

COURSE SYLLABUS



HUMAN RIGHTS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY SEMINAR

Argentine Universities Program, Buenos Aires

US semester credit hours: 3

Contact Hours: 45

IFSA-Butler course code: SO301-11

Course Length: semester

Delivery Method: Face to Face

Language of Instruction: Spanish

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is a workshop with students' active participation. Classes will be theoretical-practical seminars to consider the main steps and the basic tools used to carry out an empirical research, through presentations and individual and/or group coursework. Each session will be referred to a particular moment in the research process, so that students may clarify any doubts arising in each particular instance and write their dissertation gradually. The last two meetings will be used to provide students with a personalized assistance in the preparation of their own fieldwork and the writing of their final dissertation (structuring, wording, data analysis, and conclusions).

COURSE DELIVERY

Students are expected to read or view assigned resources in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In most meetings, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic.

Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions (based on experiential learning theory) and to make cognitive connections between this course and others in IFSA Buenos Aires whenever possible (based on the philosophy of integrative learning).

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Provide the students with the methodological tools necessary to carry out a human rights research.
- Provide practical accompanying for the preparation of a research work in an Argentine civil society organization acting in the human rights area.
- Develop and gather theoretical elements for the description and analysis of the selected research topic.
- Guide the data collection process and the selection of the proper research methodology for the study to be performed.

- Accompany the final report writing process, organizing collected data and information produced by the student. Structure information analysis and hypothesis posing.
- Become familiar with resources available for further research on human rights research.
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the IFSA Argentine Universities Program.

COURSE OUTLINE

Class 1: COURSE PRESENTATION

- *The students will be introduced to the workshop subject-matter.*
- *Brief general presentation of the different steps of the research to be carried out, that will be structured in the following classes.*

Assignment for the following classes: Bring a brief description (minimum 1 page) of the NGO in which you are doing the internship, using the following questionnaire as a guide: what type of organization is it, who work there and what does each member do, who provides the funds, which are the organization's goals, since when is it working, what are the ongoing projects and how does such organization fit in the ideological map of the other NGOs that deal with similar issues, etc. (consult web pages).

Classes 2-3: BEGINNING THE SOCIAL RESEARCH

- *The description of the non-profit organization where internship will be done will be discussed.*
- *Some basic guidelines on how to choose a research topic will be provided, including the different types of questions to be asked.*
- *We will begin reflecting on the research topic.*

Assignment for the following classes: Reflect on the topic that you would like to approach in the research and the grounds for your choice, if possible, related to a situation that occurred during the internship. Bring a list including 5-10 possible questions.

Classes 4-5: RESEARCH PROBLEMS, SOCIAL PROBLEMS

- *Provisional questions for the research will be prepared in groups, going from the description to the formulation of the problem.*
- *The following step will be the bibliographical research and the identification of previous works in the field of study. Particular strategies will be outlined.*

Assignment for the following classes: Bring a list of bibliography (maximum one page). For that purpose, students should consult libraries, archives and related databases.

Classes 6-7: THE STATE OF THE MATTER

- *The problems that arise from the research of written sources, both primary and secondary, will be discussed.*
- *We will work on basic questions regarding the adoption and constitution of theoretical-conceptual frameworks.*
- *The different information collection techniques will be presented and we will proceed to design the methodology to be applied.*

Assignment for the following classes: Choose the techniques that you would like to use in your research. Write in a page: the reasons of your choice, the pros and cons regarding other techniques, and the possible difficulties that you might encounter and how to overcome them.

Classes 8-9: DATA COLLECTION I: THE BEGINNINGS

- *Practical discussion of the use of different data collection tools: interviews, documents, images and statistical data, among others.*
- *We will work on the forms of presentation and fieldwork, and we will explain the steps to be followed when gathering the information that is missing for the purpose of the dissertation.*

Assignment for the following classes: Reflect on how to analyze and/or organize the obtained information in the dissertation. Make a first collection of data: an interview, sources, visual material, etc.

Classes 10-11: DATA COLLECTION II: SYSTEMATIZATION

- *We will delve into the use of selected data collection tools and we will evaluate whether they are functional to the research we are carrying out.*
- *We will start the analysis of the material obtained from the research work.*
- *We will go through the structure of the final work and we will evaluate the way in which it relates to obtained data and the work plan to obtain such data.*

Assignment for the following class: continue gathering data (interviews, sources, visual material, etc.), but consider them with reference to the research topic defined at the beginning. Prepare an index proposal for your dissertation, including all the information you already have.

