

Bergen Summer Research School

Course Title:

Introduction to mixed methods research

Discipline(s):

Psychology, Sociology, Public Administration, Public Health, Health Promotion

Course Leaders:

Maurice B. Mittelmark (coordinator), Professor of Health Promotion

Gro Th. Lie, Professor of Health Promotion

Elisabeth Fosse, Associate Professor of Health Promotion

Course Description, Goals and Objectives:

This course will introduce social and health sciences study designs for the conduct of individual studies, and programmes of study, suitable for research in the context of poverty as a global challenge.

Social science and health researchers have traditionally gravitated towards either quantitative or qualitative research, and few researchers have all the skill needed to combine successfully the two approaches. Yet this situation is changing, and mixed methods research is finding acceptance by peers, funding agencies and journal editors. The appeal is that research combining qualitative and quantitative traditions may offer valuable insight about phenomena that would escape a researcher working in just one or the other tradition.

This doctoral level introductory course will be comprised of lectures, group work, seminars and a paper. Using their own research, background and experience, and the course readings as the main resources, the students will address three of the five following seminar topics, with students choosing the three topics and taking responsibility for preparing and leading three seminars on the chosen topics:

1. "Historical developments leading to the mixed methods paradigm"
2. "The classification of mixed methods designs including unresolved issues"
3. "Pros and cons of conducting mixed methods research in doctoral research"
4. "Challenges in judging the quality of reports of mixed methods research"
5. "Communicating the advantages of mixed methods to sceptical audiences"

Outline of lectures and other activities:

Friday 8 August –

Overview of course, introductions of faculty and students, objectives, learning methods, course paper (Mittelmark, 1400-1600)

Saturday 9 August –

Mixed-methods lecture I (Mittelmark, 1000-1100)

Group work, seminar preparation, with faculty tutors (all faculty, 1130-1300)

Sunday 10 August –

Lecture -- Mixed-methods research: Interpersonal ties and community mental health (Mittelmark, 1000-1100)

Group work, seminar preparation, with faculty tutors (all faculty, 1130-1300)

Lecture -- Mixed-methods lecture II (Mittelmark, 1400-1500)

General discussion (all faculty, 1500-1600)

Monday 11 August –

Mixed-methods research: Multi-cultural venues for health and development (Lie, 1400-1600)

Tuesday 12 August –

Mixed-methods research: Policy processes for human development (Fosse, 1000-1100)

Group work, seminar preparation, with faculty tutors (all faculty, 1130-1300)

Wednesday 13 August –

Lecture -- Mixed-methods lecture III (Mittelmark, 1200-1300)

Group work, seminar preparation, with faculty tutors (all faculty, 1400-1600)

Thursday 14 August –

Seminar 1, presented by students (all faculty, 1000-1100)

Seminar 2, presented by students (all faculty, 1130-1230)

Seminar 3, presented by students (all faculty, 1400-1500)

Friday 15 August –

Topics and activities to be agreed during week, based on learning issues that are priorities for the students (all faculty, 1130-1300 and 1400-1600)

Required reading list:

NOTE! It is essential that the reading be completed prior to the start of the course.

Methods:

Johnson B, Onwuegbuzie (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.

Teddlie C and Tashakkori A (2003). Major issues and controversies in the use of mixed methods in the social and behavioural sciences. In A Tashakkori and C Teddlie (eds) (2003) *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications. pp 3-50

Creswell JW, Clark VLP, Gutman ML, Hanson WE (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. In A Tashakkori and C Teddlie (eds) (2003) *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications. pp 209-240.

Examples:

Sosulski MR and Lawrence C. (2008) Mixing methods for full-strength results. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(2), 121-148.

Hallman K, Lewis D and Begum S. (2003) *An Integrated Economic and Social Analysis to Assess the Impact of Vegetable and Fishpond Technologies on Poverty in Rural Bangladesh*. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) series EPTD discussion papers, number 112. IFPRI 2033 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

Prerequisites:

Students are expected to have taken at least one graduate-level overview course in research methods.

Students, ECTS, Work Required:

We welcome students from any social or health science arena whose dissertations involve mixed methods, or who simply have curiosity about mixed methods approaches.

About 250 hours of work is required (10 ECTS), inclusive all Bergen Summer School activities (this course plus plenary activities). Preparatory work includes completing the Required Reading prior to arrival in Bergen. Each student is to deliver a 10-page paper (double-spaced) on the topic “My Dissertation reconsidered from the perspective of Mixed-Methods Research”, within four weeks after the end of the course. The paper will receive careful attention from the Course Leaders and written feedback will be provided.

Working in three groups, students will take responsibility for preparing and leading seminars as described above. The Course Leaders will participate as tutors in group work sessions, will attend the seminars, and will comment on the seminars and accompanying discussions. Seminar presenters are expected to prepare a 30-minute talk, and summarise with 4-5 stimulating questions for a discussion lasting about 20. The last 10 minutes or so is devoted to a summary and comments by the Course Leaders. Each of the five seminars is a 60-minute session, in total.

The activities of this course will be interspersed with Summer School Plenary Sessions, Plenary Panel Debates, exhibitions, tours, sightseeing, etc, that all Summer School participants and faculty members will engage in.