

Econ 295/ Mgmt 294: Introduction to Research Methods
Moravian College, Fall 2015
Department of Economics and Business

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays: 2:30-4 pm; or by appointment

Class Information:

Meeting Times: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:10 pm – 2:20 pm

Class Location: Comenius 005

What is this course all about? In this course you will be prepared with the basic knowledge of applied social science research. We will emphasize choice of research topic, primary sources, data sources, and research methods. This course will culminate with the preparation and presentation of a research report based upon a Community Based Learning and Research (CBLR) project.

What I am required to read?

Kristin Luker. (2008) Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

ISBN: 978-0-6740-4821-8

Charles Seife. (2011) Proofiness: How You're Being Fooled by the Numbers. Penguin Books, New York, NY.

ISBN: 978-0-1431-2007-0

What are the recommended texts and outside sources for class?

Several websites have excellent and regular information on research methods and research-related issues. As you peruse various links, be sure to verify the credentials of each author. Databases available through Reeves Library are excellent sources of scholarly articles.

Other relevant readings and course materials will be posted on the Blackboard site for this class. Please check Blackboard regularly.

What else do I need for class? (1) Relevant reading materials. (2) An Internet-enabled device (phone, tablet, laptop) for in-class assessments and discussion.

What preparation do I have to have? Students are expected to have completed Econ 152 and one of the following statistics courses: Econ 156, Math 107, or Math 231, prior to taking this course.

How will I be assessed?

Interim Project Deliverables	35%
Final Paper, Presentation, and Screencast	15%
Interim Screencast Project Deliverables	10%
Course Preparation Assignments (CPAs)	10%
Book Club (BC) Contributions	10%
Journal	10%
Participation	10%

What are the learning outcomes for this course?

- Demonstrate the basic principles and procedures of research methodology, including the design of a basic research project.
- Evaluate both quantitative and qualitative research studies, and the limits of different methodologies.
- Write and speak clearly, thoughtfully, and critically about political, social, cultural, and economic phenomena.
- Understand the requirements necessary to obtain HSIRB approval when using human subjects.

What is the workload expectation for this course?

This course is a full-unit course that meets twice per week for 70 minutes at each class period. Middles States Accreditation requires that each full-unit course include at least **174 hours of course work** during the fifteen-week semester. Over the course of this semester we will meet 28 times for 70 minutes each; therefore, our classroom time will only account for 33 of these required hours plus an additional three hours for final presentations. This implies that **work outside of the classroom** must meet a minimum threshold of 138 hours, or **nine hours per week**. The activities and assignments required for successful completion of this course are designed with that goal in mind.

What happens if there is inclement weather?

In hazardous weather conditions, the College may be closed and classes cancelled, or the college may opt to run on a two-hour delayed schedule (see below). The decision to close or delay the opening of classes will be announced on the inclement weather hotline, 610-625-7995, and will be communicated on the following radio and TV stations: WLEV-FM 100.7, WAEB-FM 104.1, WAEB-AM 790, WCTO-FM 96.1, WRFY-FM 102.5, WBYN-FM 107.5, WODE-AM 99.9, WWYY-FM 107.1, WKFB-FM 107.5, WSBG-FM 93.5, WZZO-FM 95.1, and WFMZ-TV (Channel 69).

These closings or delays will also appear at the top of the login page on the College's internet portal AMOS (amos.moravian.edu) as well as the College's website (www.moravian.edu <<http://www.moravian.edu>>). College-wide cancellations *after the start of the class day* will be announced on the public-address system of the HUB, the

campus e-mail system, the radio and TV stations mentioned above, and AMOS and the College's website.

Two-Hour Delay: If the decision has been made to open with a two-hour delay, the day does not begin with third-period classes; it begins with first-period classes on a shortened schedule. When following the delayed schedule, please note that there will be no "A" or "B" periods. A 2-hour delay does not affect courses, which begin at 4PM or later. Those courses would run on their normal schedule, if the college were open. Morning and afternoon science labs and studio art classes have their own schedule. Music lessons and practice are cancelled for the day when the delayed schedule is in effect.

What should I do if I need an accommodation in this course or need access to tutoring services?

The Academic Support Center houses Disability Support and Greyhound Tutoring on the first floor of Monocacy Hall and can be reached at [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401).

Greyhound Tutoring provides course-specific tutors to Moravian students, free of charge. If you would like to work with a Greyhound Tutor to boost your academic success, please request a tutor through <http://bit.ly/NeedTutorMC> (case-sensitive). Plan ahead! It takes 2-3 business days to connect you with a tutor. Please email Dana Wilson (wilsond@moravian.edu), Tutor Coordinator, for more information about tutoring.

