Guildford Press. [Chapter 1 – What is a literature review, pp. 1-14; Chapter 4 – Locating and organising research resources, pp. 57- 73; Chapter 7 – Structuring and organising the literature review, pp. 121-155]

Flick, U. (2015). *Introducing research methodology: A beginner's guide to doing a research project*. Los Angeles and London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 3 - Reading and reviewing the literature, pp. 31-43]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter B2 – reviewing the literature, pp. 92-109]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 10 – The literature review, pp. 263-274]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

Efron, E.S. & Ravin, R. (2019). *Writing a literature review: A practical guide*. New York and London: The Guildford Press. [Chapter 11 – Acknowledging sources]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 5 – Literature review]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 5 – Literature review and ethics]

O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 6 – Working with literature]

### **SEMINAR 8: THE ETHICS AND POLITICS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH [Thursday, 5 March]**

This seminar explains the ethics process in social science research. Ethics is a necessary consideration before embarking on a research journey. This seminar guides students through both the theory of ethics and the practical process of obtaining ethical clearance from either the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee (RUESC) for medium- and high-risk projects or the Humanities Faculty Research Ethics Committee (HFREC) for low-risk projects.

#### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D. & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 4 – Ethics in social science research, pp. 63-78]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 3 – The ethics and politics in research, pp. 56-68]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter A5 – Ethics and cultural issues, pp. 77-86]

O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 4 – Power and ethics, pp. 42-55]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 23 – Ethics and related issues in research, pp. 569-589]

Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II chapter 12 – Ethics, pp. 147-162]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

Bordens, K.S. & Abbott, B.B. (2018). *Research design and methods: A process approach* (tenth edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education. [Chapter 7 – Understanding ethical issues in the research processes]

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (third edition). London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 4 – Writing strategies and ethical considerations]

Lune, H. & Berg, B. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (ninth edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 2 – Theory, literature and design; chapter 3 – ethical issues]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 5 – Literature review and ethics]

## THEME TWO: SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS

### SEMINAR 9: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS [Monday, 9 March]

This seminar explains the various qualitative and quantitative research approaches, as well as the most suitable approach to use, considering the research questions and objectives. It also examines how to combine qualitative and quantitative research, highlighting the importance of mixing methods through a process of triangulation. It then explains the nature and purpose of both interviews and surveys. Finally, it examines how to identify your unit of analysis, the type of sampling considered most pertinent, and how many interviews and questionnaires are appropriate, taking into account the field and topic of study.

#### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Flick, U., von Kardorff, E. & Steinke, I. (eds.) (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 5.2 - Qualitative interview, pp. 203-213; Chapter 4.6 – Triangulation in qualitative research, pp. 178-183]

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D. & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 12 - Qualitative research, pp. 241-260]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 20 – Mixed methods and combining data, pp. 620-658]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter B4 – Choosing methods, pp. 141-151; Chapter C3 – Questionnaires, pp. 200-216; Chapter C4 – Semi-structured interviews, pp. 218-232; Chapter C6 – Observation, pp. 254-262]

Seale, C. (ed.) (2004). *Social research methods: A reader*. London and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 77 – Quantitative and qualitative research: Further reflexions of their integration, pp. 505-509; Chapter 8 – Sampling, pp. 63-72]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 4 – Major research methods, pp. 65-91]

### ❖ Recommended Readings

Auerbach, C.F. & Silverstein, L.B. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysing*. New York and London: New York University Press. [Chapter 11 – The why of qualitative research]

Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social research: Theory, methods and techniques*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 5 – The survey; Chapter 8 – Sampling; Chapter 10 – The qualitative interview]

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (eds.) (2008). *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapters 16 – Comparing approaches, methodologies and methods]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 7 – Qualitative and quantitative measurement]

Vanderstoep, S.W. & Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons. [Chapter 3 – Quantitative research: measurement and data collection; Chapter 7 – What is qualitative research; Chapter 8 – Planning your qualitative study]

