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SOCIOLOGY HONOURS
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY HONOURS

2025: 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 an invaluable skill for graduate students.

The primary purpose of this module is to develop students' knowledge of social research methodology and social research techniques to enhance their capacity as researchers. In turn, the knowledge gained from this module should assist students in completing 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 perspective in social science. In addition, we explore what theory, epistemology, and ontology are; 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 and highlight the different sources to search for relevant literature, 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 qualitative data analysis (how to analyse the data, identify themes and codes, and interpret the data) and quantitative data analysis (how to do a matrix, how to read cross-tabulation tables and interpret the data). A brief introduction and exemplification of NVivo (qualitative programme) and SPSS (Statistical Programme for 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 weekly assignments to cover the different areas of the proposal.
- Submission of the final research proposal.
- An examination.

This module will be taught in the first term of 2025. The first term starts on Monday, 10 February and ends on Friday, 21 March (6 weeks) This module is structured around a seminar format, every Monday and Thursday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm (approximately). Attendance is compulsory at all seminars. Students must prepare for all sessions. A completion of a leave of absence form prior to the class is required from students who are unable to attend a seminar. The week seven (from 24 March to 28 March) students will be working on finalising the research proposals.

Please email me (c.martinezmullen@ru.ac.za) to set-up a suitable consultation date and time.

The bulk of the readings for this module are book chapters (see list in the module structure below). Some of the readings are compulsory, and 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 marks for this module (50%) are 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 can 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 see assignments: pp. 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 departmental guidelines (see the Sociology Handbook for the guidelines). You must submit a hard copy of the essays to the secretary of the Department of Sociology, Mrs Nolvuyo Sakata.

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 the students' proposal write-up at the seminars. You must upload your proposal to RUConnected and submit a hard copy to Mrs Sakata on *Friday, 28 March, no later than 12:00 pm*. 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. In addition, the lecturer will upload some research essays from students from 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, 10 February]

This seminar deals with the importance of social research, focusing on the nature of research in the social sciences, the different approaches to knowledge, and the role of methodology. It will focus on the significance of reflexivity and 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, Ch., 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 Limited. [Chapter A1 – What is research, pp. 7-14]

Sayer, A. (2010). *Method in social science: A realist approach* (revised second edition). Oxon 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, 13 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, the goals, the theoretical lens, the timeframe, and the 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, 17 February]

This seminar assists students in identifying the research problem/s and the question/s or hypothesis underpinning the phenomenon or phenomena to be study; how to conceptualise the problem and formulate the question/hypothesis; and how to choose the research methods and to answer the research question or prove or disprove the hypothesis. It assists students in differentiating research questions from objectives. In addition, the seminar outlines how to formulate 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, 20 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.

❖ Prescribed Readings

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, California: 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]

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]

❖ 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]

SEMINAR 5: THEORY, ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY [Monday, 24 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. Finally, we highlight the different levels of theoretical abstractions, the selection of theoretical concepts and concept formation, and how to use theory in social research.

❖ Prescribed Readings

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, Ch., 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]

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). California, London: SAGE Publication, Ltd. [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, 27 February]

This seminar deals with applied social theories. Some case studies will be provided to explain the role of theory in 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

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, California: 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). Oxon 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, California: 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, 3 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 part of doing any kind of social research. Doing a thorough literature review will help you contextualize 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). California, 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, 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, 6 March]

This seminar explains the ethics process in social science research. Ethics is a necessary consideration before embarking on a research journey. This seminar takes students through both the theory of ethics and the practical process of applying for 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. Dr Janet Hayward (Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee and Coordinator of Research Ethics) will teach the seminar and explain how to complete the ethics form.