Please email Laurie Roth (rothl@moravian.edu), Director of Academic and Disability Support, for more information about disability support.

How do I schedule an appointment with you?

If you would like to meet with me during office hours, please sign-up for an open office-hour slot using my Google calendar for office hour appointments, which can be found here:

<https://www.google.com/calendar/selfsched?sstoken=UUN1am9JUDhPRjFifGRIZmF1bHR8Yzc3OWY0NDBiMjM1YTM0Y2U4YjkwMGRmMDCzYTl3OTE>

If you would like to meet with me outside of my regularly scheduled office hours, please send a meeting request via Google calendar for an available time on my schedule between the normal working hours of M-F 8 am – 4 pm.

If you come by my office and my door is open, feel free to stop in and say hi! If I am available I am happy to work with you then; if not, we'll find another time to meet using the methods described above.

Upon successful completion of this course you may become eligible for the Economics Honor Society (ODE)!

Omicron Delta Epsilon (ODE) is the economics honor society. Its purpose is to recognize scholastic achievement in economics and to promote closer ties of students and faculty. Each semester ODE will organize meetings for any interested students. Current students can present their research and young economics alumni will talk about their careers. Look for upcoming announcements. To become eligible for induction into ODE, students must attain junior status and have a 3.0 GPA in three or more economics courses as well as overall.

What are the classroom policies?

1. **Attendance is expected** at each class period. Absences will not only reduce your participation grade, but also prevent you from becoming an engaged member of our classroom community.
2. As a common courtesy for your fellow students and myself, I expect students to **be on time**. Lateness not only reduces your participation grade, but also disrupts the learning environment.
3. I permit **appropriate and responsible use of technology** during class. Phones, tablets, and laptops can be used as calculators or as 'Internet-enabled' devices for **purposes of class assignment and discussion only**.
4. Violations of the Moravian College Academic Honesty Code will not be tolerated. **Plagiarism**, regardless of intent, is a violation of academic honesty; all cases **will be reported to Dean Traupman-Carr** and the offender will receive a zero on the plagiarized work in addition to other possible sanctions.
5. Communication for this course will occur through your **Moravian e-mail account and Blackboard**. You are required to check these sources regularly for updates and assignments related to this course.
6. **Late assignments are not accepted** and a grade of zero is recorded. Please be cognizant of the due dates for each assignment. No exceptions will be made to accommodate late work.
7. Part of your responsibility as a Moravian student is to attend classes and to take notes. This is an essential part of the learning process. I will therefore not post extensive lecture notes online. Also, note that this course will be fairly intense, so it is essential that you do not fall behind in your readings.
8. We will use the final exam period for presentations. Attendance is expected; please plan accordingly.
9. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the decisions made by the college (see details above). Online meetings are an option if it becomes too dangerous to travel to class. I will provide updates via email.
10. **I do not offer extra credit.**

The following pages detail specific information regarding each assessment. More details will be provided as due dates approach.

COURSE PREPARATION ASSIGNMENTS

Course preparation assignments (CPAs) are designed to facilitate discussion in the classroom. You will be required to prepare CPAs according to the schedule detailed below. CPAs will include a review of a current article related to the weekly topic of discussion. Discussion or empirical analysis of specific points will be required. Specific topics and response requirements will be provided in Blackboard at least one week before each respective assignment is due.

Your CPA must be submitted to Blackboard before class begins! The CPAs are due via Blackboard **by 1:00 pm** on the due date listed below. You are also expected to bring a (hard- or electronic-) copy of your CPA to class on the date it is due, so you can reference it during classroom discussion.

BOOK CLUB USING GOOGLE COMMUNITY

Book: Seife (2011)

In lieu of traditional textbooks, we will read two paperback books this semester that support our understanding of social research and its implication on our daily lives. The reading assignments for each book are detailed below. Each week, you will be responsible for reading specific chapters in these books.

Seife (2011) will serve as our primary text for the book club. Discussion of this text will occur throughout the course via our Google Community page. Your comments on the Seife (2011) text are due **by noon on Fridays**, as detailed in the schedule below.

I will post regular discussion questions for the Seife (2011) text each week a reading assignment is due. You should respond to each question and comment on at least one of your classmates' posts by the due date. The book club posts will be graded according to the quality of their contents, but not their length! Please see the relevant grading rubric at the end of this syllabus.

