

NP 560: Research Methods for Nonprofit Organizations

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Overview of the Course

This course will provide an overview of quantitative and qualitative methodology in the social sciences. There will be specific coverage of theories of research, why we use social inquiry, and how to interpret findings. The course will cover specific types of research analysis such as descriptive statistics, correlations, regression, surveying, interviewing, content analysis, focus groups, and participant observation. The example pieces and lectures will relate directly to nonprofit management and social services.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

After taking this course, students who participated fully in the course readings and class discussions will:

- Understand how to read and interrupt scholarly articles and program evaluations
- Provide research or program evaluation for a client or employer
- Design a research study or data collection method
- Be able to design an appropriate advocacy strategy for a nonprofit organization
- Use the computer program SPSS to analyze and report data

Methods of Instruction

This course integrates a variety of active learning techniques into the seminar format, including seminal readings from the field, case studies and media articles, group discussions, and Participatory Action Research.

Policies

Attendance is mandatory. We meet very few times and there will be certain days that we end early or have SPSS lab days. Learning is an interactive exercise that requires more than just your physical presence. This means that barring extraordinary circumstances you are expected

to attend each seminar in full. It also means that what individual seminar participants put into our class sessions determines what each of us gets out of it. All of you have unique perspectives and substantive areas of interest and expertise. Please share them! Professionalism and participation require that you come to class *prepared*, ready to *share* your views, and willing to engage and learn from fellow seminar participants. I suggest coming to class each week with questions you want to pose, comments you think need to be made, or places you simply did not “get it.” Know that some of the best participation can be of the “I feel ambivalent” variety. Sharing your views will be invaluable to seminar participants. Graduate learning is truly an empowering and fascinating process. I am excited about embarking on it with you!

Academic Honesty:

Students are permitted to work together for class. However, students are honor bound not to look on each other’s papers, copy work, or aid each other on the exam in any way. Students may discuss ideas for their papers before they actually write them. However, the discussion should be in the spirit of a free exchange of ideas rather than copying each other’s ideas or avoiding the readings. If outside sources (internet or otherwise) are consulted in the writing of papers, then they must be cited. Failure to do so is considered cheating. Students caught cheating will be given a zero on the exam or paper. Further, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Arts & Sciences who may take further disciplinary action. *If you have any questions about whether something is plagiarism, just ask me.*

John Carroll University recognizes its responsibility for creating an institutional climate in which students with disabilities can succeed. In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability, you may be eligible to receive accommodations from the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations and should have equal access to learning. Please contact the SSD office at (216) 397-4967 or come to the office located in room 7A, on the Garden Level of the Administration Building. After your eligibility for accommodations is determined, you will be given a letter which, when presented to instructors, will help them know best how to assist you. Please keep in

mind that accommodations are not retroactive so it is best to register at your earliest convenience.

Assignment One (15% grade):

Descriptive Statistics: Please do a scan of Rural and Urban Ohio (the site listed below will help you will Rural search

(<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/state-fact-sheets.aspx#.U7lEjqcAim>) . Use this site. Complete the following points for Rural and Urban areas in Ohio:

- a. Population, income, education, employment, federal funds, food insecurity, organic agriculture, farm characteristics, farm financial indicators, top commodities, and exports information trends for Rural Ohio. Specifically look at each county and comment on trends in the past 5 years. Please note in a chart where the greatest declines exist and what that means for those in these areas . Please also note where the greatest gains are and what that means for that area. Lastly include some graphs, tables and charts to support your point.
- b. Complete the same assignment for the 10 largest cities in Ohio –but choose Characteristics similar that will reflect the city population. Some till be the same such as: Population, income, education, employment, federal funds, food insecurity...
- c. Please write a general 3-5-page report summarizing your findings and why this is relevant. Compare and contrast the City Data to the Rural Areas. PROPERLY SITE the websites and Data analysis.