### **SEMINAR 10: CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL RESEARCH [Thursday, 12 March]**

The idea of public sociology, as introduced by Michael Burawoy, was inspired by the sociological practice in South Africa known as 'critical engagement'. Prof Mnwana will discuss this topic in the seminar exploring the evolution of critical engagement before and after Burawoy's visit to South Africa in the 1990s and offer a Southern critique of his model of public sociology. He will provide a multifaceted exploration of the formation of new knowledge through research practices of co-production. Tracing the historical development of 'critical engagement' from a Global South perspective, Mnwana and his co-authors deftly weave a bridge between the debates on public sociology and decolonial frameworks.

### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Bezuidenhout, A., Mnwana, S. & von Holdt, K. (2022). *Critical engagement with public sociology: A perspective from the Global South*. Bristol: Bristol University Press. [Chapter 1 – Introduction; Chapter 3 – Choosing sides; Chapter 6 – The antinomies and opportunities of Critical Engagement]

Burawoy, M. (1998a). Critical sociology: A dialogue between two sciences. *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 27 (1), pp. 12-20.

Burawoy, M. (1998b). The extended case method. *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 16 (1), pp. 4-33.

Burawoy, M. (2004a). Public sociologies: Contradictions, dilemmas and possibilities. *Social Forces*, Vol. 82 (4), pp. 1603-1618.

Burawoy, M. (2004b). Public sociology: South African dilemmas in a global context. *Society in Transition*, Vol. 35 (1), pp. 11-26.

Von Holdt, K. (2014). Critical engagement in the field of power: Cycles of sociological activism in post-apartheid South Africa. *Current Sociological Monograph*, Vol 62 (2), pp. 181-196.

### ❖ Recommended Readings

Burawoy, M. (ed.) (1993). *Ethnography unbound: Power and resistance in the modern metropolis*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [Chapter 2 – Reconstructing social theories]

Jeffries, V. (ed.) (2009). *Handbook of public sociology*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. [Chapter 1 – Redefining the future and nature of Sociology; Chapter 3 – Rethinking Burawoy's public sociology; Chapter 24 – Future in the making].

Kleidman, R. (2006). Public sociology, engaged scholarship and community organising. *Journal of Applied Sociology/Sociological Practice*, Vol. 23 (1), pp. 68-82.

Von Holdt, K. (n.d). *Critical engagement in South Africa: From public sociology to critical sociology and back*. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.

## **SEMINAR 11: CONSTRUCTING AND CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES [Monday, 16 March]**

This seminar focuses on the practicalities of constructing an interview schedule and a questionnaire, formulating questions to elicit clear, accurate, and in-depth answers, and creating pre-codes, codes, and themes. In addition, the seminar emphasises how to conduct in-depth interviews and administer questionnaires. Finally, we explore the concepts of quality, validity and reliability. Dr Lali Naidoo will briefly explain her research and the instruments used to collect relevant data.

### ❖ Prescribed Readings



Flick, U., von Kardorff, E. & Steinke, I. (eds.) (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 5.3. – Interviewing as an activity, pp. 209-213]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapters 13 – Questionnaires and surveys, pp. 233-254; Chapter 15 – Data quality, reliability and validity, pp. 272-295]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter C1 – Collecting data, pp. 180-189; Chapter C2 – Data collection skills, pp. 190-199; Chapter C3 – Questionnaire, pp. 200-217; Chapter C4 – Semi-structured interview, pp. 218-133]

Seale, C. (ed.) (2004). *Social research methods: A reader*. London and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 37 – Deep interviewing, pp. 257-260; Chapter 39 – The methodology of focus groups, pp. 269-272; Chapter 48 – Reliability and validity, pp. 325-330]

Thomas, C.G. (2021). *Research methodology and scientific writing* (second edition). Cham: Springer Nature. [Chapter 6 - Collection and analysis of data, pp. 135-167]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

