UAPP 801: Processes of Social Inquiry
Spring 2017
Wednesday 12:20-3:20 PM, Graham Hall 187

INSTRUCTORS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary objectives of this course are (1) to provide an appreciation of major issues surrounding social inquiry; (2) to contribute to an understanding of the possibilities and limits associated with the conduct of social inquiry as a scientific enterprise; (3) to gain a familiarity with the primary processes of social scientific inquiry; and, (4) to provide an opportunity for students to engage in a preliminary formulation and design of research in their area of interest.

JOINTLY TAUGHT SEMINAR BY DRS. BYRNE & RICH

The seminar will be led by Professors Byrne and Rich. The instructor is noted below for each session. Both instructors will read all essays but primary responsibility for grading will rest with one of the instructors in the case of the First and Second Essay. For the First Essay (see p. 10 below), Professor Rich will have primary grading responsibility. For the Second Essay (see p. 11), Professor Byrne will have primary grading responsibility. For the Third Essay (see pp. 12-13), Professors Byrne and Rich will share grading responsibility.

READING ASSIGNEMENTS

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:


Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, (New York: Cape and Smith, 1930, reprinted 2010)

All other required readings are available from Sakai@UD, the University of Delaware’s online learning management system at [https://sakai.udel.edu](https://sakai.udel.edu). Use your UDelNet ID and Password to log in. All passwords are CASE-SENSITIVE!! In the Sakai folder for UAPP 801, you will find pdf’s of assigned readings, the class schedule and the syllabus.

Please be advised that viewing these readings requires Adobe Acrobat software since they are in pdf format. To download a free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, go to http://www.adobe.com.

Materials retrieved from Sakai@UD are not to be shared via any online forums or internet websites. Sharing course material without written permission from the instructor constitutes both academic dishonesty and copyright infringement.
For questions about access to these readings, please contact Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu.

The reading assignments are substantial and much of the material may be unfamiliar. In many cases it may be necessary to read the material several times to gain a satisfactory understanding. In addition, it is strongly recommended that you prepare written annotations of the central ideas of each of the readings and that you review these as the material is discussed in class. Students are encouraged to form study groups to discuss the course material outside of class periods. The reading materials are intended to supplement the ideas and themes developed during the class sessions. The purpose of the class sessions is not to exhaust the content of the reading assignments but to explore ideas and the interpretation of ideas.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

1) Each student is required to prepare a preliminary design for a research project in their area of interest. Different portions of the project statement are to be submitted throughout the semester in accordance with the attached outline and schedule. Each submission should be shared with the student’s faculty advisor, as well as the instructors. Each submission throughout the semester is cumulative and should contain revisions in response to comments and criticisms of earlier drafts. Students are encouraged to select research topics which may become the subjects of theses or dissertations. The preparation of a research design provides an opportunity to begin evaluation of the suitability of various topics for theses and dissertations. In all cases the research design should reflect the student’s primary scholarly interest at this point in their graduate program. All portions of the project statement should be typed according to a systematic format for research papers and include appropriate citations and references. Students who are unfamiliar with standard research paper format should consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

The schedule for this assignment appears on p. 8 of the syllabus. It is not graded but a final grade for UAPP 801 cannot be submitted until a complete Research Design is provided. The final version of the Research Design Paper is due on May 5.

2) Each student is required to submit three essays. The essay questions are attached to this syllabus. The essays are to be submitted in accordance with the following schedule:

- First Essay – April 3
- Second Essay – April 28
- Third Essay – May 15

The essays should be written in a scholarly manner with proper citation of supporting and conflicting sources. You are expected to provide your understanding of the relevant assigned readings, but please do not use long quotes. Your own words and ideas are preferred. Citation of sources should be in-text and parenthetical – that is, (Author, Year of Publication: Page(s) from which a quote is taken). When your analysis depends upon an argument, evidence, etc. developed by an author over specific pages of a publication, it is preferred that you identify the relevant page ranges. Material beyond the assigned readings is welcome. Please provide at the end of the essay a completed list of references.
for material not assigned in the course.

Please send your essays electronically to Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu.

CLASS SESSIONS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Part I: Social Inquiry and Social Action

Session 1  Review of syllabus
Feb. 8 Byrne & Rich

Session 2  Introduction: Aspirations of Social Inquiry
Feb. 15 Byrne & Rich


Session 3  Social Knowledge, Social Action and Social Change
Feb. 22 Byrne


[Note: Research Topic Statement due on March 2. Please provide an electronic copy to drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.]

Part II: Modes of Knowledge Acquisition

Session 4  Positivism
March 1 Rich

4.1 Brian Fay, "Positivist Social Science and Technological Politics," in Social Theory and Political Practice, Chapter 2 (George Allen & Unwin Ltd. hold copyright, New York: Holmes & Meier


Session 5  Interpretivism

March 8  Rich


Session 6  Critical Theory

March 15  Rich


6.3 Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents (New York: Cape and Smith, 1930, reprinted 2010)

Session 7  Post-Modernism
March 22  Rich

7.1 Noam Chomsky/Michel Foucault Debate, 1971 Available at Video Google Link Below: http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1634494870703391080#


SPRING BREAK: March 25 – April 2

FIRST ESSAY DUE ON APRIL 3 (covers sessions 2–7)

Part III: Social Inquiry and Science

Session 8  On the Sources of Scientific Knowledge
April 5  Rich


[Note: Conceptualization & Methodology Statement due on April 6. Please provide an electronic copy to drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.]

Session 9  The Intellectual Structure of Scientific Communities
April 12  Byrne


Session 10  Paradigmatic Social Science?
April 19  Byrne


SECOND ESSAY DUE ON APRIL 28 (covers sessions 8 - 10)

Part IV: Episteme, Techne and Phronesis: The Vocation of Social Inquiry

Session 11  Measurement, Prediction and Explanation
April 26  Byrne


Session 12   The Future of Social Inquiry  
May 3       Rich


[Note: Research Design Paper due on May 5. Please provide an electronic copy to drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.]

Session 13   The Value(s) of Social Inquiry  
May 10      Byrne

13.1 Bent Flyvbjerg, “Values in Social and Political Inquiry” & “Social Science that Matters,” in B. Flyvbjerg, Making Social Science Matter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 53-65 and 176-178 (the latter are citations); 166-168 and 200 (the latter is a citation).


THIRD ESSAY DUE ON MAY 15 (covers sessions 11-13 and the seminar generally) Please provide an electronic copy to drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.]
NOTE: Each submission described below should be provided to Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu 4:00 p.m.

Due March 2 Statement of Research Topic (2-4 pp.)

Please consider the following questions in preparing your Statement of a Research Topic. Please do not answer these questions. They are offered only to encourage you to consider the issues they raise. Your Statement should be written as a narrative spelling out your topic as you currently understand it.

- What questions are you addressing? What information are you seeking to obtain? What problems are you attempting to investigate?
- Why was this topic selected? What is the rationale for this research?
- To whom and for what do you believe this research is useful? What is the expected value of this research for your intellectual or professional development, for social understanding?

Due April 6 Conceptualization & Methodology (6-10 pp.)

The questions below are intended to facilitate your writing of a Conceptualization & Methodology statement. Please do not answer these questions. Your Conceptualization & Methodology statement should be written as a narrative spelling out the key concepts and theories upon which you intend to rely and the primary methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) you intend to use in the investigation of your topic (as you currently understand it).

- What are the major concepts, models or theories you will utilize in your research?
- What methodology will you adopt to carry out your research? Why was this methodology selected? What are the strengths and limits of this methodology and how do they impact its utility for your research?

Due May 5 Research Design Paper (8-12 pp., not including your annotated bibliography)

The final step is to prepare a Research Design Paper which includes your Statement of Research Topic, your Conceptualization & Methodology statement, and a draft Table of Contents of your thesis/dissertation (as you currently envision it). You should incorporate any revisions made during the semester to your Statement of Research Topic and your Conceptualization & Methodology statement.

Please also include an annotated bibliography of at least 25 scholarly publications and references indicating their importance to your research. Each annotation should include a complete citation of the work and should be no more than 1-2 paragraphs in length. The annotated bibliography should appear after the Table of Contents.
(Covering Parts I and II of the syllabus)

Please answer the following question in an essay of 15 pages.

Those working in the social sciences, and especially those working in the applied social sciences, must almost daily confront the implications of the knowledge they produce for both individual human behavior and for the overall development of society. We have talked about several modes of knowledge acquisition. Please trace the inherent implications of each for 1) ways of knowing, 2) ways of deciding, and 3) ways of acting as individuals and as societies.

**Please do not provide us your opinion or position only;** we hope to learn your analysis and how you would support it with theoretical, logical, conceptual and empirical reasoning.

The First Essay is to be submitted on **April 3**. Please provide an electronic copy to Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.
Answer each of the following questions. It is suggested that a 4 page response to each of questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 below should be sufficient. For question 5, a 3-page response should be sufficient. Each essay should make use of the assigned readings. Please type your answers.

1. What are the distinctive sources of scientific knowledge according to Popper, Schumpeter, Waller and Homewood, and Lele and Norgaard?

2. Describe the stages of scientific development according to Thomas Kuhn and the implication of his paradigm theory for our understanding of how fundamental change in our modes of knowledge acquisition occur.

3. Using Bronfenbrenner and Garnett as starting points, evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of a paradigmatic versus a dialectical/heterodox understanding of economics.

4. Using Wolin and Walker as starting points, evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of paradigmatic versus pluralist understanding of political inquiry.

5. Which one of the following does Kuhn’s theory advocate: paradigmatic knowledge, revolutionary knowledge or cognitive justice? Choose one option and explain your choice.

Please do not provide us your opinion or position only; we hope to learn your analysis and how you would support it with theoretical, logical, conceptual and empirical reasoning.

The Second Essay is to be submitted on April 28. Please provide an electronic copy to Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.
"By means of the sociological imagination... men now hope to grasp what is going on in the world, and to understand what is happening in themselves as minute points of the intersections of biography and history within society. In large part, contemporary man's self-conscious view of himself as at least an outsider, if not a permanent stranger, rests upon an absorbed realization of social relativity and of the transformative power of history. The sociological imagination is the most fruitful form of this self-consciousness. By its use men whose mentalities have swept only a series of limited orbits often come to feel as if suddenly awakened in a house with which they had only supposed themselves to be familiar. Correctly or incorrectly, they often come to feel that they can now provide themselves with adequate summations, cohesive assessments, and comprehensive orientations. Older decisions that once appeared sound now seem to them products of a mind unaccountably dense. Their capacity for astonishment is made lively again. They acquire a new way of thinking, they experience a transvaluation of values: in a word, by their reflection and by their sensibility, they realize the cultural meaning of the social sciences."

- C. Wright Mills

"The issue is not between theories which are normative and those which are not; nor is it between those (social) scientists who are theoretical and those who are not. Rather it is between those who would restrict the 'reach' of theory by dwelling on facts which are selected by what are assumed to be the functional requisites of the existing paradigm, and those who believe that because facts are richer than theories, it is the task of the theoretical imagination to restate new possibilities."

- Sheldon Wolin

"There is a natural disposition and temptation to think that we can do for politics and economics, and even for art, literature and music, and history in the most inclusive sense, what we hope to do for physics and chemistry and perhaps for genetics and the evolution of life-forms, namely to present an incontestably self-contained and self-sufficient picture of inevitable necessity; to demonstrate that things could not be other than they are. If this is true of history, of human action, then it is plain that all our talk of choice, judgment and decision is empty vapourizing, and our study of these things totally illusive. Yet order and reason are indispensable to understanding. If the cosmos provides men with a field of purposeful and sometimes successful action, offering a game partly of skill as well as of chance, there must be discernible regularities of repetitive patterns in the sequence of states."

- G. L. S. Shackle
Bearing in mind the remarks above by Mills, Wolin and Shackle, please answer the following questions:

1. Using the readings in session 11, compare the theories of Popper and Feyerabend on the function and value of empirical knowledge for inquiry, and apply them to your research – who is more helpful and why. An essay of 4-5 pp. is sufficient.

2. Using the readings in session 11 by Shackle and Friedman, compare the theories of Shackle and Friedman on the relationship between explanation and prediction, and apply them to your research – who is more helpful and why. An essay of 4-5 pp. is sufficient.

3. Using the readings of sessions 12–13, provide an essay of 10 or so pp. on the future and value(s) of social inquiry.

Please do not provide us your opinion or position only; we hope to learn your analysis for parts 1. and 2. above; and your ideas for part 3. of the question on social inquiry’s future and value(s). As with each essay for this course, we ask you to provide the theoretical, logical, conceptual and empirical reasoning, as appropriate, to support your responses.

The Third Essay is to be submitted on **May 15**. Please provide an electronic copy to Dr. Rich at drich@udel.edu by 4:00 p.m.