Assignment Two (20% of Grade)

1. WATCH THIS VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpErYDb6PsY>

Literature Review: The literature review. A review of the literature is an essential part of your academic success in understanding how research impacts your NPO. The review is a careful examination of a body of literature pointing toward the answer to your research question.

Literature reviewed typically includes scholarly journals, scholarly books, authoritative databases and primary sources. Sometimes it includes newspapers, magazines, other books, films, and audio and video tapes, and other secondary sources. Primary sources are the origin of information under study, fundamental documents relating to a particular subject or idea. Often they are first hand accounts written by a witness or researcher at the time of an event or discovery. These may be accessible as physical publications, as publications in electronic databases, or on the Internet. Secondary sources are documents or recordings that relate to or discuss information originally presented elsewhere. These, too, may be accessible as physical objects or electronically in databases or on the Internet. All good research and writing is guided by a review of the relevant literature. Your literature review will be the mechanism by which your research is viewed as a cumulative process. That makes it an integral component of the scientific process.

The purpose of a literature review is to:

- Place each work in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the research problem being studied,
- Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration,
- Identify new ways to interpret, and shed light on any gaps in previous research,
- Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies,
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort,

- Point the way in fulfilling a need for additional research, and
- Locate your own research within the context of existing literature.

Please choose one of the questions I have provided and write a literature review using CURRENT JURRIED Articles (OHIO link ask your librarian for help if you are struggling with this.)

- **Use 8-10 Juried articles** Journals (professional and scholarly periodicals) that require that articles be examined by other experts or scholars prior to publication are designated as “**peer reviewed,**” “**refereed,**” “**juried,**” or “**blind reviewed.**” See attached PDF on Juried Articles for more Questions
- **5-7 Page** Summary of the literature in support of the question
- **Proper Citation**
- **Questions:**
 - Why do rural students under achieve?
 - Why do urban students under achieve?
 - How can non-cognitive factors influence academic achievement for college students?
 - What is student interest and how can it be measured?
 - What are promising practices in STEM programming to get students into the field and how have they been identified?
 - To what extent should community be involved in ensuring persistence and completion rates of high school and college students?
 - What are the best predictors for disadvantaged students and first generation students to succeed in college?
 - What impact do mentors have on student success?
 - What community assets that exist are underutilized to get help students persist a and complete in college?
 - What are the major reasons that disadvantaged college students leave college?
 - What are the major interventions that have a track record for helping college students persist out of being disadvantaged?
 - What are community health workers? Why can they help with the health issues in Ohio?

- What is the best pedagogy for assisting students from disadvantaged backgrounds and why?
- What is contagion of an idea? How does it impact community life success?

Your literature review will have two components:

- A search through the literature
- The writing of the review

Obviously, the search is the first step. However, you must remember that you love knowledge and that academic databases can be seductive. You could spend untold hours clicking around the bibliographies of your favorite collections. You may have fun, but you might not advance your literature review.

The solution? Have your research question written down and at hand when you arrive at the computer to search databases. Prepare in advance a plan and a preset time limit. Finding too much? If you find so many citations that there is no end in sight to the number of references you could use, it's time to re-evaluate your framing of how you are answering the question.

Finding too little? On the other hand, if you can't find much of anything, ask yourself if you're looking in the right area. Your topic is too narrow. Leading edge research. What if you are trying to research an area that seems never to have been examined before? Be systematic. Look at journals that print abstracts in that subject area to get an overview of the scope of the available literature. Then, your search could start from a general source, such as a book, and work its way from those references to the specific topic you want. Or, you could start with a specific source, such as a research paper, and work from that author's references. There isn't a single best approach.

Take thorough notes. Be sure to write copious notes on everything as you proceed through your research. It's very frustrating when you can't find a reference found earlier that now you want to read in full.

It's not hard to open up a blank text document to keep a running set of

notes during a computer search session. Just jump back and forth between the Web browser screen and the notepad screen.

