Advanced Seminar in Mixed Methods (RMTD 590)

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Course Overview

Course Description

This advanced course will address the theory and practice of mixing inquiry methodologies in social inquiry. The course will cover selected roots of the contemporary interest in mixing methods, various conceptualizations of mixed methods design and analysis, and challenges of mixed methods practice. The course emphasis on practice will feature critiques of empirical mixed method studies from various disciplines and domains of study.

Students enrolling in this course should have basic familiarity with the conceptual logic and core constructs of econometric, experimental, or survey (post-positivist, quantitative) social science (i.e., RMTD 421) and of case study, interview, or ethnographic (constructivist or interpretivist, qualitative) social science (i.e., RMTD 420).

Course objectives for students include the following:

1. Students will develop an historical and contextual understanding of the roots of the contemporary interest in mixing methods. History matters.
2. Students will develop an understanding of various conceptual or theoretical frameworks for mixing methods, and the key differences among them.
3. Students will develop basic competencies in mixed methods practice.
4. Students will generate a unique contribution – theoretical, practical or both – to the mixed methods conversation and literature.

The IDEA course objectives essential for this course include:

- Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving and decisions)
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view as needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course

Other objectives important to this course include:

- Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

Required Text


Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 80</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Class participation is based on attendance, contributions to group discussion and small group activities (which includes Blog posts in Weeks 5 and 9), timeliness of assignments, and presentation of your final project. For contributions to group discussion, be sure to do all the readings in advance of each class and come to class prepared for the discussion. Bring at least one question or comment that emerges from the readings with you to each class. Be prepared to share this question or comment with the class, along with the reading passages that generated it.

Late assignments: I strongly discourage turning in assignments after the due date. The nature of the course is that the assignments build on one another. As a result, turning in one late assignment affects the appropriate completion of subsequent assignments. I will accept late assignments and do not reduce points for late assignments, but I will also provide less feedback and will not as rapidly return your graded assignment to you. If you know in advance that you will be gone when an assignment is due, please plan ahead and submit it early. If you have an unexpected personal circumstance, please talk to me about your concerns with completing course obligations.

Learning Community at Loyola University Chicago and School of Education

Academic Honesty
Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. The School of Education’s Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml). For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml)

Accessibility
Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: [http://www.luc.edu/sswd/](http://www.luc.edu/sswd/)

Harassment (Bias Reporting)
It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any
other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of
tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care
mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse under-mines the aspirations
and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias. In
order to uphold our mission of being Chicago’s Jesuit Catholic University-- a diverse community seeking God
in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and
faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response
(BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents
of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the
Bias Response Team at this link: [http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/](http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/)

**Conceptual Framework**
The conceptual framework of Loyola's School of Education is "professionalism in service of social justice."
This course contributes to the realization of this framework by engaging students in the knowledge of
qualitative research, skills of inquiry, and ethics necessary to be professional and just qualitative
researchers.

The following is the exact wording of the School of Education’s Conceptual Framework:

> The School of Education at Loyola University Chicago, a Jesuit and Catholic urban university, supports
the Jesuit ideal of knowledge in the service of humanity. We endeavor to advance professional
education in the service of social justice, engaged with Chicago, the nation, and the world. To achieve
this vision the School of Education participates in the discovery, development, demonstration, and
dissemination of professional knowledge and practice within a context of ethics, service to others, and
social justice. We fulfill this mission by preparing professionals to serve as teachers, administrators,
psychologists, and researchers; by conducting research on issues of professional practice and social
justice; and by partnering with schools and community agencies to enhance life-long learning in the
Chicago area.

**Dispositions**
This course will assess dispositions related to professionalism, fairness, and the belief that all students can
learn. Refer to LIVETEXT for the rubric corresponding to these dispositions.

**Technology**
In recent decades, as computing technology has advanced so have computer software and other tools to
assist with research. Based on interests of students in the course, such tools might be addressed.

**Diversity**
An inherent characteristic of mixed methods research is a diversity of perspectives from qualitative and
quantitative research. This course we will exploring various ways in which theorists have engaged this
diversity. As with any approach to research, an awareness of one’s own values, beliefs, and biases is
critical. We will address diversity issues (gender, race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic
status, etc.) throughout the course in our readings and discussions as they relate to those biases and to
engaging in ethical research. In order to foster a learning community in the classroom, openness to and
respect of various perspectives and backgrounds is essential.
Weekly Schedule with Course Readings & Assignments

Week 1 (Aug. 29): Introduction to Course

Week 2 (Sept. 5): Defining Mixed Methods Social Inquiry
Greene, Ch. 1 & 2
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 1

Week 3 (Sept. 12): Roots of Contemporary Conversation in Mixed Methods
Greene, Ch. 3
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 2 pg. 19—38

Project Idea DUE

Week 4 (Sept. 19): Current Frameworks in Mixed Methods
Greene, Ch. 4 & 5
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 2 pg. 38—52

