

School of Planning, Public Policy and Management



University of Oregon
School of Planning, Public Policy and Management

PPPM 620: Research Skills in Planning
Winter 2019 (CRN: 25822) – 2 credits

Professor Rebecca Lewis, PhD
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Lewis Office Hours: 1:30-3:30 T/Th or make
appointment at [https://rebecca-
lewis.youcanbook.me](https://rebecca-lewis.youcanbook.me)
Class Time: T/Th 10-10:50
Room: 230 Lawrence

Course Overview

The general purpose of this course is to provide students exposure to common research skills utilized the planning field. This course will provide exposure to and practice using various skills so that students can apply these concepts to Community Planning Workshop, professional projects, and professional experiences after graduate school.

Research Skills is a 2 credit course that is offered in the Winter of the First Year for Masters of Community and Regional Planning students (and PPPM graduate students by permission of instructor). In this class, students focus on understanding and applying specific research methods, tools, and techniques. This class helps students understand typical research skills and provides an important framework for students to conduct their own research in professional projects. As practicing planners, students will rely on the knowledge gained in this course to conduct surveys, interviews and content analysis, among other skills.

Learning Objectives

- 1) Understand and differentiate various research skills used in planning
- 2) Apply knowledge of research skills and methods relevant to planning in Community Planning Workshop and Consultancy projects
- 3) Gain knowledge to apply skills to professional projects
- 4) Gain and retain the skills necessary to analyze and describe various types of data.

Course Structure

This class operates as a combination of lecture and workshop. In the Tuesday class, the instructor will lecture about the skill. In the Thursday class, students will work in teams to apply knowledge to real projects. The readings are limited to key topics that describe skills and will be discussed during class, hence it is imperative that students come prepared by having completed the assigned readings (by Tuesday lecture).

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Students will be asked to use personal laptops on many Thursdays during exercises. I ask that at least one student per CPW group bring a laptop to class to use for group exercises.

Course Assessment and Assignments

Each student's grade for the class will be based on their demonstration of attainment of the learning outcomes for the class. Some assignments will be completed individually and some assignments and in class exercises will be completed in pairs or in your CPW groups. Students will be asked to complete quizzes on Canvas between the Tuesday and Thursday classes (starting in Week 2) to gauge understanding of course concepts. These quizzes will be completion grades, meaning that you get full credit if you complete the quiz.

Assignment descriptions will be distributed throughout the term. All assignments will be submitted electronically on Canvas. If you have technical issues submitting your assignment, take a screen-shot of your computer screen displaying the error, email me immediately and attach the screen-shot and assignment to the email.

Assignments	
Interview Assignment (group and individual)	20%
Content Analysis (Pairs)	20%
Survey Analysis (individual and group)	20%
Final Exam (on Canvas)	25%
Quizzes on Canvas	5%
Active Participation and In Class Exercises	10%

Grading Scale and Explanation

100	A+	85-89	B+	70-74	C+	55-59	D+	<45	F
95-99	A	80-84	B	65-69	C	50-54	D		
90-94	A-	75-79	B-	60-64	C-	45-49	D-		

A+ signifies that the student clearly exceeds an exceptional level of achievement and complete mastery of all material. This is an exceedingly rare grade.

A signifies an exceptional level of achievement and superb command of the material. Demonstrates higher level thinking and mastery of subject

A- signifies a very good level of achievement and understanding of the material with some areas of potential improvement and mastery.

B+ signifies an average level of achievement with adequate professional proficiency.

B signifies a slightly below average achievement in relation to professional proficiency; the student has understood the information, but there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

B- signifies that the student has not obtained professional proficiency of the subject material and there is significant room for improvement. While a B- allows the student to pass the class, a student with an overall GPA of a B- is not in good standing.

C+ or lower signifies unacceptable work for graduate level or professionals. Significant deficiencies in assignment or knowledge.

D or lower is not a passing grade and student does not earn credit

P/NP: for a passing grade the student must achieve the equivalent of B- or better

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Course Website

The course website is located on the University of Oregon's Canvas system (<https://canvas.uoregon.edu>) The class syllabus, announcements, some readings and other materials will be posted on the Canvas site. Additionally, all assignments will be submitted on the Canvas site. Syllabus updates will be posted to the Canvas site and revisions will be described for each revised version. I will use the email function in Canvas to communicate with you. It your responsibility to check email and messages for class updates. Please adjust your Canvas notification settings accordingly.

Required Reading

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings are required readings unless noted as optional or reference on the course schedule or Canvas. Weekly readings should be completed prior to lecture on Tuesday. Readings and resources will be available on Canvas or web. See course schedule for a complete list of course readings.

