OVERVIEW

This course is designed as an introduction to the logic and processes of inquiry, particularly as it relates to social science research but also as it relates to clinical and educational settings where clinicians, teachers, and other practitioners puzzle about particular children and families needing help. Specifically, the aim of the course is to provide students an opportunity to consider in depth, the questions that guide any systematic inquiry related to the health, well-being, and development of children and families – whether those questions be general research questions or questions related to helping a particular child or family.

For our purposes, inquiry will be understood as a process of rigorous, systematic exploration or examination. The methodological form it takes, or how it is carried out depends entirely on the question posed, the setting and context, and the overall purpose of doing a systematic inquiry.

We will consider the various types of research questions and methods – as well as questions and methods typically used by thoughtful practitioners. We will discuss the aims and strengths of both formal and informal methods employed through an examination of studies by quantitative and qualitative researchers, and by practitioners.

It is imperative that students who seek to study human development and who desire to work with children and/or families, in any setting—educational, social, clinical, or cultural—understand the key role of the research question in the design of any study, and the key role of the leading question when something puzzles the thoughtful practitioner. Good research questions have the potential to lead to findings that are relevant not only to the lives of those in a study but also to the field; good questions by the practitioner have the potential to lead to better interventions.

REQUIREMENTS
Term paper: For the final paper, students will write a proposal for a study that involves integrating at least two methodological approaches discussed in class. Students will be asked to formulate a research question and then, drawing on readings from the course, consider how to explore that question through different methods. The main features of the proposal will be a detailed discussion of the purposes of the research as well as a well thought out explanation of how and why the particular methods chosen will best address the research question question. The paper can be no longer than 15 pages, and is due **Monday December 8**.

Short essay: Once or twice during the term, you will be asked to submit a 2-3 page essay on an assigned topic related to the readings. More detailed instructions will be discussed in class.

Memos: You will write short research memos throughout the course related to the readings and to your final paper. Research memos are essential to the development of any study as they allow the researcher a way to “think out loud” and to document those reflections in a systematic way. The memos will be ungraded, but will be counted toward the overall course participation grade.

Library Research: Special attention will be given to helping you learn how to conduct a thorough literature search on a particular question or interest. Knowing where to look, how to identify, and how to document relevant literature in a given field or topic of research interest is a critical skill all researchers must learn. This class and discussion will take place in Tisch at a date to be determined with the reference librarians.

Inquiry projects: Across the semester, you will be asked to conduct inquiries outside the classroom. This work will include observations of various settings and interviews with researchers.

Class Presentations: On designated weeks, you will present your findings in class, during which the rest of the class will act as an interpretive community, engaging in thoughtful discussion with you about your work. The purpose of these presentations is to give all of you a chance to articulate your thinking around design issues and to learn how to give relevant, helpful feedback.

Class participation: I would like you to keep a journal on all of the assigned readings to help you stay current with the class topics. Participation in class discussions that reflects thoughtful consideration of the readings will lead to a higher course grade.

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<th>Grading rubric</th>
<th>Final paper</th>
<th>35%</th>
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<td>Short essays</td>
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WEEKLY READINGS

9/8  Introduction to course

9/15  Paradigms of Research: Meaning and Method

Guba, E.  The alternative paradigm dialog
Phillips, D.  Postpositivistic Science: Myths and realities
Lincoln, Y.  The making of a constructivist

9/22  Inquiry and Meaning Making:

Dewey, J.  Logic: The theory of inquiry
Bruner, J.  Acts of meaning
Novak, B.  “Growing wings” and “Engrossment”: Seeing the philosophical
tradition through the lens of care

9/29  The Epistemological Ground of Inquiry

Popkewitz, T.  Whose future, whose past? Notes on critical theory and methodology
Eisner, E.  The meaning of alternative paradigms for practice
Firestone, W.  Accommodation: Toward a paradigm-praxis dialectic
Rogoff, B.  Orienting concepts and ways of understanding the cultural nature of
human development

10/13  The practice of Inquiry: Finding and Defining Questions

Langer, S.  Philosophy in a New Key (Chapter 1: the New Key)
Ely, M., et al  Working in interpretive modes
Maxwell, J.  Research Questions

10/20  Methods of Inquiry 1: Clinical and Behavioral Approaches

Piaget, J.  The child’s conception of the world
Breuer & Freud  Case histories: Anna O & Elisabeth von R
Wood, B. & Lane K  Functional behavioral assessment
Flynn  Functional Analysis
Greenburg, F. Behavioral approaches

10/27 **Methods of Inquiry 3: Teacher Research and Program Evaluation**

Ballenger, C. & Rosebery, A. What counts as teacher research
Gonzalez, et al Teacher research in focus of knowledge

**Guest Lecturer, Dr. Cindy Ballenger**

11/3 **Issues in Quantification, Modeling Development, Variance vs Process**

Platt, J. Strong inference
McCartney, K. On the meaning of models: A signal midst the noise
Maxwell, J The logic of qualitative research

Recommended:
Light et al By Design
Hearn, J. Review of By Design

11/10 **Qualitative Approaches and designs, Reviewing Literature**

Glesne & Peshkin Meeting qualitative research
Stack, R. Case Studies

**Guest Lecturer: Laurie Sabol (Class will meet in Library)**

11/24 **Other forms of Inquiry: Investigating theory, Program Evaluation**

Scarlett, G. & Perriello, L. The development of prayer in adolescence
Weiss, et al Five tiered approach to program evaluation
Patton, M Program evaluation

12/1 **Integrating Approaches**

Trend, M. On the reconciliation of qualitative and quantitative analyses
Zentella, A. Integrating quant/qual methods in study of bilingual code switching
Cook, T. Postpositivist critical multiplism
Maxwell, J Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches

12/8 **Final Projects and Wrap Up**