CLASS JOURNAL USING GOOGLE DOCS

Book: Luker (2008)

Luker (2008) will serve as our primary text and the relevant readings detailed below are **due on Mondays**. As you read Luker (2008) throughout the semester, you will be required to maintain an individual journal in response to your reading. You will maintain this journal as a shared Google document between you and me. Each week you will take notes on your reading, ask questions, and answer questions posed by the author of the text. You can format the journal in a style that is best-suited to your work flow. The purpose of the journal is to maintain a common outlet for your thoughts and ideas related to your research, as they arise during your readings. The journal will be graded

according to the quality of its content, but not its length! Please see the relevant grading rubric at the end of this syllabus.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation accounts for ten percent of your final grade, which is significant. This course will be conducted in a seminar- and workshop-style, so class attendance is crucial to your understanding of the material and contribution to our learning community.

Simply attending class will earn students an approximate participation grade of 75%. Students can marginally improve their participation grade through “passive participation”, which implies attending class, taking notes, and being attentive. Students can substantially improve their participation grade through “active participation”, which includes volunteering thoughtful questions and answers on a regular basis.

Students who choose not to attend class on a regular basis (i.e. have more than three absences during the course of the semester) or are perpetually late to class will receive a participation grade lower than a 75%.

Additionally, there may be surprise assessments on a regular basis to check students’ understanding of course material. Successfully completing these assessments will also improve a student’s participation grade.

SCREENCAST PROJECT

During the course of this semester you will create a screencast designed to teach future students about two specific topics taught in this course: Community-Based Learning and Research (CBLR) and the Human Subjects Internal Review Board (HSIRB) process. This project will be conducted in teams, and each team will produce a professional-level screencast for one of these topics. At the end of the semester, you will present these screencasts to our community partner. Additionally, faculty members may choose to use these screencasts to teach these topics and / or review these subjects in their courses. Interim due dates and workshops related to this project are provided on the course calendar. Specific details regarding expectations and the grading rubric will be provided as the course progresses.

FINAL PROJECT AND PRESENTATION

Throughout this course you will be developing your skills as a researcher. Your final project and presentation will be a culmination of these efforts. Intermediate stages of this project include: definition of your research topic, creation of a bibliography, sufficient research on the existing literature, definition of research methods and variables, and an initial data analysis. Details regarding each stage of this process will be delivered throughout the course of the semester. The goal of this project is to develop and share the story related to your research question. You will have the opportunity to share these

stories during the final exam period of this course, in addition to during scholar's day in the spring semester. Excellent projects will also be considered for conference presentations during the spring semester.

Our final project will be based on collaboration with a community partner, as part of a Community Based Learning and Research (CBLR) project. During the course of the semester, we will meet with our community partner to define deliverables and share our progress. At the culmination of the semester, you will share your project results with the community partner during the final presentation!

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS

All CPAs and project-related deliverables are due by 1:00 pm on their respective due dates. These assignments must be submitted electronically to our course Blackboard page. You should also always bring an (electronic- or hard-) copy of your submitted assignment to class for purposes of discussion.

