

Research Methods for Environmental Studies
EST 255, Section 1; Spring 2016
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:50am in 5 Illick Hall

Instructor: Professor Andrea Parker, 108a Marshall Hall, amparker@esf.edu, office hours: 1:00-2:00pm Tuesday/Thursday, appointments preferred

Teaching Assistant: Lauren Tarr, information TBA on Blackboard

Course Description: This is an introductory methods course focused on research techniques used in environmental and natural resources social science research. This course reviews quantitative and qualitative methodologies for environmental studies research including but not limited to questionnaires, in-depth interviews, rhetorical critiques and content analyses.

Pre- or Co-requisite: EWP 290

Learning Outcomes: After completing this course students should be able to: (1) identify methods used in environmental studies research; (2) interpret research results on environmental and natural resources communication and policy; (3) apply research techniques to environmental and natural resources issues; and (4) make recommendations based on research findings for environmental and natural resources issues.

Required Readings

Book

Berger, A. A., (2016). Media and communication research methods: an introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches, 4th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Chapters/Articles/Handouts

Readings will be distributed via Blackboard at least one week prior to the date of discussion.

Assignments

Attendance: In order to receive full participation points, you are expected to: (1) attend all classes with the exception of excused absences; (2) participate in all class activities and discussions; (3) come to class prepared including bringing your completed readings to class with you. This counts as 5% of your final grade.

IRB Certification: Complete the CITI Human Subjects Research training for Social-Behavioral-Educational (SBE) Modules (required modules). Go to <https://www.citiprogram.org/>, create an account using Syracuse University as your home institution, then complete the training. Submit a copy of your certification report via Blackboard by class-time on February 9th. This counts as 5% of your final grade.

In-Class Assignments: These assignments correspond to different in-class activities, submitted as a group or individually. Please refer to the schedule for dates. These are graded assignments (eight total during the semester) and will count as 10% of your final grade.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given during the first 15 minutes of class and will address lecture materials and class readings. Quizzes are not cumulative. Lecture slides will be made available for study after the lecture date. Please refer to the schedule for dates. There are a total of four quizzes; the combined quizzes count for 10% of your final grade.

Exams: There will be a total of three exams over the course of the semester. Exam #1 will be on February 16th and exam #2 will be on March 29th. These first two exams are not cumulative. The final exam (TBA) *will* be cumulative. Exams will address lecture materials, class readings and problem-solving scenarios. A review session for the final exam will occur the last day of class. The first two exams each count for 20% of your final grade, and the final exam counts for 30% of your final grade.

Tentative Schedule with Readings and Assignments (subject to change)

| Date | Topic | Readings | Activities | Assignments |
|-------------|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Jan. 19 | Why research? | N/A | Review syllabus; lecture | N/A |
| Jan. 21 | Data and IRB | Berger 2014 intro. & ch. 1 | Lecture; the data game | N/A |
| Jan. 26 | Library research | Berger 2014 ch. 2 | Lecture | N/A |
| Jan. 28 | Library research | Weigold 2001 | Lecture; the great article hunt | In-class assignment |
| Feb. 2 | Textual analyses | Berger 2014 ch. 3 & 4 | Lecture | Quiz #1 |
| Feb. 4 | Textual analyses | Berger 2014 ch. 5, 6, 7 | Lecture | N/A |
| Feb. 9 | Interviews and focus groups | Berger 2014 ch. 8 | Lecture | Due: IRB certificate |
| Feb. 11 | Interviews and focus groups | Bradbury et al. 2009 | Lecture; interview activity | In-class assignment |
| Feb. 16 | Exam | N/A | N/A | Exam #1 |
| Feb. 18 | Historical analyses | Berger 2014 ch. 9 | Lecture | N/A |
| Feb. 23 | Historical analyses | Endres 2011 | Lecture; discussion | N/A |
| Feb. 25 | Ethnography and participant observation | Berger 2014 ch. 10 & 11 | Lecture | N/A |
| Mar. 1 | Ethnography and participant observation | Milstein 2008 | Lecture; participant observation activity | In-class assignment |
| Mar. 3 | Qualitative data analysis | N/A | Lecture | N/A |
| Mar. 8 | Content analysis | Berger 2014 ch. 12 | Lecture | N/A |
| Mar. 10 | Content analysis | Boykoff and Boykoff 2007 | Lecture; content analysis activity | Quiz #2; in-class activity |
| Mar. 15 | Spring break | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Mar. 17 | Spring break | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Mar. 22 | Surveys | Berger 2014 ch. 13 | Lecture | N/A |

