

**GTD 506 Quantitative and Qualitative Research: Methodological Approaches and Techniques in Development Studies (3 credits)**

**Spring Semester 2016, Session B, March 14 – April 29, ONLINE**



**Arizona State University  
Global Technology and Development M.S. Program  
School for the Future of Innovation in Society**

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**Course Description:**

This course, a required component of the M.S. in Global Technology and Development, considers the wide range of measurement, information gathering and data analysis used in global development studies, both by policymakers and scholars. It consists of a history of social science research methodologies and methods, including the philosophical underpinnings of what constitute data and knowledge. An emphasis of the course will be on identifying methods used in published research, and the evaluation of these choices for specific research questions. It is designed to complement GTD 505 Research Design by focusing on the connection between the research problem and research methods, how to evaluate and utilize data, as well as how to evaluate published research literature. The two core research courses are designed to be taken in any order, and graduate students from other programs with an interest in topic are welcomed in the course as well. The structure of the course will have as the foundation readings on the history and variety of perspectives on social science research and development studies. It will be supplemented with reading and evaluating research literature, examining global data bases such

as the United Nations Human Development Reports, with the expected outcomes of developing problem statements, and evaluating methodological possibilities.

The main objectives of the course are:

- Enhance the ability of graduate students to critically evaluate published research in global development studies.
- Evaluation and understanding of data, and how a research question relates to a chosen research method (s).
- Identification of potential areas of research within the field of GTD.
- Preparation of students for the GTD capstone requirement by providing tools and practice in identifying research problems and how they connect to methods and data evaluation.

### **Required Books:**

Moses, J. and Knutsen, T. (2012). *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. Palgrave  
Sumner, A. and Tribe, M. (2008). *International Development Studies: Theories and Methods in Research and Practice*. Sage

Assigned research articles are free and online; some may not appear on this syllabus but will be available on the course shell for the appropriate week.

### **Assignments and Requirements:**

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Discussion Board	100 (15-20 each)
Article Analyses (4)	200 (50 each)
Problem Statement	50
Final Paper	100
	Total 450

### **Discussion Board:**

Discussion boards are always due by the date at the end of the stated week. Regarding all online discussions, proper online etiquette should be observed at all times: i.e., no ‘shouting’ with capital letters, no name calling, and show respect and restraint when stating opinions and responding to others, especially when you disagree (and it is fine to disagree, as long as you do so respectfully!). Disruptive or inappropriate behavior in the course may result in immediate removal from the Blackboard site and the receipt of an email from me. Also, please observe traditional grammatical rules in your postings – i.e., capital letters where necessary and full spelled out words and phrases. In general, discussion board posts should be 500 to 700 words.

The criteria for grading your class discussion board participation include the following:

- Posting insightful comments that reflect an understanding of the course material and prompt on-topic discussion.
- Writing comments that reflect complete thoughts and ideas that are clearly articulated.
- Clarifying, synthesizing, or asking insightful questions to another student's comments.
- If disagreeing with other students' ideas, the participant states his/her disagreement or objections clearly, yet respectfully.

**Article Analyses:**

These four short papers will be 2 pages, double spaced, and will provide a critique of the methods and underlying assumptions about knowledge in a relevant research article in a field related to Global Technology and Development. Articles will be provided to choose from for the first article analysis; after that each student will search for articles in their area of interest and related to their problem statement.

**Problem Statement and Final Paper:**

The problem statement, due at the beginning of the course, is a 350 word paragraph that provides a direction for researching a particular issue that we need to know more about, something in an area of interest. The goal is to have a problem in order to work on methods and methodological choices. It is acceptable to craft this statement based on what might have been developed in GTD 505 or other classes. The final paper will then take this problem statement and discuss the methods choices that fit the best with the information needed to pursue the research. This paper is to be no more than five pages including the original problem statement (which can be revised if necessary for the final paper).

