

Urban Studies 921: Research Methods in Urban Studies Fall 2019

Instructor: Joel Rast

Mondays, 4:30-7:10 pm
Location: Bolton Hall, Room 702B

Office: Bolton Hall 626
Office Hours: Tues. 2:30-4:00
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Course Overview

This course provides an introduction to the research methods that are most often used in the field of urban studies. All of you have undoubtedly engaged in some form of research at some point during your academic and professional lives. However, you may not always have been conscious or deliberate in your choice and use of research methods. There are a variety of methods that are useful and appropriate for conducting urban research. None is intrinsically better or worse than any other. Rather, the methodology (or methodologies) you use depends on the question you are asking. Some questions are best answered through qualitative research such as interviews or historical investigation. Other questions are better addressed through quantitative research techniques like regression analysis. This course will focus principally on qualitative research techniques. It is designed to help you think more deliberately and scientifically about your methodological approaches as you design and carry out social research.

Course Requirements

Class Participation: Weekly class sessions for this course will include discussions of the assigned reading material. Therefore, it is essential that you come to class each week well prepared. This means, obviously, that you *must* do the reading beforehand. Informed discussion of the material is one of the most important components of this class. Your participation in the class will be facilitated in two principal ways:

- *Presentations of readings:* Students will share responsibilities for presenting the readings each week. Presentations should consist of a brief (5-10 minute) overview of the reading and consider in particular methodological issues or questions raised by the reading.
- *Reaction pieces:* For each reading (excluding the text), all students are required to prepare a paragraph containing comments or questions that can be used as a basis for contributing to class discussions. You should pay particular attention to methodological issues, themes, or questions which are raised by the readings. Reaction pieces may include a brief summary of the reading, but they should focus principally on *reacting* to the material rather than summarizing it. Reaction pieces should be between 1 and 2 pages (single-spaced) in length. They will be due at the end of each class session.

Research Proposal: The final project for this course is a paper based on original research using one or more of the methods covered in the course (see below). To facilitate the research and writing of this paper, you will be asked to prepare an 8-10 page (double-spaced) research proposal, due **Monday, November 11**. The proposal will identify a research question that interests you and describe in detail both how you intend to investigate this question and why it is worth exploring. I will provide additional guidelines for the research proposal early in the semester. All proposal topics must be approved in advance by me. Once you have selected a topic please schedule a meeting with me so that we can discuss it.

Research Paper: The research proposal will serve as your framework and guide for preparing a 12-15 page (double-spaced) research paper. I will provide additional guidelines for the paper later in the semester. Papers will be due **Monday, December 16, 4:30 pm**.

Each of the above components will account for the following proportions of your final grade:

- Research Proposal 30 %
- Research Paper 40 %
- Reaction Pieces 20 %
- Class Participation 10 %

Required Books:

- Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research, 13th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013. [ISBN 9781133049791; \$156.25 new]
- Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, third edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970. [ISBN 9780226458083; \$13.00 new]

Full text versions of the additional readings are posted on the course Canvas site.

Class Schedule

September 9: Course Overview; Introduction to Urban Inquiry

- Babbie, chapter 1

September 16: Paradigms

- Babbie, pp. 30-42; Kuhn (entire book)

September 23: Social Theory

- Babbie, pp. 43-59.
- Clarence Stone, Marion Orr, and David Imbroscio, “The Reshaping of Urban Leadership in US Cities.” In M. Gottdiener and C. Pickvance, eds., *Urban Life in Transition*. London: Sage, 1991.
- Richard DeLeon, “The Urban Antiregime: Progressive Politics in San Francisco.” *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 27: 555-579, 1992.
- Stephen J. McGovern, “Mobilization on the Waterfront: The Ideological/Cultural Roots of Potential Regime Change in Philadelphia.” *Urban Affairs Review* 44: 663-694, 2009.
- Karen Mossberger and Gerry Stoker, “The Evolution of Urban Regime Theory: The Challenge of Conceptualization.” *Urban Affairs Review* 36: 810-835, 2001.

September 30: Research Design

- Babbie, chapter 4.
- Daniel Immergluck, “Progress Confined: Increases in Black Home Buying and the Persistence of Residential Segregation.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 20: 443-457, 1998.
- Jennifer Van Hook, Jennifer Glick, and Franklin Bean, “Public Assistance Receipt among Immigrants and Natives: How the Unit of Analysis Affects Research Findings.” *Demography* 36: 111-120, 1999.
- Marc Doussard and Jacob Lesniewski, “Fortune Favors the Organized: How Chicago Activists Won Equity Goals Under Austerity.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 39: 618-634, 2017.
- Eran Razin and Mark Rosentraub, “Are Fragmentation and Sprawl Interlinked? North American Evidence.” *Urban Affairs Review* 35: 821-836, 2000.

October 7: Literature Review

For this class, students should select 5-6 journal articles, read them, and write a short literature review of 3-4 pages (double-spaced) based on these readings which will be due at the beginning of class. This class session will be structured as follows:

- We’ll break out into groups of between 3-4 students each.
- We’ll then take roughly 20 minutes for everyone to read the literature reviews of their fellow group members.
- Then each group will spend 15 minutes or so discussing each literature review individually.
 - Each student will take a few minutes to present their literature review.
 - Then fellow group members will have a chance to comment.
- **Note:** Please bring at least four copies of your literature review to class.