Classroom Environment

In order to create a classroom in which students are comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives, I ask that students please approach the readings and others' contributions with both an open mind and a willingness to question one's own assumptions and biases. It is important that we create an atmosphere of debate and discussion, but you should be respectful of others at all times. As both a student and a professional you should recognize that your language and actions should be inclusive of all people regardless of their country of origin, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and political views. Language or action that is abusive or discriminatory will not be tolerated and is against the University Student Code of Conduct policies.

Professional Practice

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times.

- Students should treat each other and the instructor with the professional courtesy and respect expected in a workplace.
- All communications relating to this course and all work turned in for this course should reflect professional standards in tone, presentation, formatting, and spelling.
- All course assignments will be completed and submitted electronically.
- The classroom is a place of focused learning. This requires that students arrive on time, stay until the end of the class period, avoid disrupting the class by leaving the room temporarily, and refrain from non-learning activities. Students who fail to adhere to these guidelines may be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session and will lose participation points for that day. *If you arrive more than 5 minutes late without advance notice, you will lose half of your attendance points for that day.* **I know that you will be coming from CPW. Please make sure that you leave CPW in time to arrive at Research Skills by 10 AM. I have asked CPW instructors and project managers to be respectful of our class start time. We will begin promptly at 10 AM because we only have 50 minutes for our class session.**
- **No** cell phone use. Please turn your cell phone completely off and stow it **out of sight**.
- I prefer that you **refrain from using laptops during lecture for this class**, as computers tend to distract students from engaging in discussion. Laptop use is only permissible for note-taking and referencing readings. Please do not check email, connect to a web browser or work on other classwork, work, or projects during class. If you are using a laptop, please sit behind other students. Using a laptop is considered a privilege and the instructor retains the right to revoke this privilege if laptops become distracting to course discussion.

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Communication with Instructor

Email is the best way to get in touch with me. I encourage you to email me with questions on the syllabus, assignments, readings, etc. If you would like to meet with me in person, please visit during my office hours or email me to set up an appointment. I am generally very prompt in replying to emails, so if you have not heard from me within 48 hours, I encourage you to re-send the email. *Note that Rebecca's email address is rlewis9@uoregon.edu – there is another Rebecca Lewis in the UO Directory.*

Course Policies

Missed Class Policy

You are responsible for all content missed, including any assignments, knowledge or skills covered or assigned in missed class(es.) Please consult with classmates for class notes. You are allowed two unexcused absence in this course. For each unexcused absence beyond the second one, students will lose 1 point off their final course grade. Excused absences require official written documentation. **Please notify me at least two weeks in advance if your CPW group will be traveling during class and will require your team to miss either Tuesday or Thursday class.**

Late Assignment Policy

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and to turn in all materials at the designated time. When applicable, assignments turned in late with no documentation will be marked down ten percent for every day (24-hour period) they are late. **Assignments submitted one minute past the deadline will be graded as late.**

Extensions will only be granted in severe hardship (death in immediate family, illness or injury requiring bed confinement) or extenuating circumstances (fire, earthquake, etc.) in advance of assignment deadlines. Competing pressures from other courses, job requirements, or problems with your computer do not qualify as extenuating circumstances. Extensions must be requested before the assignment is due. In all circumstances, students are responsible for providing the instructor with official documentation of explanation prior to accommodation.

Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying or obtaining content from other students or other persons and submitting it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor.

Plagiarism

Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas, data, analyses). If there is any reasonable question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student's obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at:

<http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>

How to Avoid Plagiarizing

When directly quoting another author, the writer must:

- Accurately quote the original author's words.

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- Enclose the quotation within quotation marks.
- Follow quotation with in-text citation [e.g., (p. 276)], the format of an in-text citation varies by citation style.
- Introduce the quotation with a 'signal phrase' (whether you are required to use a signal phrase or not varies by citation style).
- A list of references with full citation information is also required at the end of the paper. For more information on humanities or social sciences citation manuals see: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/citing/index.html>

When paraphrasing another author, the writer must:

- Use words or have a sentence structure different from the original work, while maintaining the gist of the original author's idea. Paraphrasing or summarizing doesn't mean just changing a couple of words from the original work.
- Acknowledge the source through in-text citations immediately following the paraphrase.

Accessibility

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in the course, please make the necessary arrangements. You may contact the Accessible Education Center at 541-346-1155. Also, please contact the instructor *early* in the term so that your learning needs are appropriately met.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

As part of the PPPM Equity Initiative, instructors are encouraged to describe how a course relates to issues of equity and inclusion. Equity and inclusion are topics that cut across issues of planning, public policy and management. The content of this course relates to equity and inclusion in that many of your project topics may relate to issues of equity and inclusion. Throughout the term, I will challenge you to consider how your topic relates to equity and inclusion and encourage you to consider a broad range of literature and methods.

The College of Design is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact your instructor and/or department head.