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| Mar. 24 | Surveys | Teel and Manfredro 2010 | Lecture; survey activity | In-class assignment |
| Mar. 29 | Exam | N/A | N/A | Exam #2 |
| Mar. 31 | Experiments | Berger 2014 ch. 14 | Lecture | N/A |
| Apr. 5 | Experiments | Spence and Pidgeon 2010 | Lecture; experiment activity | In-class activity |
| Apr. 7 | Policy analyses | Tromborg et al. 2007 | Lecture | Quiz #3 |
| Apr. 12 | Cost/benefit analyses | Carter and Keeler 2008 | Lecture; cost/benefit activity | In-class activity |
| Apr. 14 | Quantitative data analysis | N/A | Lecture | N/A |
| Apr. 19 | Using Excel | Excel Handout | Lecture | N/A |
| Apr. 21 | Using Excel | N/A | Lecture | Quiz #4 |
| Apr. 26 | Statistics | Berger 2014 ch. 15 | Lecture | N/A |
| Apr. 28 | Report writing | Berger 2014 ch. 16 & 17 | Lecture; writing activity | In-class activity |
| May 3 | Review session | N/A | Review session | N/A |
| TBA | Final Exam | N/A | N/A | Final Exam |

Grading

Re-Grading Policy: Requests for an assignment re-grade are allowed assuming valid cause is given (e.g., miscalculation or information overlooked). Potential outcomes of a re-grade can be as follows: grade increases, grade decreases or grade remains the same (i.e., equal points added and taken away or no change made). Such requests have to be made within one week (7 days) of receiving a grade or it will not be considered for re-grading.

| Assignment | Points | Grade Percentage |
|--------------------------|--------|------------------|
| Attendance | 20 | 5% |
| IRB Certificate | 20 | 5% |
| In-class assignments (8) | 40 | 10% |
| Quizzes (4) | 40 | 10% |
| Exam #1 | 80 | 20% |
| Exam #2 | 80 | 20% |
| Final exam | 120 | 30% |
| Total | 400 | 100% |

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| A | 93-100% |
| A- | 90-92% |
| B+ | 87-89% |
| B | 83-86% |
| B- | 80-82% |
| C+ | 77-79% |
| C | 73-76% |
| C- | 70-72% |
| D | 60-69% |
| F | 59% or below |

Students with Learning and Physical Disabilities: SUNY-ESF works with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Syracuse University, who is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations. Students can contact ODS at 804 University Avenue- Room 309, 315-443-4498 to schedule an appointment and discuss their needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Students may also contact the ESF Office of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, 315-470-6660 for assistance with the process. To learn more about ODS, visit <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>. Authorized accommodation forms must be in the instructor's possession one week prior to any anticipated accommodation. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty is a breach of trust between a student, one's fellow students, or the instructor(s). By registering for courses at ESF you acknowledge your awareness of the ESF Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.esf.edu/students/handbook/StudentHB.05.pdf>), in particular academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism and cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct. The Academic Integrity Handbook contains further information and guidance (<http://www.esf.edu/students/integrity/>). Infractions of the academic integrity code may lead to academic penalties as per the ESF Grading Policy (<http://www.esf.edu/provost/policies/documents/GradingPolicy.11.12.2013.pdf>).