Using resources wisely. Practice makes perfect. Learn how and then use the available computer resources properly and efficiently. Log onto the Internet frequently. Visit your research resources regularly. Play with the discipline resources. Enter the databases. Identify publications which print abstracts of articles and books in your subject area. Look for references to papers from which you can identify the most useful journals. Identify those authors who seem to be important in your subject area. Identify keywords in your area of interest to help when you need to narrow and refine database searches. Read online library catalogs to find available holdings. Be sure to write copious notes on everything.

Assignment Three: Book Paper (15% of the grade)

Please choose two of the following books:

- Think Like a Freak: by Steven D. Levitt (Author), Stephen J. Dubner
 - Super Crunchers By Ian Aryes
 - The Numerati, By Stephen Baker
 - Freakonomics by Steven D. Levitt (Author), Stephen J. Dubner
 - The Black Swan by Telab
1. Choose two books from list and write a piece relating both of them.
 2. Your report should consist of (a) a brief description of the book as a whole and (b) a well-developed discussion in depth of one or two issues, themes, topics, or aspects of the book that strike you as being especially noteworthy. Do not attempt to summarize the entire book. Give careful, probing, and sustained attention to selected points that interest you and to the author's way of dealing with them. Do not simply write an essay on something the book happens to cover. Focus directly on the book and on the author's distinctive approach to matters that you pick out for examination.

3. The report should very clearly show that you have a close personal acquaintance with the book. The report should not be based on sources about the book, or on an editor's or translator's introduction to the book, or on anything else besides your own complete familiarity with the book
4. The report should consist of at least six double-spaced typewritten or word-processed pages.
5. Use your own words. Quote very sparingly. Any passages you quote from the book must have quotation marks around them, and the page numbers of these passages must be given in parentheses. Quotations from other sources should not be necessary, but if you do make use of anyone else's words, then documentation as well as quotation marks and page references are necessary for them. It is strictly forbidden to pass off another's words as one's own, that is, to engage in plagiarism. For documentation, use the MLA method of parenthetical citations; see the Guidelines for Papers
6. Give at the beginning of each report the standard bibliographical information on the book you're writing about: the author's name, the book's title, the editor or translator (if any), the city of publication, the publisher, and the year of publication of the edition you have used. See the example below.

Assignment Four (35% of the grade)

Please watch each of thee videos. Please create a spreadsheet that will have the following Information:

1. Video Title
2. Key Lessons
3. Definitions
4. How can this be applied in my work in the Non-Profit World?

1. Introduction to Statistics:
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHXadaW_lso
2. How to develop a good research topic
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXNztCLYgxz>
 - b.
3. The Mean, Median, Mode...
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dE1zDbFABQ>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=095BdbOunPU>
 - c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV_m_uZOUgl
4. Standard Deviation
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3v6mYNPyDoY>
 - b.
5. The Gaussian/ Distributions
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPFoQEhil9A>
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=772_n15Ke9Q
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c11d3vVM5v8>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykmT12Ipigc>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mai23vW8uFM>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daIb2VF1i3M>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wa9yxL5Susw>
6. Error Types
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=taEmnrTxuzo>
7. What is a p value?/Hypothesis testing
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FtlH4svqx4>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cW16A7hXbTo>
 - c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kx0xLnqI_30
 - d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVMVGHkt2cg>

8. Z-Scores

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xhCL5m4nI0>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0ILBcARxL4>
- c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUu5HIHrRw>
- d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NY2zWGBXBhU>

9. What is Correlation?

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-i1-PzVlxc>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhR342u-FYA>
- c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EXNedimDMs>

10. Binomial Distribution/PROBABILITY

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9GpfHQcdBg>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sqq4k50dxbI>
- c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AY3O_qsSnbE
- d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLK0MWRwFYc>

11. SAMPLING THEORY

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIVnW2kv4tE>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1El4znkRH0g>