GRADING RUBRICS

Book Club Rubric

	Expected Level of Competence 2 points	Moving Toward Expected Level 1 point	Not Acceptable 0 points
Content Understanding	The student understands significant ideas relevant to the issue under discussion. This is indicated by correct use of terminology, precise selection of the pieces of information required to make a point, correct and appropriate use of examples and counterexamples, and explanations that are pointed and concise. Information and knowledge are accurate. The student elaborates statements with accurate explanations, reasons, or evidence.	Ideas are reasonably clear, but the reader needs to make some guesses as to what the student meant. Some vocabulary is used correctly and some is not. Ideas are correct but not concise. Contributions to the group are generally supported by some facts, examples, analogies, statistics, and so forth, but there's a sense that more is needed.	The student uses foundational knowledge incorrectly. The student struggles to provide ideas or support for ideas. Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand. The student has difficulty understanding themes and distinguishing main ideas and supporting details. Terminology is used incorrectly.
Reasoning	The student actively stimulates and sustains inquiry by asking thoughtful questions. The student has a clear idea of the topic under discussion and sustains inquiry in order to explore relevant issues. The student recognizes values or value conflict as things that form the assumption basis of arguments and recognizes when it is important to acknowledge these values. The student recognizes the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements. The student recognizes contradictions and irrelevant comments. The student asks clarifying questions when necessary. The student distinguishes fact from opinion.	The student relies on the momentum of the group to motivate inquiry. The student generally distinguishes fact from opinions. The student may be repetitive with comments. The student takes a position but with little evidence or explanation.	The student accepts ideas of others without much thought. The student jumps randomly from one aspect of an issue to another. The student provides little relevant information or contributes little to the discussion. Opinions may be stated as facts. The student shows little evidence of understanding the topic under discussion and how to sustain the inquiry to adequately explore issues related to it. There is little sense of which information is of most importance.
Interaction with Others	The student initiates the dialogue with thoughtful and reflective comments and questions. The student acknowledges the statements of others in a way that builds a consecutive interchange between participants. Replies to others are responsive to the statement and indicate that the student understood it and thought about it. When disagreeing, the student does it respectfully. The nature of the disagreement is stated and an invitation to respond is extended. The student is courteous and attentive. The student is aware of cultural differences in social interactions and behaves in an appropriate fashion. When conflicts arise, the student attempts to resolve them. The student is aware of the value of group input and decision making.	The student attends to the discussion but contributes little new knowledge or ideas. The student's contributions do not detract from the discussions. The student participates in the group, but does little to involve others or encourage others to think critically.	The student makes irrelevant or distracting statements. Some comments are unconstructive and non-courteous. The student makes a personal attack; language might suggest bias toward a group member or others. The student does not contribute to the discussion. The student appears unaware of cultural differences in conducting discussions. Discussion does not take into consideration the ideas/comments by the group; there is little attempt at collaborative thinking.
Language Conventions	The student uses precise vocabulary and discipline-specific syntax. Words and syntax are purposefully chosen to make a point. The student uses language that others in the group will understand. The student defines or clearly explains language or concepts that might be unfamiliar to others; the student knows when such explanations might be necessary.	The student uses general vocabulary and tends to express ideas verbosely. Although correct, language might not be equally understandable to all members of the group.	The student uses language that others in the group are unlikely to understand. Ideas appear disproportionately lengthy and are difficult to follow. Language choices are vague, abstract, or trite. Jargon may be used when more precise language is needed.
Mechanics	The student shows mastery of academic English. The student uses English conventionally without grammatical or typographical errors.	The student occasionally misspells words and makes grammatical errors.	The student frequently misspells words and makes grammatical errors.

Reference: Baiyun Chen, Aimee DeNoyelles, Kelvin Thompson, Amy Sugar and Jessica Vargas (2014). Discussion Rubrics. In K. Thompson and B. Chen (Eds.), Teaching Online Pedagogical Repository. Orlando, FL: University of Central Florida Center for Distributed Learning. Retrieved August 19, 2015 from https://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php?title=Discussion_Rubrics&oldid=3649

Journal Rubric

Contribution	Description	Points Assigned
Provocative	Journal entry goes beyond simple note-taking and responses to in-text prompts. Entry attempts to further thought and discussion.	4
Substantial	Entry provides most of the content required by the in-text prompts, but does not seek further analysis.	3
Superficial	Entry provides obvious information without further analysis of the concept. Entry lacks dept of knowledge or reasoning.	2
Incorrect	Entry does not accurately address the prompt. Entry includes rambling and/ or incoherent thoughts.	1
None	No entry is made within the required timeframe.	0

Reference:

Baiyun Chen, Aimee DeNoyelles, Kelvin Thompson, Amy Sugar and Jessica Vargas (2014). Discussion Rubrics. In K. Thompson and B. Chen (Eds.), Teaching Online Pedagogical Repository. Orlando, FL: University of Central Florida Center for Distributed Learning.
Retrieved August 19, 2015 from
https://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php?title=Discussion_Rubrics&oldid=3649

CPA Rubric

Your CPAs will be graded for completeness and accuracy. The CPAs are designed to promote critical thinking and analysis about the particular topic covered in the assignment. Your job is to show me that you understand the topic by providing clear and complete responses to the questions. Unless otherwise stated, you can answer each part of the CPA as a separate question, but you should consider each question to be a mini-essay, in which you fully develop your thoughts and analysis.

I will grade your CPAs on a 0-5 scale, as follows:

Level	Competencies Displayed	Points Assigned
Excellent	Response includes clear and complete thoughts and a detailed, accurate analysis with relevant sources used to substantiate your thoughts.	5
Good	Response contains fully developed ideas, but the understanding of the concepts is slightly confused. Sources are used in a limited way to substantiate your analysis.	4
Fair	Response is not fully developed and understanding of the concepts is not evident. Sources are not incorporated into your response or are incorporated incorrectly.	3
Poor	Response is incomplete and analysis is incomplete and/ or inaccurate. Additional references are inaccurate or missing.	2
Unacceptable	Response is unintelligible and lacks proper analysis and/ or thought development.	1
Late or Missing	Response is not submitted by the due date.	0

Screencast rubric to be delivered during the fifth week of class.