Class 12: DATA ANALYSIS

- *We will prepare a grid to analyze obtained data.*
- *We will update the bibliographical proposals based on the reading of selected material.*
- *All material considered during the course will be discussed in order to consider each particular case.*
- *The structure of the final work will be defined, articulating the data obtained and the bibliography.*

Assignment for the following class: Bring a rough copy of the introduction and/or of some chapter or section that you have prepared. Finally, prepare a list of bibliography and data search pending tasks.

Class 13: HOW TO WRITE YOUR DISSERTATION

- We will discuss the different ways of writing and some useful tools for the presentation of dissertations.
- We will revise the first rough copy in the light of the research topic.
- We will evaluate whether obtained information is sufficient for the analysis to be carried out.

Assignment for the following classes: Bring a rough copy of your complete, or almost complete, dissertation, to be checked with the tutors.

Classes 14-15: TUTORSHIPS

The last two meetings will be dedicated to the personalized treatment of each research work, to accompany the students in the writing of their dissertations and assist them in the resolution of any problems and hindrances faced during the process, clarifying any doubts. Students will submit drafts with the state of their research and personalized feedback will be provided.

RESOURCES

Given that the course is a workshop, the texts to be read will be indicated according to each student's specific needs at the different stages of his/her research.

- Jorge Padua. 1996. "Research techniques applied to Social Sciences" (*"Técnicas de investigación aplicadas a las ciencias sociales"*). Fondo de Cultura Económica, México.
- Eco, Umberto. 1988. "How to prepare a thesis?" (*"¿Cómo hacer una tesis?"*) Ed. Tecnos: Madrid.
- Martin Bauer and George Gaskell (Editors). 2006. "Qualitative research with text, image and sound. A practical handbook". Sage Publications, London.
- Rosana Guber. 1988. "The metropolitan savage" (*"El salvaje metropolitano"*). Legaza, Buenos Aires
- Hermitte, Esther. 2002. "Observation through participation" (*"La observación por medio de la participación"*). In "Fieldwork histories and styles in Argentina" (*"Historias y estilos de trabajo de campo en la Argentina"*). Rosana Guber and Sergio Visacovsky, editors. Buenos Aires: Editorial Antropología.
- Alan Agresti and Barbara Finlay. 1997. Statistical methods for the social sciences. Prentice Hall, New York.
- Rodríguez Gómez, Gregorio, Gil Flores Javier and Jiménez García Eduardo. 1996. "Interview" (*"Entrevista"*), in "Qualitative Research Methodology" (*"Metodología de la Investigación Cualitativa"*). Ediciones Aljibe. Chapter 9, pages 167-184.
- Holy, Ladislav. "Research Theory, Methodology and Process" (*"Teoría, Metodología y Proceso de Investigación"*). In Field Research Methodology and Techniques Course material. Chair Professor: Graciela Batallan, School of Humanities, Buenos Aires University.

- Hammersley, Martyn and Atkinson, Paul. 1994. What is the meaning of ethnography? in Hammersley, Martyn and Atkinson, Paul. *Ethnography*. Ediciones Paidós – Barcelona, Mexico, Buenos Aires.
- Saltalamacchia, Homero. 1992. *The History of Life ("La Historia de Vida")*.
- Wainerman, Catalina and Sautu, Ruth. 1997. "Research Backstage" (*"La Trastienda de la Investigación"*). Editorial de Belgrano, Buenos Aires.
- Willis, Paul. 1980. Notes on Method, in Hall, Stuart et al. (editors.): "Culture, Media, Language": Hutchinson, London.
- Rockwell, Elsie. 1987. "Reflections on the ethnographic process" (*"Reflexiones sobre el proceso etnográfico"*) (1982-1985), in Rockwell, Ezepeleta. "To observe school, roads and notions" (*"Para observar la escuela, caminos y nociones"*). Mexico, DIE.
- Berreman, Gerald. 1962. Behind many masks: ethnography and impression management in a Himalayan village", in Monograph Number 4, Published by the Society for Applied Anthropology.
- Cicourel, Aaron. 1982. *Method and measurement in sociology*. Madrid, Editora Nacional.
- Oxman, Claudia. 1999. "Social Sciences research interview" (*"La entrevista de investigación en Ciencias Sociales"*). Eudeba, Buenos Aires.
- Briggs, Charles. 1986. "Learning how to ask. A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science Research. Cambridge University Press.
- Schuster, Félix. 1997. "The method in Social Sciences" (*"El método en las ciencias sociales"*). Editores de América Latina, Buenos Aires.

