

UAP 5484 — Advanced Research Methods

SYLLABUS

CRN: 97496
Credit Hours: 3
Date: Thursday
Time: 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Classroom: Alexandria: 1021 Prince St., MI Conference Room
Website: <https://learn.vt.edu>
Instructor: Katrin Anacker, Ph.D.
Office: 1021 Prince St., Room 104 (MI@VT)
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Office Hours: Thursday, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm or by appointment (kanacker@vt.edu)

Course Description

This introductory course is designed to help students writing the first draft of their Major Paper, one of the graduation requirements in Urban Affairs and Planning (UAP). Special emphasis will be placed on qualitative research methods, typically discussed in Chapter 3 of a Major Paper (or any scholarly publication).

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students should

- be able to formulate research hypotheses/questions
- be able to develop surveys
- be able to draw samples
- be knowledgeable about research ethics
- be knowledgeable about sources of research funding
- be able to write grant proposals
- be able to conduct analyses
- be knowledgeable about sources of publishing

Class Website

This class uses Blackboard in order to enhance the online learning experience of students. This website contains a discussion board, a course calendar, and other pertinent information. Please go to <https://learn.vt.edu>.

Required Reading:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press).

Course Requirements:**Class Attendance/Participation/Behavior**

Students required to attend class and to participate in discussions. Students are expected to arrive on time and to shut off their cell phones before the beginning of class.

Reading Assignments

Students are required to familiarize themselves with and understand the class readings before each class. Readings will be discussed during class time.

Writing Assignments/Final Paper

Students are required to submit several assignments over the course of the term, as specified below. These assignments will be returned to the students with comments the following week. On November 15 or November 29 students will present their research projects to the UAP community (30-minute-presentation; 25% of grade) and submit their final papers to the instructor (15 pages minimum; 75% of grade). After the instructor returns the graded final paper students are expected to work with their advisor on subsequent drafts of their Major Paper.

Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A	95.00 points total – 100.00 points total
A-	90.00 points total – 94.99 points total
B+	85.00 points total – 89.99 points total
B	80.00 points total – 84.99 points total
B-	75.00 points total – 79.99 points total
C+	70.00 points total – 74.99 points total
C	65.00 points total – 69.99 points total
C-	60.00 points total – 64.99 points total
D+	55.00 points total – 59.99 points total
D	50.00 points total – 54.99 points total
F	below 49.99 points total

Assignment Submission, Late or Missing Assignments

The assignments must be submitted on paper or electronically via e-mail by the day they are due and by the beginning of class time (7:00 pm). An assignment that was handed in after 7:00 pm on the day it is due is considered late. Late assignments will not be commented on by the instructor.

Graduate Honor Code

The Graduate Honor Code establishes a standard of academic integrity. As such, this code demands a firm adherence to a set of values. In particular, the code is founded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others. Compliance with the Graduate Honor Code requires that *all* graduate students exercise honesty and ethical behavior in all their academic pursuits at Virginia Tech, whether these undertakings pertain to study, course work, research, extension, or teaching. A more detailed description of the University's Graduate Honor Code may be obtained on the web at <http://ghs.grads.vt.edu/student/index.html>. More details on plagiarism and on how to avoid it may be obtained at <http://ghs.grads.vt.edu/student/avoiding.html>.

Disability Statement

If students need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, sensory issues, etc.), or if students have emergency medical information to share with the instructor, or if students need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, they should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible. If students need captioning for videos, they should let the instructor know no later than two weeks in advance of date on syllabus for viewing.

Course Schedule

August 23 Topic: Introduction to Class

August 30 Topic: Introduction to Advanced Research Methods

Study Assignments for August 30th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 3-37. (Chapter 1: Business Research Strategies).

September 6 Topic: Finding Research Gaps/Generating Research Ideas

Study Assignments for September 6th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 153-178, 401-438, 625-659. (Chapter 6: The Nature of Quantitative Research; Chapter 16: The Nature of Qualitative Research; Chapter 24: Breaking Down the Quantitative/Qualitative Divide; Chapter 25: Mixed Methods Research: Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Research).

Assignment (due September 13):

Free write [covered in class on September 6] about at least three research ideas for your Major Paper and conclude your thoughts with “what I really mean is....”.

September 13 Topic: Conducting Literature Reviews

Study Assignments for September 13th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 93-125, 553-577, 660-689. (Chapter 4: Getting Started: Reviewing the Literature; Chapter 21: Documents as Sources of Data; Chapter 26: Internet Research Methods).

Assignment (due September 20):

Find at least 20 publications that you will reference in your Major Paper.

Write at least one page per publication for at least five publications that you base your Major Paper on. Answer the following questions:

- * What are the research hypotheses/questions posed?
- * What research methods are used? (elaborate!)
- * What are the results?
- * What are the conclusions and policy implications?
- * How will your Major Paper differ from the publication under discussion in terms of
 - research hypotheses/questions,
 - research methods,
 - expected results, and
 - expected conclusions and policy implications?

September 20 Topic: Formulating Research Hypotheses/Questions

Study Assignments for September 20th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 38-73, 74-92. (Chapter 2: Research Designs; Chapter 3: Planning a Research Project and Formulating Research Questions).

Assignment (due September 27):

Formulate at least three research hypotheses/questions of your Major Paper (these can be alternatives).

September 27 Topic: Developing Surveys

Study Assignments for September 27th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 208-300, 471-528. (Chapter 8: Structured Interviewing; Chapter 9: Self-Completion Questionnaires; Chapter 10: Asking Questions; Chapter 11: Structured Observation; Chapter 18: Interviewing in Qualitative Research; Chapter 19: Focus Groups).

Assignment (due October 4):

Develop a survey (four typed pages maximum).

October 4 Topic: Drawing Samples

Study Assignments for October 4th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 179-207. (Chapter 7: Sampling).

Assignment (due October 11):

Discuss your sampling strategy, incorporating your strategy for non responses.

October 11 Topic: Adhering to Research Ethics (part 1)

Study Assignments for October 11th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 126-150. (Chapter 5: Ethics in Business Research).

[no assignment due October 18]

October 18 Topic: Adhering to Research Ethics (part 2)

Self Guided Study: <http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/training.htm#VTTutorial>
[instructor at ACSP Conference in Milwaukee, WI]

Assignment (due October 25):

Complete the IRB paperwork for new studies.
<http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/newstudy.htm#ExeForm>

**October 25 Topic: Finding Research Funding and Writing Grant Proposals
[no study assignments for October 25th]**

Assignment (due November 1):

Find at least five potential sources of funding. Select the most promising one and write a grant proposal to obtain funding for your Major Paper.

November 1 Topic: Conducting Analyses

Study Assignments for November 1st:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 301-346, 578-601. (Chapter 12: Content Analysis; Chapter 13: Secondary Analysis and Official Statistics; Chapter 22: Qualitative Data Analysis).

Assignment (due November 8):

Submit a draft of your presentation/discussion.

November 8 Topic: Publishing Research Findings

Study Assignments for November 8th:

Alan Bryman & Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press) 690-724 (Chapter 27: Writing up Business Research).

November 15 Topic: Presentation/Discussion of Research Projects (part 1)

November 22 [no class – Thanksgiving Day]

November 29 Topic: Presentation/Discussion of Research Projects (part 2)