Schedule of Assignments and Topics (subject to change with notice):

Week / Dates:	Topic/ Text Reading Assignment (due each Monday):	Written Assignments (due Wednesdays and/or Fridays):
1: Aug. 31 and Sept. 2	Introduction to Course Content and Technology Luker Ch. 1	CPA 0: Sept. 2 BC 0: Sept. 4 Syllabus Sign. Page: Sept 2.
2: Sept. 7 and 9	Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research; Luker Ch. 2 and 3	CPA 1: Sept. 9
3: Sept. 14 and 16	Research Interest vs. Research Question; Luker Ch. 4	CPA 2: Sept. 16 BC 1: Sept. 18
4: Sept. 21 and 23	Literature Reviews Luker Ch. 5	Research Question Defined: Sept. 23
5: Sept. 28 and 30 Reeves Library 9/28 Guest Speaker/ Demo 9/30	Literature Reviews, Continued	Bibliography: Sept. 30 BC 2: Oct. 2
6: Oct. 5 and 7	Sampling and Selection Bias Luker Ch. 6	Literature Review Outline: Oct. 7
7: Oct. 14 (no class Oct. 12) Reeves Library 10/14	Transition Literature Outline to Draft	CPA 3: Oct. 14 BC 3: Oct. 16
8: Oct. 19 and 21	Review Project Deliverables and Current Status; Luker Ch. 7	Draft Literature Review: Oct. 21
9: Oct. 26 and 28 Guest speaker on IRB	Participation Observation, Interviews, IRB Luker Ch. 8 (through p. 167)	BC 4: Oct. 30
10: Nov. 2 and 4 Reeves Library 11/2	Focus Groups, IRB Luker Ch. 8 (through p. 189)	Draft Screencast Script: Nov. 4 BC 5: Nov. 6
11: Nov. 9 and 11 Guest tech. support all week	Screencast Workshops	Present Screencast Drafts: Nov. 11 BC 6: Nov. 13
12: Nov. 16 and 18	Data Reduction and Analysis Luker Ch. 10	CPA 4: Nov. 18 BC 7: Nov. 20
13: Nov. 23 No regular class; workgroup meetings held outside of class	Data Reduction and Analysis	None Happy Thanksgiving!
14: Nov. 30 and Dec. 2	Data Reduction and Analysis Luker, Ch. 11	Draft Lit. Review, Research Method, Data: Dec. 2 BC 8: Dec. 4
15: Dec. 7 and 9 Reeves Library 12/7	Drafting, Editing, Analyzing	Final Screencast and Practice Presentations: 12/9
Finals Week: Dec 14	Presentations Monday, Dec 14 @ 1:30 pm	Final Report Due: Dec 14 @ 1:30 pm

Book Club Reading Assignments:

Week/ Dates	Reading Assignment	BC Comments Due Date
1: Aug. 31 and Sept. 2	Seife: Introduction	BC 0: Fri. Sept. 4 by noon
2: Sept. 7 and 9	No assignment	
3: Sept. 14 and 16	Seife: Ch. 1	BC 1: Fri. Sept. 18 by noon
4: Sept. 21 and 23	No assignment	
5: Sept. 28 and 30	Seife: Ch. 2	BC 2: Fri. Oct. 2 by noon
6: Oct. 5 and 7	No assignment	
7: Oct. 14	Seife: Ch. 3	BC 3: Fri. Oct. 16 by noon
8: Oct. 19 and 21	No Assignment	
9: Oct. 26 and 28	Seife: Ch. 4 and Appendix A	BC 4: Fri. Oct. 30 by noon
10: Nov. 2 and 4	Seife: Ch. 5 and Appendix B	BC 5: Fri. Nov. 6 by noon
11: Nov. 9 and 11	Seife: Ch. 6	BC 6: Fri. Nov. 13 by noon
12: Nov. 16 and 18	Seife: Ch. 7 and Appendix B	BC 7: Fri. Nov. 20 by noon
13: Nov. 23	No assignment	
14: Nov. 30 and Dec. 2	Seife: Ch. 8	BC 8: Fri. Dec. 4 by noon
15: Dec. 7 and 9	No assignment	