HUMAN RIGHTS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY SEMINAR
Argentine Universities Program, Buenos Aires

Class Term: Semester 2, 2016
Suggested US semester credit hours: 3
Contact Hours: 60
IFSA-Butler course code: SO301-11
Delivery Method: Face to Face
Instructor: Prof. María del Carmen Arnaiz
Email: marnaiz@ifsa-butler.org
Class Time: Wednesdays, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Location: IFSA-Butler Resident Office
Credits: 3 U.S. semester credit hours

Course Description
The course is a workshop with students’ active participation. The first eight 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 two remaining 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).

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.

Bibliography
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.


COURSE SYLLABUS


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.


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.


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.
COURSE SYLLABUS

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.

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.

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.

Grading:

- 95%-100% = 10
- 94%-85% = 9
- 84%-75% = 8
- 74%-65% = 7
- 64%-55% = 6
- 54%-45% = 5
- 44%-35% = 4
- 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.
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Outline

Class 1 (4/14 week): 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 class: 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).

Class 2 (4/21 week): 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 class: 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.

Class 3 (4/28 week): 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 class: Bring a list of bibliography (maximum one page). For that purpose, students should consult libraries, archives and related databases.

Class 4 (5/5 week): 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 class: 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.

Class 5 (5/12 week): 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 class: 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.

Class 6 (5/19 week): 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 7 (5/26 week): 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 8 (6/2 week): 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 class: Bring a rough copy of your complete, or almost complete, dissertation, to be checked with the tutors.

Classes 9-10 (6/9 to 6/16 weeks): 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.