Week 5 (Sept. 26): Finding Frameworks in Classic Empirical Mixed Methods Studies

**Week 6 (Oct. 3): Purposes of Mixed Methods Research***
Greene, Ch. 6

*Re-read* Greene, Caracelli, & Graham (1989) from Week 3

**Week 7 (Oct. 10): Mixed Methods Research Designs***
Greene, Ch. 7

Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 3—6

**Week 8 (Oct. 17): NO CLASS—WORK ON DRAFTS/OUTLINES**

**Week 9 (Oct. 24): Finding Purposes and Designs in Empirical Examples***

**Draft of Design/Outline of Paper DUE**

**Week 10 (Oct. 31): Data Analysis***
Greene, Ch. 8

Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 7
Excerpts from Chapter 11. The analysis of mixed methods data (pp. 263-284)


**Week 11 (Nov. 7): Quality***
Greene, Ch. 9
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 8 pg. 266—272


**Week 12 (Nov. 14): Reporting***
Greene, Ch. 10
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 8 pg. 251—265


**Week 13 (Nov. 21): Presentations**
Greene, Ch. 11
Creswell & Plano-Clark, Ch. 9

**NOV. 28—NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING**

**Week 14 (Dec. 5): Presentations**


**Week 15 (Dec. 12): Final Examination**

FINAL PROJECT DUE (MUST BE UPLOADED ON SAKAI BY 6:30PM)
*indicates a week that an example of a mixed methods study will be added to the reading list
Assignment Descriptions

Assignment Submission

Please submit all assignments electronically via Sakai. I will repost your assignments with grades and comments. If you have difficulties uploading the file, then please email it to me at lkallemeyn@luc.edu. To assist with file organization, please use the following naming conventions for your assignments if you email them to me: [Assignment Tag]_Firstname. For example, when submitting the first assignment, I would name it AC_Leanne.doc.

Blog Postings

For Weeks 5 and 9, you will complete a blog posting in Sakai on ONE of the required readings for the week prior to class. Guidelines for your post will be provided the previous week in class. These posts will be used in small group activities. Blog postings will contribute to your participation grade.

Group Presentation and Discussion of a Mixed Methods Study

With a partner, choose an empirical example of a good research study that utilizes mixed methodology in your field or area of interest. The example could be published work, your own work, or that of classmates or colleagues. You will need to defend your judgment of “goodness” during your presentation. Your presentation should concentrate on illustrating and critiquing one or more of the conceptual ideas about mixing methods offered in the readings and class discussions, and it should include an activity in which to engage other class members. Plan on 45-60 minutes for your presentation and discussion. Be sure to email lkallemeyn@luc.edu the article, book section, conference presentation, research proposal, or other material about the study at least one week prior to your assigned week, so that it can be posted in Sakai and your colleagues will have an opportunity to review it in preparation for your discussion. Be sure that all aspects of the discussion and activity focus on how the study was conducted, not what the study found.

When grading the presentation, I will be looking for the following:

- Study provided a good example of methodology (2 pt)
- Evidence of equitable collaboration between partners, and that both partners have a thorough understanding of the study. (2 pt)
- Class discussion focuses on the study’s methodology, or aspects of how the study was conducted/reported (2 pt)
- Class discussion connects the study to at least one conceptual idea we have discussed in the course (2 pt)
- Evidence that discussion is engaging and relevant to other members in the class (2 pt)

Mixed Methods Research Project

Choose one of the following options.

Option 1: You may develop an elaborate research plan, or methodology for a study. This research plan MUST utilize mixed methodologies. In a dissertation, the third chapter typically focuses on
methodology, so you could also think of this project as the methodology chapter of a dissertation. I encourage you to pilot aspects of your research design this semester to help you develop your plan.

How you choose to organize the chapter is up to you, and you should work directly with the chair of your dissertation committee throughout the semester on the development of this chapter. Be sure that you cite appropriate literature that informs the design of your research, in addition to what you may include in your literature review.

Further assignment details will be available on Sakai.

Option 2: You may summarize, synthesize, reflect on, critique, challenge, or otherwise engage the mixed methods content of the course in some final product. The product can take one of many forms, including a conventional course paper, a publishable article, a presentation for a conference, or – using an alternative representation – a story, poem, or performance. Students may work in groups (of no more than 3) for this final course product. Planning for the final product will proceed in stages throughout the semester. An approved plan for this final paper is required through the submission of your project ideas and revisions to your project ideas.

Possible conferences for submitting papers include the following:
- American Evaluation Association Mixed Methods Evaluation TIG—Submissions in March 2014 and conference in fall 2015 (see http://www.eval.org)
- International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry—Submissions in December 2013 and conference in May 2014 at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (see http://www.icqi.org/)
- American Educational Research Association, such as the Mixed Methods Research SIG (see http://www.aera.net/Home/tabid/10041/Default.aspx)

I have two current research ideas that I am developing for any students that might be interested in exploring them with me. I also encourage you to use this as an opportunity to develop your own project with colleagues.

For both options, you will submit your ideas, revision of your ideas, and an outline to me for formative feedback and approval prior to working on your final project. You will also have an opportunity to present your final project to the class to receive their feedback, prior to the completion of your final project. Timely and thoughtful completion of these assignments will contribute to your participation grade. I will only assign a grade to the final project.