O’Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 11 - Data collection]

Olsen, W. (2012). *Data collection: Key debates and methods in social research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II, Chapters 2.2. – Transcript; Chapter 2.3. - Coding; Chapter 2.4. – Meaning; Chapter 5.1. – Operationalisation; Chapter 5.2. – Measurement]

Vanderstoep, S.W. & Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons. [Chapter 10 – Qualitative research tools: Interviews, focus groups and observation]

## THEME THREE: DATA ANALYSIS

### SEMINAR 12: DATA ANALYSIS IN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH [Thursday, 19 March]

In this section, we outline the various methods for analysing data in both qualitative and quantitative research. The types of data analysis include statistical analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, and content analysis, among others. We will pay particular attention to thematic analysis. Qualitative analysis involves creating themes and codes, while quantitative analysis entails coding, tabulating, and creating a matrix. Computer programmes designed to analyse data will be illustrated briefly (N-VIVO

and Atlas-ti for qualitative data analysis, and SPSS for quantitative data analysis). Finally, case studies will be used to outline the analysis of different types of data.

#### ❖ Prescribed Readings

Auerbach, C.F. & Silverstein, L.B. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysing*. New York and London: New York University Press. [Part III – Analysing your first research study, pp. 31-76]

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D. & De Waard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 14 – Data preparation and analysis, pp. 287-301]

Laher, S., Fynn, A. & Kramer, S. (eds.) (2019). *Transforming research methods in social sciences: Case study from South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. [Chapter 2 – Non-experimental research designs: Spatial distribution and social ecology of male homicide, pp. 19-35; Chapter 15 – The power of critical discourse analysis: Investigating female-perpetrated sex abuse victim, pp. 236-250]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter D3 – Statistical analysis, pp. 342-370; Chapters D4-D5 – Thematic analysis, pp. 372-386]

Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 10 – quantitative data analysis, pp. 109-128; Chapter 11 – Qualitative data analysis, pp. 129-146]

#### ❖ Recommended Readings

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 16 – Analysis of qualitative data]

Hwang, S. (2008). Utilizing qualitative data analysis software: A review of Atlas.ti. *Social Science Computer Review*, Vol. 26 (4), pp. 519-527.

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapter 25 – Data analysis and interpretation]

Mouton, J. & Marais H.C. (1996). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (fifth edition). Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 5 – Analysis and interpretation]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 12 – Analysis of quantitative data; Chapter 14 – Analysis of qualitative data]

O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The essential guide to doing research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 12 – Data management and analysis]

Olsen, W. (2012). *Data collection: Key debates and methods in social research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Part II, Chapters 5.4. – Data cleaning; Chapter 5.5. – Data extraction]

Paulus, T.N. & Lester, J.N. (2016). ATLAS.ti for conversation and discourse analysis studies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. Vol. 19 (4), pp. 405-428.

Seale, C. (ed.) (2004). *Social research methods: A reader*. London and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 19 – Interpretation of statistical relations]

Whitaker, M.E. & Atkinson, P. (2022). *Reflexivity in social research*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan. [Chapter 3 – Methodological reflexivity; Chapter 4 – Living and working with reflexivity]

Woods, M., Paulus, T., Atkins, D.P. & Macklin, R. (2016). Advancing qualitative research using qualitative data analysis software (CDAS)? Reviewing potential versus practice in publishing studies using ATLAS.ti and NVivo, 1994-2013. *Social Science Computer Review*, Vol. 34 (5), pp. 597-617.

## SUMMARY OF THE MODULE

The table below outlines the topics to be covered and the exercises to be completed in each seminar. Please *bring a laptop to each seminar*. The practical exercises will be related to your chosen research topic and other examples used in the seminars.

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
WEEK 1 - 4: Preparing for Research		
1	Social research in social sciences	List and provide examples of different areas of research.  Discuss and choose a topic/area of research you want to focus on and explain what knowledge you have on the topic.
2	Research proposal and design	Drawing on proposals from previous years, outline the different steps involved in writing a research proposal. including the research design.  Outline a tentative structure for your research proposal.

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
3	Research problems and questions	<p>Revise research problems and questions from previous research proposals.</p> <p>Identify the problem of the area of study and construct the research questions of your research.</p>
4	Philosophy of science and paradigms	<p>Briefly explain the different paradigms in social sciences and identify the paradigms used in other research proposals.</p> <p>Define what paradigm/s you are going to use in your research, given the problem and questions of your research.</p>
5	Theory, ontology and epistemology	<p>Discuss the main differences between theory, ontology and epistemology.</p> <p>Outline the main theories used in sociology and explain which theory you will choose for your research and why.</p>
6	Applied social theories	<p>Illustrate what theories Honours students from previous years have used and if this inspires you to follow a particular theory. Case studies will be provided to analyse during the seminar.</p> <p>Choose a theory and identify what theoretical concepts you will choose to work with from the chosen social theory.</p>
7	Literature review and objectives	<p>Identify the main sources you will use to find your literature, and what type of literature review you will develop. What gap in the existing literature do you wish to address. Examine whether the literature has been developed globally, regionally, or locally.</p> <p>Discuss the objectives of your research and differentiate between main objectives and subsidiary ones. Provide examples of literature and objectives from previous Honours students' research.</p>

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
8	The ethics and politics of social research.	<p>You will learn how to complete the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee (RUESC) form, and how to write the informed consent form.</p> <p>Students should debate the ethical considerations, considering the area/s of the chosen research, the sampling and the unit of analysis.</p>
<b>WEEK 5-6: Social Research Methods</b>		
9	Qualitative and quantitative research methods and mixed methods	<p>Choose the research method/s you will use, given the theoretical framework and objectives of your research. Provide a clear explanation of why you chose this method/s.</p> <p>Identify what technique/s and instrument/s of data collection you will use in your research. In addition, highlight the unit of analysis and the sampling frame and type you will use.</p> <p>Practice with interview schedules and questionnaires written by students in previous years.</p>
10	Critical engagement with Public Sociology	Prof. Sonwabile Mnwana will conduct this seminar.
11	Conducting interviews and questionnaires.	<p>You will practice conducting interviews with other students (you will both take turns to ask and answer questions).</p> <p>Responses will be analysed in the seminars to determine the level of reliability and validity of the response.</p>
<b>WEEK 6: Data Analysis</b>		

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
12	Data analysis in qualitative and quantitative research	<p>Exercise with examples of previous research done by Honours students. Review various research essays done and explain how they analysed the data.</p> <p>Identify how to create themes, codify and tabulate qualitative data, and interlink the data with the theory and literature used in your research. Do the same for quantitative research: coding, tabulating, and creating tables and graphics.</p>

## ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE MODULE

### First assignment: 20 February (1000 to 1500 words)

Briefly discuss the steps of the research design and submit a concept note stating your research topic, the research problem, and the steps needed to achieve your goal. In addition, elaborate on the relationship between subject and object as explained by Sayer (2010) in Chapter 1, "Knowledge in Context", and explain if you can apply this subject/object explanation in your study.

### Second assignment: 6 March (1500 to 2000 words)

Briefly explain the various philosophical paradigms of social sciences and their relationship with theories, particularly Marx and Foucault's theories. Explain what methods and methodologies these theories use, highlighting the relationship between structure and agency. Finally, explain what paradigm you are applying to your research topic and how it is connected to the theory and method you will use in your study, focusing on the relationship between structure and agency.

### Third assignment: 17 March (1500 to 2000 words)

Critically analyse how the theoretical analysis of 'public sociology', as explained by Michael Burawoy, has contributed to a more reflexive sociology. In addition, explain how the method or social process of critical engagement in the South, combining public sociology, policy sociology, and critical sociology, may, in practice, produce a new co-productive knowledge.