**Grading Policies:**

To determine your final percentage, divide your final point total by the total points available in the class (450). For example, a final point total of 400 would be a percentage total of 88 % which will be a final grade of B+. Any final percentage total less than 65% will result in a final grade of E. Grades are calculated and assigned using the following plus/minus percentages. Final grades will not be rounded up or down!

A+	98%
A	95%
A-	92%
B+	88%
B	85%
B-	82%
C+	78%
C	70%
D	65%

## **Weekly Schedule:**

### **Week 1: March 14–21: Review of Research Design and Process**

- Purpose of research
- Research Steps – from problem to data analysis
- Writing a problem statement
- Defining and measuring development
- Readings: Sumner and Tribe text, Chapters 1 and 2; Varma, R. (2014) Questioning Professional Autonomy in Qualitative Inquiry, *IEEE*

### **Week 2: March 21–28: What is methodology? Ways of Knowing**

- Ontology, epistemology and methodology
- Methodology vs. methods
- Naturalism and constructivism
- ‘Ways of knowing’ – assessing current new articles on research
- Readings: Moses & Knutsen, Chapter 1; and Sumner and Tribe, Chapters 3 and 4
- *Problem statement due March 30 (all assignments due by midnight)*

### **Week 3: March 28-April 4: Positivist Paradigm**

- History of ‘naturalist philosophy of science’
- Experimental method
- ‘Rigor’ in development studies; quantitative, qualitative, mixed
- Readings: Moses & Knutsen, Chapters 2-3; Sumner and Tribe, Chapter 5
- *First article analysis paper due April 6*

### **Week 4: April 4-11: Quantitative/Qualitative Methods**

- Descriptive and inferential statistics
- United Nations Development Programme indicators
- Surveys
- Comparative and case study contexts
- Readings: Moses & Knutsen, Chapters 4-6
- *Second article analysis paper due April 13*

### **Week 5: April 11-18: Constructivism as Alternative**

- Critiques of positivism
- Constructivist philosophy of science

- Role of ideas and society in research
- Discourse and language, knowledge and power
- Reading: Moses & Knutsen, Chapters 7-8
- *Third article analysis paper due April 20*

### **Week 6: April 18-25: Survey of Methods from a Constructivist Perspective**

- Using history and comparing context
- Contextualizing statistics
- Experiments
- Readings: Moses & Knutsen, Chapters 9-12
- *Fourth and final article analysis paper due – April 27*

### **Week 7: April 25-29: Conclusions**

- Problem statements and methods choices
- Readings: Moses & Kutsen, Chapter 13; Sumner & Tribe, Chapter 6
- *Final Paper due – May 3 (midnight)*

### **Arizona State University Academic Policies:**

#### **Plagiarism:**

Academic integrity and honesty is expected of all students at Arizona State University, and is so stated in the ASU Student Code of Conduct (available at <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/>). Plagiarism or cheating can result in the grade of "XE". The XE grade denotes failure through academic dishonesty. *Plagiarism also includes copying sections, including sentences and phrases of text out of research articles, or off internet websites, without citing the source and putting phrase/sentences in full quotation marks.* For more information on plagiarism and the ramifications of academic dishonesty see: [http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic\\_integrity.htm](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm). Students are responsible for understanding these policies and following proper academic research and citation protocol.

#### **Incomplete Policies**

According to University grading policies (<https://students.asu.edu/grades>), a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given by an instructor *when a student is otherwise doing acceptable work but is unable to complete the course because of illness or other conditions beyond their control.* In this course acceptable work assumes that at least 50% of the written coursework has been completed. Incompletes must be completed with a calendar year; after that the "I" changes to an "E". The student must complete Request for Incomplete Form, and deadlines must be set for the completion of the work.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities:**

Accommodations for disabilities are made according to the policy of Arizona State University, which is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information on ASU's Disability Resource Center see <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/>. If you need any specific assistance with this class please let me know.

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>.