12. What is a T-Test? What is a Z-test?

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Pd3dc1GcHc>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsalXF5POtY>
- c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kzqm8F9Le_4

13. What is a Chi-square?

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VskmMgXmkMQ>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXPBoFDqNVk>

14. What is an ANOVA?

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qV-WoquC4dA>
- b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51QZa7b0Ozk>
- c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgMFhKi6f6Y>

15. What is a Regression?
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gb4qqX4uhYA>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPjW2HPTaEw>
 - c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU2t1HDwVuA>
 - d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aq8VU5KLmkY>
16. What is a multiple regression?
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLpfEml4Vak>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek4bIe-DuMA>
 - c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfGiIVbf0CA>
17. Survey Research
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-WOQNsggWY>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqn4TscFmSg>
 - c. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36s6wBSJW8U>
18. Content Analysis
 - a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0_d1QsR04
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhQX-zKultw>
19. Ethnographic Research
 - a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fM_CJ5vDK4
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIQ2b23ImYw>
20. What is a focus group
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XA2Eo1ggkjc>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vft9sDzMoIQ>

**Assignment 5 SPSS lectures and some excel to keep it interesting!
(15% of grade)**

Please watch these videos ...then go to the web-site:

http://www14.software.ibm.com/download/data/web/en_US/trialprograms/W110742E06714B29.html and download free SPSS Software. Once you have downloaded the software complete the following assignment:

1. Create a research Question (Hypothesis/Null)
2. Create a survey to support that research question: Collect information such as gender, education level etc – as well as the heart of the matter for your question. You can get a free version of Survey monkey to do this on (less than 10 questions)
3. Survey 30 people
4. Analyze the Data in SPSS
5. Write a report 7-9 pages that includes your question, the findings and the analysis. In the appendices please put the survey, the data analysis and any other relevant information.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msl7xf0tInE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmVKGshelcQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8lmUkB4lag>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVGD_5Tk6ao
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5WiYh2jmG8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWyFdUjdHeM>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4mGKguUnvc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b163iBByycw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQykoF1ZMX8>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcS6_I63PHs
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CWeHF3Mn00>

Lit Review Rubric

<i>Rubric for Literature Review*</i>			
Criteria and Qualities	Low	Middle	High
Introducing the idea: Problem statement	Neither implicit nor explicit reference is made to the topic or purpose of the article.	Readers are aware of the overall problem, challenge, or topic of the article	The topic is introduced, and groundwork is laid as to the direction of the article.

<i>Rubric for Literature Review*</i>			
Body: Flow of the review	The summary appears to have no direction, with subtopics appearing disjointed.	There is a basic flow from one section to the next, but not all sections or paragraphs follow in a natural or logical order.	The summary goes from general ideas to specific conclusions. Transitions tie sections together, as well as adjacent paragraphs.
Coverage of content	Major sections of pertinent content have been omitted or greatly run-on. The topic is of little significance to the course.	All major sections of the pertinent content are included, but not covered in as much depth, or as explicit, as expected. Significance to the course is evident.	The appropriate content in consideration is covered in depth without being redundant. Sources are cited when specific statements are made. Significance to the course is unquestionable.
Clarity of writing and writing technique	It is hard to know what the writer is trying to express. Writing is convoluted. Misspelled words, incorrect	Writing is generally clear, but unnecessary words are occasionally used. Meaning is sometimes hidden.	Writing is crisp, clear, and succinct. The writer incorporates the active voice when appropriate and supports ideas with

<i>Rubric for Literature Review*</i>			
	grammar, and improper punctuation are evident.	Paragraph or sentence structure is too repetitive. Few (3) spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors are made.	examples. No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors are made.
Conclusion: A synthesis of ideas and application to library media center program	There is no indication the author tried to synthesize the information or make a conclusion based on the literature under review. No application to library media center program is provided.	The author provides concluding remarks that show an analysis and synthesis of ideas occurred. Some of the conclusions, however, were not supported in the body of the report. The application to library media center program is stated.	The author was able to make succinct and precise conclusions based on the review. Insights into the problem are appropriate. Conclusions and the application to library media center program are strongly supported in the review.
Citations/References: Proper APA format	Citation for the article did not follow APA	Citation for the article did follow APA format ;	Citation for the article did follow APA format .

