**Social Science Research: Methods and Writing：**

**Instructor**: Xiangnan Chai, PhD., Assistant Research Fellow

**Instructor Affiliation**: Sociology Department, School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Nanjing University

**Semester**: The Fall semester of the 2021-2022 Academic year

**Course Level**: Graduate and Seniors

**Credit**: 2

**Course Description** (within 150 words)

This course is to help graduates as well seniors to build up basic understandings of social research methods, including quantitative and qualitative methods, and to learn how to propose research questions using these methods. Specifically, our course covers topics on basic statistics, conducting social survey, making psychological scales, doing structured and semi-structured interview, and organizing field studies. Students are required to learn and practice these methods via reading and practicing. Importantly, they are encouraged to propose research questions of own interests, join group research, and further present their findings. Our course is designed to inspire students’ research passion under strict training on methods, writing, and research ethics.

**Assessment**

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| --- | --- |
| Class attendance | 10% |
| Class participation | 15% |
| Article review (Individual work) \* | 25% |
| Group research proposal \*\* | 25% |
| Group research presentation\*\*\*  | 25% |

Note.

\*. Article review (Individual work) should be within 1000-1500 words.

\*\*. Group research proposal should be within 1500-2000 words.

\*\*\*. Group research presentation should be within 15-20 mins. Contributions of each group member should be presented clearly.

**Textbook: No textbook will be used. Reading materials are seen below.**

**Syllabus：**

**1. Week 1: Get together**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai***This class introduces key practical aspects of the course including the syllabus, assignments, and presentations.*

**2. Week 2: Basic quantitative research: Part 1.**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai**

*Introduction to basic quantitative research. Part 1: Variables and descriptive statistics.*

**Readings:**

* Fayers, P. M., & Hand, D. J. (2002). Causal variables, indicator variables and measurement scales: an example from quality of life. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society), 165(2), 233-253.
* Ledford, J. R., Lane, J. D., & Gast, D. L. (2018). Dependent variables, measurement, and reliability. In Single case research methodology (pp. 97-131). Routledge.

**3. Week 3: Basic quantitative research: Part 2.**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai**

*Introduction to basic quantitative research. Part 2: Data and Sampling.*

**Readings:**

* Acharya, A. S., Prakash, A., Saxena, P., & Nigam, A. (2013). Sampling: Why and how of it. Indian Journal of Medical Specialties, 4(2), 330-333.
* Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (2014). Validity and reliability of the experience-sampling method. In Flow and the foundations of positive psychology (pp. 35-54). Springer, Dordrecht.
* Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). Collecting quantitative data: Sampling and measuring. Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences, 2, 131-159.
* Larson, R., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). The experience sampling method. In Flow and the foundations of positive psychology (pp. 21-34). Springer, Dordrecht.

**4. Week 4: Basic quantitative research: Part 3.**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai**

*Introduction to basic quantitative research. Part 3: Survey and questionnaire making.*

**Readings:**

* Mann, L., Burnett, P., Radford, M., & Ford, S. (1997). The Melbourne Decision Making Questionnaire: An instrument for measuring patterns for coping with decisional conflict. Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, 10(1), 1-19.
* Tennant, A., Hillman, M., Fear, J., Pickering, A., & Chamberlain, M. A. (1996). Are we making the most of the Stanford Health Assessment Questionnaire?. Rheumatology, 35(6), 574-578.

**5. Week 5: Basic quantitative research: Part 4.**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai**

*Introduction to basic quantitative research. Part 4: Data cleaning.*

**Readings:**

* Rahm, E., & Do, H. H. (2000). Data cleaning: Problems and current approaches. IEEE Data Eng. Bull., 23(4), 3-13.
* Van den Broeck, J., Cunningham, S. A., Eeckels, R., & Herbst, K. (2005). Data cleaning: detecting, diagnosing, and editing data abnormalities. PLoS Med, 2(10), e267.

**6. Week 6: Advanced quantitative research: Part 1.**

**Instructor: Xiangnan Chai**

*Introduction to advanced quantitative research. Part 1: Regressions: OLS and logit.*

**Readings:**

* Hayes, A. F., & Matthes, J. (2009). Computational procedures for probing interactions in OLS and logistic regression: SPSS and SAS implementations. Behavior research methods, 41(3), 924-936.
* Noreen, E. (1988). An empirical comparison of probit and OLS regression hypothesis tests. Journal of Accounting Research, 119-133.