Sexual Violence, Harassment and Survivor Support

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted to completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

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Tentative Course Schedule (all readings available on Canvas)

Week	Date	Content	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1	8-Jan	Introduction and Course Overview		
	10-Jan	Interviews	Patton Ch. 7 (pg 277-357)	
Week 2	15-Jan	Focus Groups (Lecture will be posted online – no class session today)	See: https://www.planning.dot.gov/publicinvolvement/pidocuments/3b-a.asp ; Berg ch. 5 (pg 144-168)	
	17-Jan	Focus Group Exercise (run by Bethany and Aniko)		Quiz #1 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 3	22-Jan	Case Studies	Berg ch. 10 (pg 283-299); Yin ch 1-2 (pg 1-54)	
	24-Jan	Case Studies Discussion/Exercise		Part 1, Interview Assignment Due (Team); Quiz #2 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 4	29-Jan	Content Analysis	Patton, Ch. 8 (pg 452-479), Krippendorf ch 3 and 4(optional) , Berke & Godschalk (pg 227-240)	
	31-Jan	Content Analysis Exercise		Quiz #3 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 5	5-Feb	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Center for Evaluation and Research (5 pg); Reference: Saldana	Part 2, Interview Assignment Due
	7-Feb	Qualitative Data Analysis Exercise		Quiz #4 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 6	12-Feb	Survey Design and Structure (Sampling) and Questions	Kelley et al (pg 261-266); http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survey.php ; Reference: Dillman	
	14-Feb	Survey Design, Structure and Questions Exercise		Content Analysis Due; Quiz #5 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 7	19-Feb	Survey Analysis	The University of Reading Statistical Services Center (28 pg) http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survey.php	
	21-Feb	Survey Analysis Exercise		Quiz #6 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 8	26-Feb	Descriptive Data	Dandekar, ch. 3 (pg 80-111); Wang and von Hofe, ch 2 (pg 11-50)	
	28-Feb	Descriptive Data Exercise		Quiz #7 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 9	5-Mar	Data Quality	Dandekar, ch. 4 (pg 126-156)	
	7-Mar	ACS Margins of Error Exercise		Survey Analysis Due; Quiz #8 due Thu at 8:30 AM
Week 10	12-Mar	Selecting Methods		
	14-Mar	Course Redux and Prep for Spring		
Week 11		Take Home Final to be completed on Canvas during final exam window (Monday, March 18 from 8 AM – 10 AM)		

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Grading Rubric Example (will vary by specific assignment – check Canvas for each assignment rubric)

<i>Criteria</i>	Unacceptable professional quality	Minimally acceptable professional quality	Adequate professional quality	Very good professional quality	Highest professional quality
EVALUATION					
Addressing each portion of assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will vary 					
Providing adequate justification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of literature to present issues and arguments • Development of a coherent argument or reasoned position • Exhibition of higher-level thinking, synthesis and argumentation 					
Writing (see below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly structured and organized • Professional tone • Grammar, referencing & presentation 					

WRITING: Detailed Feedback	Weaknesses or Deficiencies
Logical structure: <i>Can your reader follow presentation of information?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory section to orient the reader to the purpose of the document • Clear sequence of sections: logical order for writing task • Clear structure to sections • Uses subheadings effectively—reader can easily find key information • Uses paragraphs to support structure • Clear topic sentences • Links between paragraphs • Links within sections 	
Professional approach: <i>May not apply for each assignment.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective paper avoids bias and prejudice • Assertions supported by evidence (references, clear information, citations) and not just opinion • Uses a range of high quality sources • Appropriate use of active and passive voice • Awareness of audience: avoids slang, jargon and informal language • Coherence 	
Grammar: <i>Errors can raise questions about sloppiness</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noun verb agreement • Correct use of tense • Complete sentences • Appropriate punctuation • No run on sentences • No spelling errors or typos • Other grammar issues 	
Referencing: <i>Provide support for assertions in accepted referencing style.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In text references (author date, page) or footnotes • Reference list (or footnotes) using proper citation format 	
Professional Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't overuse bullets • Professional format (page #s, clear print + graphics) • Free of handwritten edits • Use graphics to support text, but not replace it • Proofreading 	

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Student Engagement Inventory

Educational Format or Activity	Traditional Hours Engaged (Grad)	Explanation/Justification
Lecture	10	50 minute class -- Tuesdays are lecture
Labs or workshops	10	50 minute class -- Thursdays are workshop.
Assigned readings	17	Total of 340 pages of reading.
Projects or presentations	30	Three written assignments that relate to applying research skills (on topics related to CPW projects.)
Exams taken outside class	10	Take home final exam (on Canvas)
Online interaction (e.g., discussion boards)	3	Quizzes on Canvas (these are short quizzes administered between classes.)