EVALUATION METHODS

Course Information

Student's minimum attendance is 75%. Assignments delivered after the deadline will only be accepted in the event of documented illness or emergency.

Assessment

The student's mark will depend on the following factors:

- Participation in the class discussions and handing in of all weekly homework and assignments, 20%
- Final written work, 80%

Besides, the following is required in order to pass the subject:

- To have a positive evaluation of the organization in which the internship was completed;
- To have a 75% class attendance record.

Grading:

• 95%-100% = 10	10=	A
• 94% - 85%= 9	9=	A
• 84%-75%= 8	8=	A-
• 74%-65%= 7	7=	B+
• 64%-55%= 6	6=	B
• 54%-45%= 5	5=	B-
• 44%-35%=4	4=	C
	3=	D
	2=	F
	1=	F

- 34%-25%= 3
- 24%-15%=2
- 14%-0%=1

*Note: Grades that end in .5 or higher will be rounded up. Grades that are .49 and lower are rounded down.

The course instructor will determine specific assignments (including paper topics), projects, and exams for the course. Your work on individual assignments and projects will be guided by grading rubrics provided by the course instructor. Your final grade in the course will be arrived at through assessment methods determined by the course instructor and according to the percentages attached to each assignment and exam by the course instructor. Participation will constitute a determined percentage of your grade. Participation includes attendance, preparation, engagement in discussion, civility, and respect.

Grading Rubrics

Criteria	EXCELLENT (A)	GOOD (A- B+)	ACCEPTABLE (B- C)	UNACCEPTABLE (F)
Objectives	The student clearly identifies the main objectives and ideas	The student identifies the objectives	The student identifies the objectives unclearly	The student fails to identify the objectives
Research Context	The student achieves a clear delimitation of the object of study specifying place, time, and relevant characteristics	The student achieves a delimitation of the object of study specifying time and place	The student achieves the delimitation of the object of study in a general way	The students fails to achieve any delimitation
Methodology	The student develops a detailed methodology in terms of gathering, organizing and processing information	The student mentions the methodology to be followed but without details	The student mentions the methodology in a very shallow way	The student does not specify any methodology
Structure of the document	The document provided by the student presents a clear structure and a fluid content that allows the reader to easily locate key items such as index, introduction, methodology, development,	The document presented by the student presents a structure that depicts the main elements of the document but in a very unspecified way	The document presented by the student fails to achieve a complete structure	The student presents a document that lacks structure

	conclusions and bibliography			
Sources	The student provides accurate and compelling evidence to support in depth the central argument. Research sources are highly reliable and relevant. The sources are cited in an effective manner throughout the entire document	The student provides evidence to support the central argument and the sources are properly cited	The student provides some evidence to support the central argument but presents few sources. Some sources are not relevantly or appropriately mentioned in the document	The document presented by the student lacks sufficient sources of research to support the central argument. If included, the sources are not properly cited
Conclusion	The student achieves an excellent summary of the subject, reframes the key points and suggests new perspectives or questions that are relevant to the central argument	The student presents a good summary of clear and conclusive topics and ideas but it does not examine new perspectives or questions	The student presents a basic overview of the topic solely containing a number of conclusive ideas	The student presents an incomplete and/or out of focus conclusion
Oral presentation	The student's presentation includes well prepared visual materials that work in an informative and effective way. The information is very well connected within the assigned time limits	The student's presentation only includes some visual materials but the information is well connected within the assigned time limits	The student's presentation includes visual materials but they are very few and difficult to understand. In the same manner, the information is irregularly connected within the assigned time limits	The student's presentation does not include visual materials and the information fails to respect the assigned time limits

Timely Submissions

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA-Butler takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA-Butler resident director as well as your home institution.