**7. Week 7: Advanced quantitative research: Part 2.**

**Instructor: Yunsong Chen**

*Introduction to advanced quantitative research. Part 1: Big data and machine learning.*

**Readings:**

* Chen, Y., He, G., & Yan, F. (2021). Understanding China through Big Data: Applications of Theory-oriented Quantitative Approaches.
* Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (2014). Validity and reliability of the experience-sampling method. In Flow and the foundations of positive psychology (pp. 35-54). Springer, Dordrecht.
* Davenport, T. H., Barth, P., & Bean, R. (2012). How'big data'is different.
* Labrinidis, A., & Jagadish, H. V. (2012). Challenges and opportunities with big data. Proceedings of the VLDB Endowment, 5(12), 2032-2033.

**8. Week 8: Advanced quantitative research: Part 3.**

**Instructor: Yunsong Chen**

*Introduction to advanced quantitative research. Part 1: How to write quantitative research articles.*

**Readings:**

* Hartley, J., & Chesworth, K. (2000). Qualitative and quantitative methods in research on essay writing: no one way. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 24(1), 15-24.
* Lutsky, N. (2008). Arguing with numbers: Teaching quantitative reasoning through argument and writing. Calculation vs. context: Quantitative literacy and its implications for teacher education, 59-74.
* Nenty, H. J. (2009). Writing a quantitative research thesis. International Journal of Educational Sciences, 1(1), 19-32.
* Silvia, P. J. (2007). How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing. American Psychological Association.

**9. Week 9: Psychological research methods**

**Instructor: Yuchen Shen**

*Introduction to psychological scale, its credibility and validity, and how to develop one.*

**Readings:**

* Clark, L. A., & Watson, D. (2016). Constructing validity: Basic issues in objective scale development.
* Simms, L. J. (2008). Classical and modern methods of psychological scale construction. Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2(1), 414-433.

**10. Week 10: Doing readings**

*In this week, students are free to reviewing readings assigned in previous weeks.*

**11. Week 11: Qualitative research: Part 1.**

**Instructor: Zhaojin Lyu**

*Introduction to qualitative research. Part 1: Content analysis.*

**Readings:**

* Huang, Yiping, 2016, “Understanding China's Belt & Road Initiative: Motivation, framework and assessment”, *China Economic Review,* 40: 314-321.
* Summers, Tim, 2016, “China's 'New Silk Roads': sub-national regions and networks of global political economy”, *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9): 1628-1643.

**12. Week 12: Qualitative research: Part 2.**

**Instructor: Zhaojin Lyu**

*Introduction to qualitative research. Part 2: Structured and semi-structured interview.*

**Readings:**

* Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi‐structured interview guide. Journal of advanced nursing, 72(12), 2954-2965.

**13. Week 13: Qualitative research: Part3.**

**Instructor: Zhaojin Lyu**

*Introduction to qualitative research. Part 3: How to write qualitative papers.*

**Readings:**

* Holloway, I. M. M. Y. (2005). Qualitative writing. Qualitative research in health care, 270-286.
* Weaver-Hightower, M. B. (2018). How to write qualitative research. Routledge.

**14. Week 14: Qualitative research: Part 4.**

**Instructor: Yudong Yang**

*Introduction to qualitative research. Part 4: How to conduct a field study? Theories, methods, research ethics, and problems we face. Also the due of submitting article review.*

**Readings:**

* Moore, A. (1998). Cultural anthropology: The field study of human beings. Rowman & Littlefield.
* Rieman, J. (1996). A field study of exploratory learning strategies. ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI), 3(3), 189-218.

**15. Week 15: Qualitative research: Part 5.**

**Instructor: Yudong Yang**

*Introduction to qualitative research. Part 4: A specific case: Field study on older residents. Also the due of submitting group research proposal.*

**Readings:**

* Chaudhry, A. G., Ahmed, A., Zeeshan, M., & Mehmood, R. (2014). Income status and medical history of older persons in Rawalpindi: anthropology of ageing. In Medical Forum (Vol. 25, No. 6, pp. 13-17).
* Dossa, P. A. (1994). Critical anthropology and life stories: case study of elderly Ismaili Canadians. Journal of cross-cultural gerontology, 9(3), 335-354.

**16. Week 16: Student presentation: Part 1.**

**17. Week 17: Student presentation: Part 2.**