<i>Rubric for Literature Review*</i>			
	<u>format</u> and was missing essential information.	however; a few (2) errors in essential information were evident.	Essential information was accurate and complete.

Paper Rubric:

Rubric for grading each paper:

Criteria	Level 1 (50-59)	Level 2 (60-69)	Level 3 (70-79)	Level 4 (80-100)	Mks
Introduction / Thesis	-weak introduction of topic, thesis & subtopics -thesis is weak and lacks an arguable position	-adequate introduction that states topic, thesis and some of the subtopics - thesis is somewhat clear and arguable	-proficient introduction that states topic, thesis, and all subtopics in proper order - thesis is a clear and arguable statement of position	-exceptional introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic, thesis, and all subtopics in proper order - thesis is exceptionally clear, arguable, well developed, and a definitive statement	/8
Quality of Information / Evidence	-limited information on topic with lack of research, details or historically accurate evidence	-some aspects of paper is researched with some accurate evidence from limited sources	-paper is well researched in detail with accurate & critical evidence from a variety of sources	-paper is exceptionally researched, extremely detailed and historically accurate with critical evidence from a wide variety of sources	/12
Support	-limited	-some	-consistent	-exceptionally	

Criteria	Level 1 (50-59)	Level 2 (60-69)	Level 3 (70-79)	Level 4 (80-100)	Mks
of Ideas / Analysis	connections made between evidence, subtopics, counterarguments & thesis / topic -lack of analysis	connections made between evidence, subtopics, counterarguments & thesis / topic showing analysis	connections made between evidence, subtopics, counterarguments & thesis / topic showing good analysis	critical, relevant and consistent connections made between evidence, subtopics, counterarguments & thesis / topic showing excellent analysis	/10
Organization / Development of Ideas	-paper lacks clear and logical development of ideas with weak transition b/w ideas and paragraphs	-somewhat clear and logical development of subtopics with adequate transitions b/w paragraphs	-clear and logical subtopic order that supports thesis with good transitions b/w paragraphs	-exceptionally clear, logical, mature, and thorough development of subtopics that support thesis with excellent transition b/w paragraphs	/10
Conclusion	-lack of summary of topic, thesis & subtopics with weak concluding ideas	-adequate summary of topic, thesis and some subtopics with some final concluding ideas	-good summary of topic, thesis and all subtopics with clear concluding ideas	-excellent summary of topic (with no new information), thesis & all subtopics in proper order with concluding ideas that leave an impact on reader	/5
Language	-	-paper has	-paper is	-paper is very	/5

Criteria	Level 1 (50-59) inconsistent grammar, spelling and paragraphing throughout paper	Level 2 (60-69) some errors in grammar, spelling and paragraphing	Level 3 (70-79) clear, with mostly proper grammar, spelling and paragraphing	Level 4 (80-100) concise, clear, with consistently proper grammar, spelling and paragraphing	<i>Mks</i>
e Conventions					
Total					

Dates of Assignments Due:

- You can self monitor... and turn in all assignments by August 15th. If you choose this approach, no change in grade will occur.
- The second option is to turn in assignments per date and have the opportunity to revise for mastery (grade A).

Assignment	Early Date Due	Date Due	Early Date Revision	Due date Revision	Final submission
1	7/13	7/19	7/18	7/26	August 17
2	7/19	7/26	7/25	8/2	August 17
3	7/26	8/2	8/1	8/9	August 17
4	8/2	8/9	8/8	8/16	August 17