Quantitative Research Methods

Instructor: Chen-Chao Tao
Time: Monday 1pm-4pm
Room: Room 216
Credits: 3
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Office: Room 034, Science Building I
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Office Hours: Thursday 12-14pm

Course Description

This course is an introduction to inquiry. It considers burning questions like:
- How do I know if I know something?
- Is there a reality out there?
- How do you prove or disprove something?
- How do you study things if you can’t be sure they exist?

Goals and Objectives

The seminar is intended to provide students with a theoretical and practical understanding of quantitative research methods. Specific goals include:

- Survey research methods;
- Experimental research;
- Content analysis;
- Longitudinal research.

Grading/Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of grade</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly reflections (critiques)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9 am on the day of the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion leader</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 1-8, 10-13, 15-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper draft</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Week 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 18</td>
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Overview of assignments

Weekly reflections (critiques) require students to read assigned readings every week and write a reflection. This reflection should consist of at least three parts: (1) identify the research question; (2) identify new concepts and definitions of interest to you; (3) either criticize these authors’ theoretical stances or apply these authors’ arguments to different situations, or both. Ask for clarification if there is something you do not understand. Remember that a reflection is not just a
summary. In the reflection, the summary should be no more than five lines. Post your reflections on the assigned group weblog by 9 am on the day the readings is due.

A writing assignment requires students to write a thoughtful 5-6 page paper based on quantitative research methods.

Each student will be responsible for leading the discussion once. When you are the discussion leader, you need to prepare a two-page handout, read classmates’ weblogs, and synthesize critical questions. Presentations should be about 25 minutes in length, and should be followed by 25 minutes of discussion.

Research paper should review some area of concepts and theoretical frameworks and apply that area to some aspect of communication processes. The research paper will be written in stages, beginning with a paper proposal and draft, followed by peer reviews, and the final paper submission. For the final paper, students should revise or extend their draft based on peer reviews and instructor comments. During the last week of class, each student will be required to present their paper in a panel format.