October 14: Measurement

- Babbie, chapter 5.
- Spencer Cowan, William Rohe, and Esmail Baku, “Factors Influencing the Performance of Community Development Corporations.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 21: 325-340, 1999.
- Quynh C. Nguyen et al., “Leveraging Geotagged Twitter Data to Examine Neighborhood Happiness, Diet, and Physical Activity.” *Applied Geography* 73: 77-88, 2016.
- Mark Tranel and Larry B. Handlin, Jr., “Metromorphosis: Documenting Change.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28: 151-167, 2006.
- Jeremy Nemeth and Stephan Schmidt, “Toward a Methodology for Measuring the Security of Publicly Accessible Spaces.” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 73: 283-297, 2007.

October 21: Field Research

- Babbie, chapter 10.
- Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, third edition, chapters 7-8. London: Sage, 2012.
- Jackelyn Hwang, “The Social Construction of a Gentrifying Neighborhood: Reifying and Redefining Identity and Boundaries in Inequality.” *Urban Affairs Review* 52: 98-128, 2016.
- Sean M. Crotty, “Strategic Visibility and the Production of Day-Labor Spaces: A Case Study from the San Diego Metropolitan Area.” *Urban Affairs Review* 54: 593-631, 2018.
- Michelle Boyd, “Reconstructing Bronzeville: Racial Nostalgia and Neighborhood Redevelopment.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 22: 107-122, 2000.

October 28: Qualitative Data Analysis

- Babbie, chapter 13.
- Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, third edition, chapter 12. London: Sage, 2012.
- Amy Lubitow, Bryan Zinschlag, and Nathan Rochester, “Plans for Pavement or for People: The Politics of Bike Lanes on the ‘Pasdo Boricua’ in Chicago, Illinois.” *Urban Studies* 53: 2637-2653, 2016.
- Joanna Lucio, Laura Hand, and Flavio Marsiglia, “Designing Hope: Rationales of Mixed-Income Housing Policy.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 36: 891-904, 2014.
- Setha M. Low, Dana H. Taplin, and Mike Lamb, “Battery Park City: An Ethnographic Field Study of the Community Impact of 9/11.” *Urban Affairs Review* 40: 655-682, 2005.

November 4: Community-Based Participatory Research

- Peter Park, “What is Participatory Research? A Theoretical and Methodological Perspective.” In Peter Park, Mary Brydon-Miller, Budd Hall, and Ted Jackson, eds., *Voices of Change: Participatory Research in the United States and Canada*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1993.
- Erualdo Romero Gonzalez, et al., “Participatory Action Research for Environmental Health: Encountering Freire in the Urban Barrio.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29: 77-100, 2007.
- Will Damon et al., “Community-Based Participatory Research in a Heavily Researched Inner City Neighbourhood: Perspectives of People Who Use Drugs on their Experiences as Peer Researchers.” *Social Science & Medicine* 176: 85-92, 2017.
- Patricia Maguire, “Challenges, Contradictions, and Celebrations: Attempting Participatory Research as a Doctoral Student.” In Peter Park, Mary Brydon-Miller, Budd Hall, and Ted Jackson, eds., *Voices of Change: Participatory Research in the United States and Canada*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1993.

November 11: Data Sources Workshop (Meet in Library, Instruction Room B)

Research proposals due. No reading assignment.

November 18: Unobtrusive Research

- Babbie, chapter 11.
- Danilo Yanich, “Location, Location, Location: Urban and Suburban Crime on Local TV News.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23: 221-241, 2001.
- Richard Harris and Kaitlin Hendershott, “How Newspapers Portray Suburbs: A Paradox.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 40: 974-991, 2018.
- Christopher Boone and Ali Modarres, “Creating a Toxic Neighborhood in Los Angeles County: A Historical Examination of Environmental Inequity.” *Urban Affairs Review* 35: 163-187, 1999.
- Joel Rast, “Critical Junctures, Long-Term Processes: Urban Redevelopment in Chicago and Milwaukee, 1945-1980.” *Social Science History* 33: 393-426, 2009.

November 25: Case Studies; Comparative Research

- Randy Stoecker, “Evaluating and Rethinking the Case Study.” *The Sociological Review* 39: 88-112, 1991.
- Richard Lloyd, “Neo-Bohemia: Art and Neighborhood Redevelopment in Chicago.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24: 517-532, 2002.
- David Reingold, “The Decentralization of Manufacturing Employment and the Role of Race: The Case of the Lakeside Press.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23: 191-209, 2001.

- Anne-Marie Broudehoux, “Spectacular Beijing: The Conspicuous Construction of an Olympic Metropolis.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29: 383-399, 2007.
- David Gladstone and Susan Fainstein, “Tourism in US Global Cities: A Comparison of New York and Los Angeles.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23: 23-40, 2001.

December 2: Research Week

Work on research paper. No class.

December 9: Research Presentations

Class presentations of research papers. No reading assignment.

Final papers due Monday, December 16, 4:30 pm.