❖ Prescribed Readings

Frankfort-Nachmias, Ch., 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]

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). California, 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]

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

THEME TWO: SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS

SEMINAR 9: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS [Monday, 10 March]

This seminar explains the different qualitative and quantitative research approaches, and the most appropriate approach to use given 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 an interview and a survey. 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 according to 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, Ch., 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, CA: 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: HISTORICAL ARCHIVE METHODS [Thursday, 13 March]

There is a large body of existing data that can be used for research, including interview collections and transcriptions, newspaper and press-clipping collections, photograph and video collections, private papers, and documents generated by organisations like churches, corporations, governments, and unions. Many of these materials are housed in specific archives: repositories of documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people. Notable archives include local, provincial, and national government archives, specialised library collections, and university archival holdings. Although some archival data is digitised and online – especially more recent documents -- most archival materials exist only in physical form at specific locations. This seminar, taught by Prof. Lucien van der Walt, will explain how and when to use archival materials, how to locate and access such materials, and the distinction between archival research and so-called "desktop research."

❖ Prescribed Readings

Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social Research: Theory, methods and techniques*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 7 – Official statistics, pp. 194-208; Chapter 11 – The use of documents, pp. 287-308]

Flick, U., von Kardorff, E. & Steinke, I. (eds) (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 5.15 – Analysis of documents and recordings, pp. 290-295]

Gronmo, S. (2020). *Social research methods: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications. [Chapter 11 – Documentary sources and qualitative content analysis, pp. 208-222]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter C8 – Documents, pp. 276-283; Chapter C10 – Collecting data using computer-mediated communication, pp. 292- 314]

Seale, C. (ed) (2004). *Social research methods: A reader*. London and New York: Routledge. [Chapter 42 – Qualitative data archiving, pp. 290-294]

❖ Recommended Readings

Frankfort-Nachmias, Ch., Nachmias, D. & De Waard, J. (2015). *Research methods in social science* (eighth edition). New York: Worth Publishers. [Chapter 13 – Secondary data and content analysis]

Lune, H & Berg, B. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (ninth edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 9 – Social historical research and oral traditions]

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter C9 – Secondary sources of data]

Neuman, W.L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (seventh edition). Essex: Pearson Education. [Chapter 11 – Nonreactive research and secondary analysis]

SEMINAR 11: CONSTRUCTING AND CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES [Monday, 17 March]

This seminar focuses on the practicalities of constructing an interview schedule and a questionnaire, how to formulate questions to acquire a clear, accurate and deep answer, and how to create pre-codes, codes and themes. After that, the seminar's emphasis is placed on how to conduct an in-depth interview and administer a questionnaire. Finally, we explore the concepts of quality, validity and reliability. Dr Lali Naidoo will briefly explain her research and the instruments of data collection used to obtain relevant information.

❖ 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, CA: 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, 20 March]

In this section, we will outline the different methods for the analysis of data in 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, Ch., 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. & Marais H.C. (1996). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (fifth edition). Pretoria: HSRC Press. [Chapter 5 – Analysis and interpretation]

Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. [Chapter 25 – Data 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 details the topics to be covered and the list of exercises to be done 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	<p>List and provide examples of different areas of research.</p> <p>Discuss and choose a topic/area of research you want to focus on and explain what knowledge you have on the topic.</p>
2	Research proposal and design	<p>Drawing on proposals from previous years, outline the different steps involved in writing a research proposal. including the research design.</p> <p>Outline a tentative structure for your research proposal.</p>
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>

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
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>
8	<p>The ethics and politics of social research.</p> <p>Dr Janet Hayward will teach this seminar.</p>	<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>
WEEK 5-6: Social Research Methods		

Seminar	Topic	Exercises
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	Historical archive methods	Prof. Lucien van der Walt will teach 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>
WEEK 6: Data Analysis		
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 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 Marxist and Bourdieu's theories. Explain how these theories analyse 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 you will use in your study, focusing on the relationship between structure and agency.

Third assignment: 17 March (1500 to 2000 words)

Highlight the main advantages of the qualitative and quantitative research methods and justify your research method. In addition, explain how it is connected to the objectives/goals of your research and provide a theoretical explanation of your chosen sampling method.