ODKM710 Inquiry

Spring 2016

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DRAFT

ODKM710. Spring 2016
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Professor Anne L. Washington, PhD

ODKM710 Social and Organizational Inquiry

DRAFT SYLLABUS January 5, 2016

E-mail: awashi14@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-3 pm and by appointment

Spring 2016 – Cohort 20.
Six Executive Sessions

Topics:
- Interviewing
- Validity and ethics
- Interpretive research

Learning Outcomes:
- Apply academic research to real-world situations
- Ask questions that can be systematically answered
- Generate, interpret & present qualitative data results
- Reason with data, identify assumptions & build arguments
- Give compelling oral presentations.

Classroom Tools:
- GMU Blackboard Classroom Technology https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu
  Students will be notified by email when Blackboard is available.

Tentative Schedule:
1. What is inquiry?
2. What is fieldwork?
3. How do we ask questions? ATTENDANCE ESSENTIAL!
4. How do we recognize answers?
5. How do we report results?
6. Who is our Cohort?
About ODKM710:
Social and Organizational Inquiry introduces ways to systematically think about ambiguous, complex, naturalistic real-world problems. Our method of inquiry has a great emphasis on ethics, consistency, credibility and reflection. Our main task as a class will be to build research skills to design, conduct and understand naturalistic field studies. Because social inquiry is open to interpretation, we will learn how to support credible conclusions recognizing that there are other perspectives.

Experience is an essential aspect of this method and this course. The research of David A. Kolb showed that experiential learning is the essence of adult learning. Conducting research is a deeper experience than watching it. Asking your own questions is different from reading an interview transcript. Through practice, your personal challenges and strengths will become clear.

As the research foundation for the Organization Development and Knowledge Management Program (ODKM) program, this course provides research experience and builds analytic skills. Assignments will initially emphasize experiment over outcome to encourage intellectual curiosity. This is different from traditional academic work where students are evaluated by the ability to repeat facts.

The assessment and assignment structure is designed to provide a safe place to practice and refine research skills. For example, students will design and conduct an un-graded research project called the Class Inquiry (CLI) Project. It is a semester-long reflective study about students in the program. Aside from the opportunity to get to know your classmates better, it provides us a tangible experience of what it means to study others and to be studied.

ODKM710 Assignments:

Assignments for assessment include online participation, class participation, a group presentation, an individual semester-long project, and many exercises given in class or as homework. Homework exercises will drive activities in the classroom.

The assignments build on each other and are inter-related. The first assignment is an ongoing requirement to participate in the online discussion board. The second is a group assignment where students will deeply explore one social theory and connect it to real-world experiences. The third assignment is actually a series of research exercises that will be given as homework or in-class activities. In the final assignment, each student will conduct individual research and write a paper summarizing results across the entire semester. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to conduct dependable research through self-reflection, consistency and well-supported reasoning.
ODKM710 Books:

Required Books

Suggested Books
Suggested books are strongly encouraged to provide practical assistance if you are not familiar with the methods needed to complete the assignments.
  
  *This book introduces qualitative research in a uniquely practical manner. Firstly, it recognizes that for many novice researchers, data, rather than methods are the point of departure. Secondly, it advocates a progressive accumulation of skills.*

  
  *The book presents the process of research from the beginning steps of philosophical assumptions to the writing and presenting of research.*

Additional Books
Additional books explore class topics in-depth. These books are not required, although a chapter may be assigned as required reading.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Exceptional and rare</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Optional Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Mandatory Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>Meeting Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Optional Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Mandatory Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Meeting Required</td>
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ODKM710. Readings - ODKM710. Bibliography DRAFT
This is a list of potential required and suggested readings for the course. It provides the full reference citation for items that will appear in the Reading Schedule. Where available, links are listed below. The complete reading schedule and calendar will be available in a later draft.

## ODKM710 POLICIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration:</th>
<th>Each student is expected to make an individual contribution to group projects. Although students are encouraged to work with each other to discuss and solve problems, submission of identical or nearly identical work will be seen as an infraction of the university honor code. See the George Mason University Honor Code for more information. <a href="http://honorcode.gmu.edu/">http://honorcode.gmu.edu/</a></th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity:</td>
<td>It usually takes more effort to cheat than to simply complete an assignment. Before submitting someone else's work, find out what will happen when it is discovered. The George Mason University statement on academic integrity can be found here: <a href="http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/academicintegrity/">http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/academicintegrity/</a>. The plagiarism policy for the School of Public Policy is stated below. If you are in doubt about the line between paraphrasing, quoting and plagiarism, ask me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPP Policy on Plagiarism:</td>
<td>The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources are essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined. Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career. The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of &quot;F.&quot; This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the university. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa. To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.</td>
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**Special Needs Policy:**

Any student in need of accommodation based on the impact of a special need or disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor of any accommodation at the beginning of the semester so there will be time to make modifications.

**Office Hours:**

Wednesdays, 1-3 pm in person on campus or by phone. Please email me in advance so I can anticipate your visit. I am also available by appointment including evenings and weekends.

**Email:**

Feel free to ask questions by email. However keep in mind that I may not be able to answer immediately, especially those sent less than 12 hours before class. Emails with ODKM710 in the subject line from gmu.edu email addresses are given priority.

**Attendance:**

Attendance in all class meetings is essential. Class participation is part of the calculation for the final grade.

**Electronic Devices:**

Please turn off your cell phone during class sessions. No SMS texts, email or phone calls in the class. If you must respond to a message or a call, leave the room quietly so the rest of the class can stay focused. Use of any electronic device such as an iPhone, iPod, iPad, Blackberry, PDA, tablet, phone, or laptop during seminar discussions is discouraged. While the instructor will announce when it is appropriate to put away electronic devices, it is the student’s responsibility to choose to comply.

**Emergencies:**

Please let me know if you have an emergency situation that requires you to be connected during a particular class period. Given my stated email policy, students who have an emergency within 12 hours of class are responsible for speaking to me in class to make sure I am aware of the situation.

**Class Notices:**

The most recent syllabus, assignments and in-class projects will be posted on the classroom technology platform. Remember to check for any updates before class. Important updates will be sent to your GMU email address. It is your responsibility to make sure that your GMU email account is set up properly, including the ability to forward emails to an account you check more regularly.

**Classroom Tools:**

- **GMU Classroom Technology Blackboard** [https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu](https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu)
- **University Library** [http://library.gmu.edu](http://library.gmu.edu)
- **ODKM Sharepoint** [http://policvsharepoint.gmu.edu](http://policvsharepoint.gmu.edu)

**..final thoughts:**

This is a class on inquiry. Questions are essential. Your input is vital to making this a successful learning experience for everyone.

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The complete reading schedule and calendar will be available in a later draft made available to enrolled students.