Government of Russian Federation

National Research University – Higher School of Economics

Department of Public Policy

Syllabus of the course
Foundations of Social Research: Qualitative and Mixed Methods

Master degree in Political Science (41.04.04)
Master degree program “Political Analysis and Public Policy”

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Approved by the meeting of the Public Policy Department
on « »__________ 2017

Head of department:
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Moscow, 2017

This syllabus cannot be used by other university departments and other higher education institutions without the explicit permission of the Department of Public Policy.
1 Scope of Use

The present syllabus outlines minimum demands of students’ knowledge and skills and the content of the course. The syllabus is intended for the department teaching this course, its teaching assistants, and students of the degree program 41.04.04 ‘Political Science’, master’s program ‘Political Analysis and Public Policy’.

This syllabus meets the standards required by:

- Standards of National Research University Higher School of Economics of Federal Masters’ Degree Program 41.04.04 “Political Science”,
- Master’s program ‘Political Analysis and Public Policy’ of Federal Master’s Degree Program 41.04.04 “Political Science”,
- Curriculum of the master’s program ‘Political Analysis and Public Policy’ as of 2016.

2 Learning Objectives

The main objective of the course “Foundations of Social Research: Qualitative and Mixed Methods” is to assist students in developing clear understanding of the applications for qualitative research methodology in public policy research. The course focuses on the fundamental aspects of planning and designing public policy research by the means of qualitative methods. It analyses the advantages and disadvantages of the qualitative research methodology and proposes strategies of strengthening qualitative research designs. The course does not cover statistics, regressions analysis, etc. but provides a complex perspective on the potential of the mixed-methods approach to the research methodology.

The course aims at:

- Creating methodological basis for research in public policy sphere
- Forming understanding of qualitative in comparison with quantitative research methodology
- Developing conceptual understanding of the qualitative research planning and design
- Studying methods of qualitative research: different types of interviews, focus groups, participant observation, case study and others
- Proposing a practical perspective on combining qualitative and quantitative methods in developing mixed-methods research designs
- Creating practical skills of using qualitative data in public policy

3 Learning outcomes

As a result of studying of discipline the student should

- **Know** key instruments of qualitative methods in social research, its genres, specifics and conditions of implementation.
- **Be able to** collect and interpret qualitative data to analyze public policy phenomena and processes.
- **Acquire the skills for** usage of different methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>NC/NU-HSE Code</th>
<th>Descriptors (indicators for achieving the result)</th>
<th>Forms and methods of education which help the students to acquire the competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to analyze political, economic and sociological data using different qualitative methods.</td>
<td>PC-8</td>
<td>Students use qualitative methods in their term paper</td>
<td>Presentation of empirical research in the sphere of public policy. Review of literature. Discussion of the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to analyze and improve familiar research</td>
<td>SC-1</td>
<td>Students use qualitative</td>
<td>Presentation of empirical research in the sphere of public policy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Syllabus of the course Applied Qualitative Methods of Social Research

for Master degree in Political Science (030200.68), Master degree program “Political Analysis and Public Policy”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>NC/NRU-HSE Code</th>
<th>Descriptors (indicators for achieving the result)</th>
<th>Forms and methods of education which help the students to acquire the competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>methods and professional skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>methods in their term paper</td>
<td>Discussion of the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to report the work results and present them according to required standards</td>
<td>PC-5</td>
<td>Students use qualitative methods in their term paper</td>
<td>Presentation of empirical research in the sphere of public policy. Discussion of the essay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 Role of the discipline within the structure of Master program

For specialization 030200.68 “Political Science”, master’s program “Political Analysis and Public Policy”, the first year, this course is basic and is not based on other disciplines.

Main competences developed by studying this discipline can be used to study the following discipline:

- Research seminar
- Term paper
- Master’s Thesis

### 5 Course Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Total hours</th>
<th>Contact hours</th>
<th>Independent students’ work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Design and Logic of Qualitative Research</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interview: types and techniques</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Secondary and Specialized Methods and Data Analyzing/Interpreting</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>228</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6 Requirements and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of grading</th>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Present in-class and submit in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.1 Course Evaluation Criteria**

**Exam (40% of Final Grade)**

The students have to prepare a comprehensive research proposal based on the qualitative methodology (preferably on their term paper topic).

**Participation (40% of Final Grade)**

The student must attend the classes, get familiar with the relevant literature and apply certain research methods during the preparation for the classes, participate in the discussions, and complete in-class exercises related to qualitative and mixed methodology. Activities are graded either on 10-points scale or by pass/fail. The grade for participation is an average for all activities.
Essay (20% of Final Grade)
The student has to write an Essay (report) devoted to critique of some research based on qualitative or mixed methodology. The student is responsible for finding such a report that will include enough information to make reasoned judgements about the general research quality of the project and particular aspects of qualitative research discussed during the classes.

7 Course Description

Topic 1. Design and Logic of Qualitative Research
Principles of research for social sciences. Qualitative and quantitative social research: comparative advantages and limitations. Kinds and genres of qualitative research. Research ethics. Planning and designing a qualitative research project. Literature review, research problem, research purpose, research question, research tasks and qualitative research design.

Recommended readings:
   • Read pp. 9-19 and review some of the papers (for example: Joel Best - “Defining Qualitative Research”; Andrew Bennett - “Testing Theories and Explaining Cases”).
   • Review pp. 10-18, Appendix 4, and Appendix 5.
4. Flick, Uwe. 2007. Designing Qualitative Research. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Optional readings:
3. Berger, Roni. 2013. “Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research.” Qualitative Research 0, 1-16.
11. Handout on Conducting a Literature Review: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/

**Topic 2. Interview: types and techniques.**


**Recommended readings:**


**Study cases of qualitative interviewing**


**Topic 3. Observation**


**Recommended readings:**

2. The handbook of qualitative research. 2000. Los Angeles [etc.] SAGE Publications. Part III. Chapter 18, 21 (Tedlock B. The Observation of Participation and the Emergence of Public Ethnography and Madison D.S. Critical Ethnography as Street Performance: Reflections of Home, Race, Murder and Justice)
Optional Readings:

Topic 4. Secondary and Specialized Methods and Data Analyzing/Interpreting

Recommended reading for content analysis and archival analysis
3. Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method read online: http://www.academia.edu/8434566/Document_Analysis_as_a_Qualitative_Research_Method

Study examples

Recommended reading for other methods and data analysis/interpretation:

8 Teaching Methods and Recommendations
Lectures are combined with the discussion of reading for the week. Students are also required to make reports and oral presentations of their independent works.

8.1 Recommendations for course teacher
It is recommended to use interactive teaching methods, which allow for most student participation such as discussions, case studies, role-plays. It is also expected that Power Point presentations will be used for teaching.

The course is intended to be based on real-life case studies, multimedia examples, and current events. It is necessary to develop examples in the computer programs.
8.2 Recommendations for Students
The course format mixes lectures, group discussion, and presentations. Students should take notes, both on lectures and on the reading, and presentations, with the intention of addressing the key themes of the course. The student must read the textbooks and use the computer programs.

8.3 Provisional Questions for Final Control
Elaborate the research design (using qualitative methods) for one of suggested topics:

1. Brief methodology and detailed examples of sections/question
2. List of experts/respondents (sampling, selection’s criteria, recruiting)
3. Argue the choice of suggested methods. Additional/complementary methods
4. Main principle and stages of data analysis

9 The rule of forming cumulative grade

\[ O_{\text{accumulated}} = 0,65 \times O_{\text{participation}} + 0,35 \times O_{\text{essay}} \]

\[ O_{\text{final}} = 0,6 \times O_{\text{accumulated}} + 0,4 \times O_{\text{exam}} \]

10 Reading and Materials

10.1 Textbooks and Readers
- Flick, Uwe. 2007. Designing Qualitative Research. SAGE Publications Ltd.

10.2 Recommended Reading
- Berger, Roni. 2013. “Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research.” Qualitative Research 0, 1-16.
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- Kawulich, B. Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/466/996
- The handbook of qualitative research. 2000. Los Angeles [etc.] SAGE Publications. Part III. Chapter 18, 21 (Tedlock B. The Observation of Participation and the Emergence of Public Ethnography and Madison D.S. Critical Ethnography as Street Performance: Reflections of Home, Race, Murder and Justice)
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11 Equipment

Teachers need projector and students need a personal computer and a voice recorder.