

Viewing: **GLBL 200 : Foundations of Research**

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History

1. Dec 14, 2018 by Amy Elli (amyelli)
2. Aug 27, 2022 by Deb Forgacs (dforgacs)

Catalog Pages
referencing this course

[GLBL - Global Studies](#)

Programs referencing
this course

[10KV5206BALA: Global Studies, BALAS](#)

[10KV5215BALA: Global Studies, BALAS](#)

[5206: Global Studies Minor, UG](#)

General Information

Effective Term:

College: Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department/Unit: Global Studies Prog & Courses (1563)

Name (ORG
Code):

Course Subject: Global Studies (GLBL)

Course Number: 200

Course Title:

Abbreviated Title: Foundations of Research

Course

Description:

Introduction to the foundations of interdisciplinary social science research. Topic include understanding the purpose for research, identifying researchable issues, finding evaluating and using sources effectively, recognizing methods associated with different types of data and disciplines, and writing a literature review. Prepares students for course-based research papers and advanced research methods courses. Guest faculty present their Global Studies-relevant research as students (b)log their own research interests.

Justification

Justification for change:

Please Note: a syllabus is
required for General
Education review:

Course Information

Course Credit

Course credit:

Undergraduate: 3

Graduate:

Professional:

Registrar Use Only:

Banner Credit: 3

Billable Hours: 3

Grading Type

Grading type: Letter Grade

Alternate Grading
Type (optional):

Available for DFR: No

Repeatability

May this course
be repeated? No

Credit Restrictions

Credit
Restrictions:

Advisory Statements

Prerequisites:

Concurrent
Enrollment
Statement:

Restricted
Audience
Statement:

Cross-listing

Cross Listed
Courses:

Class Schedule Information

Class Schedule
Information:

Fees

Is a fee requested No
for this course?

Course Description in the Catalog Entry

This is how the above information will be represented in the Catalog:

Introduction to the foundations of interdisciplinary social science research. Topic include understanding the purpose for research, identifying researchable issues, finding evaluating and using sources effectively, recognizing methods associated with different types of data and disciplines, and writing a literature review. Prepares students for course-based research papers and advanced research methods courses. Guest faculty present their Global Studies-relevant research as students (b)log their own research interests.

Additional Course Notes

Enter any other
course
information
details to be
included in the
catalog:

Course Detail

Frequency of course:

Every Fall
Every Spring

Duration of the course Full

Anticipated Enrollment: 25

Expected distribution of student registration:	Freshman: 15 %	Sophomore: 50 %	Junior: 30 %	Senior: 5 %
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General Education

General Education Category Quantitative Reasoning II
Social Science

General Information

Is the course required for a major concentration? No

Is the course part of a sequence? No

What is the frequency with which the course will be offered?:
(For Example: every semester, once a year)

The class is currently offered every Spring semester. LAS Global Studies would like to expand offering the course to every semester if enrollment and demand for the course warrants it.

Briefly describe how the course fulfills the General Education objectives:

GLBL 200 requires students learn how to approach interdisciplinary social science research from a design perspective, which fosters substantial openness to a variety of methods (that are subsequently determined by the research topic, questions, and scale of the project) rather than the narrower paradigm and methodological preferences of more traditional disciplinary-focused research. In addition to studying different research approaches (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed method and evaluation) and paradigms (e.g., positivist, interpretivist, pragmatic, and critical/transformativ), GLBL 200 students learn about ethical standards and practices in research and the significance of positionality and reflexivity in line with the standards and expectations of the Institutional Review Board. Students learn about the appropriate steps and

procedures for conducting research with different populations, including groups who have been historically marginalized in their respective societies and/or have been exploited by research in the past. Toward this end, students read and discuss texts by scholars of race, class and gender that familiarize them with the significance of under-represented experiences in research. As a Global Studies course, there is a strong emphasis on assessing one's cross-cultural competency and awareness as a researcher and on addressing how to take further steps to develop these capacities and ensure that they are sufficiently considered in one's research projects. For students who are interested in pursuing research projects abroad, especially projects that positively and constructively address critical issues in various countries and communities, the course aims to develop their deeper appreciation and recognition of gender, ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, and socioeconomic differences. During the course, students engage with a range of digital resources and texts; listen to guest lectures; attend library, SPSS, and citation database workshops/tutorials; complete methods and analysis assignments; design a research project; and author a research proposal. All of these course activities are meant to increase students' understanding and sensitivity toward diverse social and cultural environments while substantially building students' knowledge of research design and methods. Furthermore, the course has a practice orientation so students begin to develop the skills to apply their newly acquired research knowledge in such diverse environments in order to successfully pursue collecting data that answers their research questions. Ultimately, students undertake the development of such understanding and practical skill-building in context of a strong emphasis on issues of global concern, such as human rights, gender equity, sustainable development, good governance, and climate change.

To highlight the centrality of gender, race and class to the scope of GLBL 200 – Foundations of Research, we have included the following resources and approaches on the syllabus:

- 1) Week 1: Introduction to the course – Adichie's (2011) powerful Ted Talk on the process of stereotyping allows students to reflect on their own experiences and preconceived notions of distant countries and communities prior to initiating their training in global inquiry
- 2) Week 4: Literature review – Zerai et al. (2017) illustrate how growing digital divides are further isolating scholarship produced by scholars based in the Global South, and urges researchers based in the United States to ensure a broad representations of authors and perspectives in their literature reviews.
- 3) Week 5 – Using theory in research design. We have broadened the scope of our discussion the relationship between theory and research with an introductory piece on intersectionality and its implication for research design
- 4) Week 10: Conducting ethnographic interviews. Marjorie DeVault's (1999) chapter on conducting ethnographic interviews with vulnerable social groups, such as lower-income and ethnic-minority women illustrates how informants' lower socio-economic

status can respond to a researcher's presence and questions. This piece further provides explicit suggestions to ensure that researchers not dismiss such inequalities, and rather highlight them as a key component of the research process

5) Week 13 – research ethics. With the article by Sultan (2007), we have broadened the scope of our section on research ethics to encourage students to reflect more explicitly on their positionality, meaning on how their own race, gender, sexuality and class (among many others) influence the research process

Describe the instructional format and provide special justification, if necessary:

The format of this class is a mix of small lectures, seminar-style discussions, writers' workshops (with intensive peer review), and field-based/practical methods assignments. The instructor provides weekly lectures on key topics and readings and leads discussions on student research projects as well as individual and group methods assignments. Students regularly complete individual brainstorming and writing tasks related to the development of their research project or related to the exploration of a research concept. Such brainstorming and tasks are then followed by small group discussions or peer-review of in-class work. In addition, students frequently present, informally to the entire class, aspects of their research projects for feedback and they formally present their work related to analysis assignments (e.g., the international database analysis assignment) and field-based/practical methods assignments (e.g., the evaluation proposal). Students complete 4 methods assignments—1) observation and mapping, 2) interviewing, 3) survey design, and 4) evaluation proposal—in addition to an assignment that requires analysis of an international dataset. As mentioned in the previous section, students also participate in in-class workshops and tutorials on topics such as SPSS (addressing statistical analysis), Institutional Review Board (research ethics) and literature review (addressing library search methods) with the help of guest presenters and experts on campus.

Describe the means by which the Communication Skills goal will be achieved:

The format of GBLB 200 reflects that of writers workshop in that it is a student-centered, peer-review approach to learning social science research design. This approach recognizes the inherent interconnectedness of writing, thinking, and communicating ideas that is part of the academic research process. As such, students constantly peer-review aspects of each other's research projects and formal proposals as these aspects progress through their stages of development. Such aspects include students' research questions, problem statements, survey questions, methodological plans, and positionality statements. The process of peer review helps to teach students an important component of participating in academia—namely, the role of a collaborator and sounding board to the ideas being developed and research being conducted in one's field. The course provides students many opportunities to develop their ability to articulate complex ideas related to the design and conduct of social research. In addition to peer review, the instructor provides detailed written feedback on the many aspects of students' work related to their projects as well as routinely

meets with students about their progress. In order to facilitate a workshop-style course, the enrollment for the course is capped at 25 students and ideally does not exceed 20 students. If demand exceeds 25 students, it will be necessary to create more lecture-discussion sections.

Through the course's assignments, students are introduced to a range of research methods and approaches that are applicable to an interdisciplinary Global Studies perspective. These assignments require students to do the following:

a. Working with Data: Students identify, analyze and present their written reports (800-1200 words) on different international datasets and databases that relate to their research interests. Databases might be produced by organizations such as the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and Pew Research. As part of their report, students are required to analyze aspects of the data's production such as its collection and sampling procedures as well as reflect on measurement concerns related to the structure and wording of survey questions used to produce the data and/or the assumptions inherent in other indicators comprising the dataset. Students assess limitations and benefits of the data as part of the assignment and formally present their report to the class.

b. Field-based/Practical Methods Assignments: Students complete 4 assignments that develop their practical skills related to data collection.

a. Observation/Mapping: Students conduct an observation and map the location of their observation. The assignment requires students to transform written observational notes into a well-developed field note (2-3 pages) that includes "thick description" and can be shared with a wider audience.

b. Interviews: Students design an interview protocol and conduct an hour-long interview utilizing it. As part of the assignment, students transcribe 10 minutes of the interview and describe how the interview data addressed their broader research questions.

c. Survey Design: Students design a survey to collect data addressing a specific research topic with a particular population. In relation to their survey's development, students are prompted to consider issues of validity and reliability especially as they relate to cultural and linguistic plurality across a diverse population. Surveys are presented by students to the entire class and also are peer reviewed in small groups. Students are instructed to consider question structure and scales to evaluate the types and quality of the quantitative data produced.

d. Evaluation proposal: As an important practical approach to social science research, students learn how to design the evaluation of a social program. This is an assignment completed in 2-3 person teams. Students select a program and author an evaluation proposal that reflects an original design of an evaluation to address specific questions about the program's efficacy. The assignment requires students to consider issues of power, transparency, stakeholder equity, and the use of resources in social programming as well as which approaches (e.g., qualitative, quantitative or mixed) will best provide useful information on that programming. Students co-author the proposal and then present it to the entire class.

c. Individual Research Proposal: Students write a research proposal that reflects their original research design for a project of their choosing. Proposals require them to

identify problems with global relevance, refine research questions, conduct literature reviews, and design projects with appropriate methods. Students complete sections of the proposal in exercises throughout the course and write multiple drafts. The final draft of the proposal is 14-16 pages (approximately 4,000 words).

d. Research Proposal Presentation: Students communicate the final design of their research project (from research context and questions through their plans for data analysis) to the entire class via a formal presentation using a visual aid like PowerPoint or Prezi.

Describe how evaluation and adherence to General Education guidelines will be monitored:

Please indicate the timeline for such evaluations

Course materials, instructional plans, and assignments will be prepared according to the general education recommendations for the Quantitative Reasoning II and Social Science designations. The course instructor will continue to revise the course in consultation with colleagues in the Global Studies program and in other affiliated programs. In addition, students' feedback on the materials and instructor evaluations will provide important information with regard to the quality of the course and the necessity of revisions to its format, assignments, and texts.

Indicate those who will teach the course and describe procedures for training & supervising teaching assistants:

The course will be taught by: Dr. Valeria Bonatti, lecturer in Global Studies.

Quantitative Reasoning II

Which type of course is this?

Probability or Statistics

Show how at least 25 percent of the course content and graded material incorporates the relationships between the assumptions of the probabilistic and statistical models discussed and the conclusions drawn?

GLBL 200 familiarizes students with how statistical studies are designed in order to investigate social phenomena, and course content focuses on the issues of scale, measurement, and sampling that influence the conclusions that can be drawn from quantitative data. Students review the basics of statistical methods and analysis that are relevant to research in the social sciences. The course incorporates lessons on descriptive and inferential statistics while providing an introduction to applying statistical models and analysis in global research. Lessons include understanding principles of measures of central tendency, variance, statistical sampling and representativeness, hypothesis testing, and testing of univariate and bivariate relationships.

Students also apply the knowledge they gain of statistical principles to their analysis of real world data. Students find and assess datasets/databases produced by international organizations (e.g., the World Bank, United Nations, Pew Research, and the International Organization for Migration). These databases provide broad statistical data illuminating different topics related to Global Studies. By referring to the databases and various indicators used, students are expected to interpret the ways in which theories and concepts are operationalized into measurable variables. Students also use knowledge gleaned from these datasets toward formulating assessments of the drawbacks and benefits of statistical analysis for exploration of social science issues.

The instructor will introduce students to the use of statistical analysis software such as SPSS through in-class demonstration and will lead students through exercises that illustrate the statistical concepts described above. To accomplish this, related course sessions will be held in the computer labs that provide access to statistical software such as SPSS and Excel to allow students to learn and use statistical analysis in real-time. During these sessions, the instructor will provide walkthroughs and hands-on guidance, as well as in-lab exercises for students to become familiar with commands for generating descriptive and inferential statistics.

Assignments and course content addressing statistical models and the application of statistics to the study of social science far exceed the required 25%. Students will take a mid-term (15% of final grade) that tests their knowledge of the statistical and quantitative research principles covered in the first half of the course. They will also complete an international dataset analysis assignment (15% of final grade) where they generate a report and give a presentation assessing the dataset in terms of its approaches to measurement and sampling and its issues with validity, reliability and representativeness. In addition, students complete a survey design assignment (5% of final grade) where they apply the concepts they have learned in the quantitative research module to creating a survey that could generate quantitative data and allow for statistical analysis. As importantly, students may opt to incorporate existent statistical datasets or articulate a design for collecting quantitative data in their draft and final research proposals (5% and 20% of final grade), which are the culminating assignments for the GLBL 200 course. Students additionally present their plans for using such datasets or generating and then analyzing such quantitative data in their final research project presentations (5% of final grade). While some students will opt for a solely qualitative research project design, even they will complete the initial quantitative assignments (survey and international data analysis assignment) and midterm, which represents at minimum 35% of the course grade. Quantitative research and statistical concepts are truly interwoven throughout the course as they are also central to latter discussions of mixed methods, evaluation, research ethics, and the writing of research.

Social and Behavioral Sciences - Social Sciences

If the course contains elements of both the Social Sciences and the Behavioral Sciences categories, show how the emphasis of the course makes it most appropriate for the Behavioral Sciences category for which it is being proposed.

What social groups, institutions, organizations, or processes are studied in this course? What is the chronological, geographical, or cultural area within the scope of the course?

The GLBL 200 course systematically leads students through the research design process for an interdisciplinary social science study. The course prepares students to design and conduct original research across cultures and with a global orientation. Students may design studies that reflect a historical or contemporary focus. Some research within the field of Global Studies is comparative; some is global in scale; and some is more narrowly defined to address transnational dynamics within a particular region, nation, or smaller context. In GLBL 200, students are guided through the research design process in a way that helps them refine their ideas and research interests so they can ultimately choose an appropriate context and scale for pursuing their study. The topic being studied can and often does include institutions (e.g., the United Nations) and organizations like civil society groups and non-governmental organizations.

Show how the course emphasizes persons in relation to other persons and to their environment.

The generation of social science data is principally relational; even if contact between the researcher and participants is indirect (like in a survey), obtaining good data relies upon good design, which in turn relies upon comprehensive knowledge of your research population and genuine rapport with the people who are participating in your study. To progress with research absent of this knowledge and rapport is to risk, at worst, conducting a study that is exploitative and causes harm and, at best, that is out of touch and produces invalid data. The course includes a substantive exploration of researcher positionality, bias, and research ethics in order to guide students toward a successful and ethical approach to their studies. Through guest lectures, course readings and small group discussions, students investigate issues of harm, power, and representation in research; they also consider how research can be part of ensuring democratic, equitable and transparent societies.

Show how the course considers both methodological and substantive issues, and formulates and inquires into basic questions about the nature of social life.

The main focus of the course as described above is the consideration of methodological issues pertaining to the design and conduct of interdisciplinary social science research. Students design studies that attempt to explore basic and complex questions related to the nature of social life—for instance, research that addresses the construction of community identity or that explores the dynamics of power between groups of people. Since Global Studies as a field draws upon the disciplines of history, geography,

sociology, political science, economics and anthropology, the range of questions students can consider is extensive. Another aspect of Global Studies as a field is its applied nature in that its practice also draws upon the applied fields of education, social work, and public health. Consequently, students' research projects are often quite applied in nature and attempt to address substantive issues that have direct relationships to the quality of people's lives (i.e., their social welfare).

Additional Course Information

Does this course replace an existing course? No

Does this course impact other courses? No

Does the addition of this course impact the departmental curriculum? No

Has this course been offered as a special topics or other type of experimental course? No

Will this course be offered on-line?
Face-to-Face

Faculty members who will teach this course:

The course will be taught by: Dr. Valeria Bonatti, lecturer in Global Studies.

Course ID: 1010356

Comments to Reviewers:

Course Edits Proposed by:

