**Description:**

This course aims at familiarizing the students with systematic and methodical investigating of social phenomena. By emphasizing the peculiarity of social phenomena as topics of scientific research, it aims at identifying the appropriate ways of examining them through acknowledged approaches, methods and techniques. The course discusses issues such as: what is scientific social research; how does it differ from other ways of viewing and representing social world; how empirical research interacts with social theory and existing knowledge; why are we talking about methodological pluralism in social sciences; what are the basic principles in social research and on what ontological and epistemological assumptions are they based; what are the methodological implications of choosing one or the other of the research approaches. Ethics and politics in social research as well as the criteria for assessing the quality of social research will be also discussed. The course prepares students to specify a research purpose, to formulate research questions or hypothesis, to plan a research process and to design its steps, to collect, organize and analyze (qualitative and quantitative) data, to produce convincing interpretations, to document research results and to write of a scientific report.
Timetable

1st week
(a) Introduction to course and project
(b) Assignments
(c) The nature and process of empirical social research


2nd week
(a) Epistemological and ontological issues
(b) Theory and research (induction, deduction and abduction)


3rd week
Approaches to social research
(a) Quantitative and qualitative research
(b) Mixed and combined research approaches


4th week
The process of social research
(a) Research design - Steps
(b) Reviewing the literature
(c) Planning a research project and formulating research questions


5th week
Ethics and politics in social research - criteria for assessing the quality of social research.
(a) Ethical principles
(b) Social research as a political practice
(c) Criteria for assessing the quality of social research.


6th week
Qualitative Research
(a) The feature of qualitative research
(b) The main steps in qualitative research
(c) Producing qualitative data


7th week

Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data
(a) Basic operations in qualitative data analysis.
(b) Thematic analysis
(c) Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis: using NVivo


8th week

Research designs of quantitative social research (Stefania Kalogeraki)
(a) Survey designs

9th week

Research designs of quantitative social research (Stefania Kalogeraki)
(b) Basic principles of measurements: From theoretical concepts to variables.
(c) Questionnaire Construction


10th week

Ethnography
(a) Key characteristics of ethnographic research
(b) Access to the field, field notes and analyzing ethnographic material


11th week

Intersectionality in social sciences research (Alexandra Zavvos)
(a) Positioning knowledge
(b) Gender, ethnicity and class as analytical categories in social research

12th week

Research infrastructure in social sciences
(a) Secondary analysis and data sharing
(b) Meta-analysis


13th week

Students’ presentation in class

Recommended Literature


Literature


Saris, W., & I. Gallhofer (eds.) (2207), Design, evaluation and analysis of questionnaires for survey research, New York: Wiley


Journals about methods:
http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/resrch.htm

Forum: Qualitative Social Research http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs