

LOM 7393: The Philosophy of Science & Qualitative Research Methods

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COURSE MEETING TIMES: Thursdays 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Lucas 206

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Only students officially admitted to a Ph.D. Program at UMSL are allowed to register for class.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

The abbreviation “Ph.D.” stands for the Latin term “philosophiae doctor”, or Doctor of Philosophy. My strong and passionate belief is that no student should earn a Ph.D. without a basic understanding of the philosophy of science and of the positivist tradition underlying the research methods we teach Ph.D. students at UMSL. Do you believe that laws govern social phenomena? Do you believe that as a researcher, you are a detached and objective observer? Do you believe you can study social phenomena by mathematically modeling it? If you do, you have subscribed to positivist assumptions. There is nothing wrong with holding these assumptions, but they should be examined, reflected upon and chosen judiciously in light of alternative views like antipositivism.

Antipositivism (or interpretive approaches) assume that meaning in the social world (including business) is socially constructed and temporally fluid. Interpretive researchers are concerned with understanding what is specific, interesting and unique about social phenomena and how such understanding is bounded by time, context, and culture (Dudovskiy 2015; Walsham 1993). With interpretive approaches, researchers engage closely and naturalistically with “participants” to collaboratively co-construct meaning. Interpretive researchers treat research participants as contributors to the sense-making process of inquiry; they are not passive “subjects” to be remotely observed and analyzed. Furthermore, the researcher is not presumed to be an objective witness. The researcher even may take on the additional roles of consultant, activist, or emancipator.

Qualitative methods, particularly interviewing, text analysis, and participant observation can be used in positivist, antipositivist, and critical research approaches. Qualitative methods can be used with quantitative methods, or used on their own as a valid approach to scientific inquiry.

As a Ph.D. student, if you are delighted with the quantitative methods you have learned, then this course will better help you understand the traditions that created them. If you are a bit lost concerning a method to use in your dissertation, you might find a qualitative research approach that complements your own interests.

Above all else, a Ph.D. should change the way one thinks, which will change the way one experiences the world.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar presents an introduction to philosophical concepts and qualitative research methods underlying scientific inquiry in business research. The philosophical and methodological foundations are

largely built upon the philosophies, theories, and methods from the physical and social sciences. In this course, we survey a variety of philosophical perspectives and qualitative methods from other disciplines by reading the original works, critical responses to these works, and representative applications of these ideas in business/LOM domains. Beyond reading about and discussing research, students gain valuable experience by doing two qualitative research projects.

Logically, we should first cover all of philosophy of science, followed by qualitative methods. Practically, we have a brief introduction of sociological paradigms (part of philosophy of science), followed by the study qualitative research methods because students need the entire semester to complete the qualitative research projects. The final sessions cover more philosophy of science.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Session 1:	August 27	Introduction to the Course
Session 2:	September 3	Sociological Paradigms
Session 3:	September 10	Sociological Paradigms in SCM/LOM
Session 4:	September 19	Interviewing (9:00am to 11am <i>Saturday</i>)
Session 5:	September 24	The Case Study Method
<i>Workshop</i>	October 1	Qualitative Research Project Workshop
Session 6:	October 8	Participant Observation and Project Workshop
Session 7:	October 15	Action Research
Session 8:	October 22	Methods that Build Theory
Session 9:	October 29	Beyond Either/Or Integrating Paradigms
Session 10:	November 5	Nature of Scientific Inquiry
Session 11:	November 12	The Social Construction of Reality
Session 12:	November 19	Oral Presentations: Participant Observation
Session 13:	December 3	Qualitative Research Project: Coding Review Day
Session 14:	December 10	Oral Presentations: Qualitative Research Project

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Philosophy of Science Learning Objectives:

- Understand the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the nature of social science
- Understand the assumptions of the nature of society
- Understand the four paradigms of organizational analysis
- Understand the criticisms of the four paradigms of organizational analysis
- Understand how scientific knowledge advances
- Understand inductive and deductive research approaches
- Understand how social reality is constructed and changed over time

Qualitative Research Learning Objectives:

Each student will conduct five or more interviews from a positivist perspective. Interviewing is an important skill associated with qualitative research. The learning goals from this project include:

- Designing a qualitative research study
- Defending the use of a qualitative method
- Developing an interview guide, usually based on theory
- Pro-actively finding appropriate participants to interview
- Interviewing five or more people
- Interpreting the interviews (cross interview analysis)
- Communicating findings orally and in writing

Each student will do one participant observation exercise. The learning goals from this project focus on improving field research skills, including:

- Developing research questions that are best answered with participant observation
- Building the courage to engage in new situations with new people
- Developing observational skills
- Developing interpretive skills
- Learning your strengths and weaknesses as a field researcher

Ph.D. Readiness Objectives:

All Ph.D. students enrolled in the NIH course will obtain **Protecting Human Research Participants** certification. Upon completion of the NIH course, students will be able to:

- Describe the history and importance of human subjects protections
- Identify research activities that involve human subjects
- Discover the risks a research project might pose to participants
- Understand how to minimize the risks posed by a research project
- Describe additional protections needed for vulnerable populations
- Understand additional issues that should be considered for international research
- Describe appropriate procedures for recruiting research participants and obtaining informed consent
- Identify the different committees that monitor human subjects protections
- Understand the importance of study design in the protection of research participants

Instructions:

Go to: <https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>

Register to create an account

Read through the modules and take the quizzes until you earned the certificate

Email me a copy of your certificate:



All Ph.D. students enrolled in the course will obtain **Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of** certification. Learning Objectives:

- State how the U.S. federal government has defined research misconduct.
- Differentiate among the three types of research misconduct: fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism.
- Identify factors that can contribute to the occurrence of research misconduct.
- Describe strategies that individuals and organizations might use to prevent or mitigate the occurrence of research misconduct.
- Describe how research misconduct allegations should be managed.
- Describe core issues about data management that arise during the research process.
- Discuss methodological, technological, and legal-regulatory considerations that affect data management decisions.
- Describe ethical issues relating to the design and reporting of research data.
- Discuss ethical issues relating to data ownership, data sharing, and data stewardship. Describe the primary criteria used to determine who should be listed as an author on a scholarly publication.
- Describe the range of acceptable authorship practices, including different conventions used to determine the order of authors.
- Discuss the circumstances under which an acknowledgement may be appropriate.
- Describe the ethical responsibilities related to being an author.
- Discuss challenging and problematic authorship practices.

- Discuss the history and evolution of peer review.
- Describe different types of peer review.
- Discuss the value of peer review as it relates to publications and grant awards.
- Identify ethical issues associated with peer review.
- Describe the ethical obligations of a peer reviewer.
- Explain the importance of collaborative research and why it is increasingly common.
- Discuss challenges associated with interdisciplinary research collaborations and ways to meet them.
- Describe ethical considerations in international collaborative research and in academic-industry partnerships.
- Identify regulations, policies, and ethical guidelines that affect collaborative research.
- Describe practices for establishing and maintaining effective research collaborations

Instructions:

Go to: <https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp?language=english>

Register under UMSL

Select Social & Behavioral Research Investigators

Under Main Menu, click on “University of Missouri-St. Louis Courses to view your courses

Click and go!

Read modules & take quizzes

Email me the successfully completed “Coursework Transcript Report”

**COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT****

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Mary Lacity (ID: 4876152)
- **Email:** Mary.Lacity@umsl.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** University of Missouri-St. Louis (ID: 1786)
- **Institution Unit:** College of Business

- **Curriculum Group:** Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course
- **Description:** This course is for investigators, staff and students with an interest or focus in **Social and Behavioral** research. This course contains text, embedded case studies AND quizzes.

- **Report ID:** 16310730
- **Report Date:** 06/08/2015
- **Current Score**:** 96

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Course Introduction (ID:1522)	06/08/15	No Quiz
Using Animal Subjects in Research (RCR-Basic) (ID:13301)	06/08/15	4/5 (80%)
Research Involving Human Subjects (RCR-Basic) (ID:13566)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Authorship (RCR-Basic) (ID:16597)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Collaborative Research (RCR-Basic) (ID:16598)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest (RCR-Basic) (ID:16599)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Data Management (RCR-Basic) (ID:16600)	06/08/15	4/5 (80%)
Mentoring (RCR-Basic) (ID:16602)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Peer Review (RCR-Basic) (ID:16603)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Research Misconduct (RCR-Basic) (ID:16604)	06/08/15	5/5 (100%)
Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Course Conclusion (ID:1043)	06/08/15	No Quiz

- Students will gain practice in preparing for and completing comprehensive exams.

COURSE MATERIALS:

There are seven books and about 25 readings on the reading list. You may purchase books from Amazon or borrow from the library. Readings will be posted on mygateway.

GRADING AND DUE DATES:

It is vital students plan time wisely. We will stick strictly to the class schedule to be sure students finish the course on time.

Assignment:	Percent of	Due Date
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	Grade	
Session Quizzes	20%	Start of Class
Session Class Participation	10%	Every Class
Participant Observation Exercise – Oral	5%	November 19
Participant Observation Exercise –Written	10%	November 19
Qualitative Research Project --Oral	10%	December 3
Qualitative Research Project --Written	25%	December 17
Human Subject Certification	5%	Please complete on your own any time before Oct 1
Responsible Conduct in Research Certification	5%	Please complete on your own any time before Oct 1
Final Exam (Take-home)	10%	December 17
	100%	

SESSION QUIZZES:

At the start of class, I will administer a brief quiz on the assigned readings. The purpose of the quiz is to give you that extra incentive to read all assignments prior to class. The quizzes will assess basic understanding of the material, while the subsequent class discussion will provide more erudite analysis.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

It is vital that students attend all sessions. Please make attendance your number one priority. This class will only be valuable if each and every one of us makes a commitment to be prepared. That means that each student must have *carefully* read all the reading assignments prior to class. We will assess the class participation grade based on our impression of your session preparation, meaningful insights, plentiful comments, intellectual curiosity, and enthusiasm. In a rare circumstance that a student has to miss class (such as the birth of a child or severe illness), please contact me immediately.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION EXERCISE

Participant observation requires the researcher to learn about how “insiders” experience, define, and make meaningful their actions. For this project, you must pick a context that you are unfamiliar with and attend and participate in one of the group’s activities. You may work in pairs.

Example of contexts:

Attend a local chapter meeting of an organization related to supply chain/LOM if you never attended one before. There are plenty of groups—the following are just some examples:

- Saint Louis Roundtable Council of SCM Professionals (CSCMP): <http://www.stlouisroundtable.org/>;
- https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&qid=2500199&trk=groups_about-h-logo
- WERC (Warehouse Education and Research Council): <http://www.werc.org/wercouncils/council.aspx?CouncilId=28>
- APICS: <http://apics-stlouis.com/>
- Transportation Club of St. Louis: <http://transportationclubofstlouis.com/>
- Young Supply Chain Professionals of St. Louis (sub-group of Transportation Club of St. Louis)
- INFORMS: <https://www.informs.org/Participate-in-a-Community/Regional-Chapters/Saint-Louis-Gateway-Chapter>

If you really want something different, consider:

- Attend an AA meeting if you never attended one before
- Attend a religious ceremony for a religion you know little about
- Participate in a non-profit activity for an activity you know little about

- Spend a few hours in a tattoo parlor if you do not have a tattoo
- Spend a few hours in a casino if you have never been to one

Before the participant observation exercise, prepare a few questions to guide the inquiry:

1. Why did you pick this context? What do you hope to learn?
 - What is your research problem/topic/question?
 - Describe the setting in terms of theoretical sampling
 - Describe the setting in terms of how you might obtain access
 - Describe the setting in terms of possible roles you might assume
 - Describe how these roles might help to answer your research question
 - Describe your entrée strategy (overt/covert)
2. Did you choose to work alone or in a pair? Why? If a pair, did you chose someone with different demographics to gain different perspectives?

After participant observation, write your field notes within 24 hours

Answer as best you can the questions you generated above. In addition, answer these questions:

3. Describe what you observed in terms of the physical space
4. Describe what you observed in the social space; Who inside seemed to be powerful? Powerless? Who seemed to have the highest social rank?
5. Develop and describe an inventory of vocabulary used in the setting
6. Describe what the vocabulary means to the insiders
7. Why do you think people participate in this activity? What does participation mean to them?
8. To what extent did you participate vs. observe? Where did you fall on the Jorgenson continuum (page 55); With whom did you speak?
9. What did you not understand? What new questions arose?
10. How did your role as “social scientist” affect your participation? What did you learn about yourself as a “social scientist”?

Papers should include academic references to relevant readings, most notably to book on participant observation; For question 10, there are multiple views on the role of the research scientist than can be referenced and compared to your answer.

Participant Observation Project	Milestones:	
Identify context and seek approval	Oct 8	Part of workshop
Prepare for data collection (questions 1 & 2)	Oct 8	Part of workshop
Collect data (participant observation)	Oct 9-Nov 12	On your own
Write 1500 - 2000 words (answer the ten questions; include references)	Nov 12-Nov 19	On your own
Present to class (20 minutes)	Nov 19	In class

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT: POSITIVIST INTERVIEWING

Each student will conduct five or more interviews. Interviewing is an important skill associated with qualitative research. The learning goals from this project include:

- Designing a qualitative research study
- Defending the use of a qualitative method
- Developing an interview guide, usually based on theory
- Pro-actively finding appropriate participants to interview
- Interviewing five or more people
- Transcribing the interviews (interviews must be audio or video recorded)
- Interpreting the interviews (cross interview analysis)
- Communicating findings orally and in writing

There are several options that students may pursue. Each student may work on their own, in pairs, or in trios. The benefit of working with others is that you will be able to combine interviews and possibly develop a publishable piece of research. Also, I find that coauthored projects are inherently more fun and more productive.

As this is a learning exercise, students should consider topics in which it will be easy to find participants. Students might try to pick a topic in which current UMSL students, faculty, or staff could serve as subjects. Alternatively, students may want to pick a topic in which subjects could be selected from prior work places with other established contacts. Students should not pick a topic that requires interviews with five CEOs or CXOs unless students have access to C-level executives.

Student(s) will select their own topic. Students have at least two choices:

(a) Select a new and exciting topic that has never before been researched. This option is most appropriate for doctoral students who have already taken several Ph.D. seminars. The benefit is that an original study could serve as a pilot for a dissertation and or lead to a publication. The drawback is that this requires a significant amount of work under a tight deadline. I can show you the various incarnations of research started in this course that resulted in the following presentation, publications, and dissertation:

Project for class: Iyer, V., and Rudramuniyaiah, P. (2006), "Investigations of Intentions to Leave Amongst IS Professionals Using Investment Model: A Qualitative Approach," Class project, 109 pages.

Conference Paper: Lacity, M., Iyer, V., and Rudramuniyaiah, P. (2007), "Modeling Turnover Intentions of Indian IS Professionals," *Third International Conference on Outsourcing of Information Systems*, Heidelberg. (papers published online)

Presentation: "Modeling Turnover Intentions of Indian IS Professionals," Third International Conference on Outsourcing of Information Systems, Heidelberg, Germany 2007, May 30, 2007. (Written with Iyer, V., and Rudramuniyaiah, P.)

Book Chapter: Lacity, Rudramuniyaiah, P., and Iyer, V. (2008), "Understanding turnover among Indian IS Professionals," in *Offshore Outsourcing of IT Work* (Lacity and Rottman), Palgrave, London, pp. 209-244.

Journal Publication: Lacity, M., Iyer, V., and Rudramuniyaiah, P. (2008), "Turnover Intentions of Indian IS Professionals," *Information Systems Frontiers*, Special Issue on Outsourcing of IT Services, 10(2): 225-241.

Dissertation: Iyer, V. (2011), Understanding Turnover Intentions and Behavior of Indian IS Professionals: A Qualitative Study of Organizational Justice, Job Satisfaction and Social Norms

(b) Find an existing study to replicate or slightly extend. The benefit of this approach is that new students can quickly conquer the learning curve. This option is appropriate if you have a strong interest in a certain topic and would like to start building some experience with empirical research in a certain topic area. The drawback is that you will learn less about designing a new contribution to knowledge.

On the last day of class, each student/team will take 30 minutes to discuss their research method and findings.

Qualitative Research Project Timeline:	Milestones	
Find topic, theory, prior studies	Oct 1	Bring ready to discuss to workshop
Develop an interview guide based on theory: 1-2 pages	Oct 1	Bring ready to discuss to workshop
List of participants you plan to interview (provide names, titles, and dates of interviews)	Oct 1	Bring ready to discuss to workshop
Conduct interviews	Oct 1- Nov 1	
Transcribe interviews (must be audio or video recorded)	Nov 1-Nov 7	
Interview and Cross Interview Analysis	Nov 7 – Nov 14	
Oral Presentation	Dec 10	
Written Paper	Dec 17	

FINAL EXAM: PRACTICE COMP QUESTION:

One of my goals is to help students prepare for comprehensive exams. The practice comprehensive exam will be in the same format as the comprehensive exam. The practice exam will comprise two questions from the course. You will answer two take-home questions.

Session 1: Course Overview

Read Prior to class: This is an example of a finished research project from class and will help you think of ideas for your project; *Be prepared to take a multiple choice quiz on:*

Lacity, M., Iyer, V., and Rudramuniyaiah, P. (2008), "Turnover Intentions of Indian IS Professionals," *Information Systems Frontiers*, Special Issue on Outsourcing of IT Services, 10(2): 225-241.

Session 2: Sociological Paradigms

A paradigm is a common perspective (shared assumptions about nature of social science and the nature of society) which binds the work of a group of scholars. In this session, Burrell and Morgan's seminal summary of four sociological paradigms—functionalist, radical structuralism, interpretive, and radical humanist is discussed. The book's impact in varying fields such as sociology and business school disciplines was to compellingly argue for theoretical and methodological diversity in organizational studies. Critics, however, subsequently contested that research paradigms can be neatly organized into a Cartesian plane, but this book will serve as a great foundation.

Read Prior to class:



Burrell, G., and Morgan, G. (1979), *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis*, Heinemann Educational Books, New Hampshire; Read Chapters 1-3 closely; skim remainder of book.

Lacity, M., and Janson, M. (1994), "Understanding Qualitative Data: A Framework of Text Analysis Methods," *Journal of Management Information Systems*, **11**(2): 137-155.

Session 3: Sociological Paradigms in SCM/LOM Research:

Does LOM/Supply Chain management research follow a paradigm?

ARTICLES:

Naslund, D. (2002), "Logistics Needs Qualitative Research—Especially Action Research," *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, **32**(5):321-338

Golicic, S., Davis, D., McCarthy, T. (2005), "A Balanced Approach to Research in Supply Chain Management," in *Research Methodologies in Supply Chain Management* Editors: Kotzab, H., Seuring, S., Müller, M., Reiner, G. (Eds.), Springer, 15-29.

Sachan, A., and Datta, S. (2005), "Review of Supply Chain and Logistics Research," *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, **35**(9):664-705.

Grimm, C., Knemeyer, M. Polyviou, M., Ren, X. (2015), "Supply chain management research in management journals: A review of recent literature (2004-2013)," *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management* **45**(5) 404-458.

Chicksand, D., Watson, G., Walker, H., Randor, Z. and Johnston, R. (2012), "Theoretical perspectives in purchasing and supply chain management: an analysis of the literature," *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, **17**(4): 454-472.

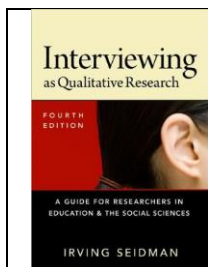
Barratt, M., Choi, T. and Li, M. (2011), "Qualitative case studies in operations management: Trends, research outcomes, and future research implications," *Journal of Operations Management*, **29**: 329–342.

Session 4: Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the most common qualitative data collection methods. Interviewing can be approached from positivist, interpretive, or critical perspectives. Interviewing is usually one part of a broader research method, such as input into a survey design or simulation, or part of case studies, participant observation, action research, grounded theory, etc.

The purpose of this session is to help get you prepared for your interviews. The assigned book is designed for Ph.D. students who might consider using interviews as a potential research method for their dissertation. The readings are from my own research in which I have used interviews as a data collection method.

Read Prior to class:



Seidman, I. (2013), *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York

Pagell, M. and Wu, Z. (2009), "Building a more complete theory of sustainable supply chain management using case studies of 10 exemplars," *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, **45**(2): 37–56.

Look at these from the perspective of the interviews—look at interview guides, interviewees, how interviews were used as textual data to be interpreted.

Lacity, M., and Willcocks, L. (2014), "Business Process Outsourcing and Dynamic Innovation," *Strategic Outsourcing: An International Journal*, **7**(1): 66-92. *2015 best paper award*

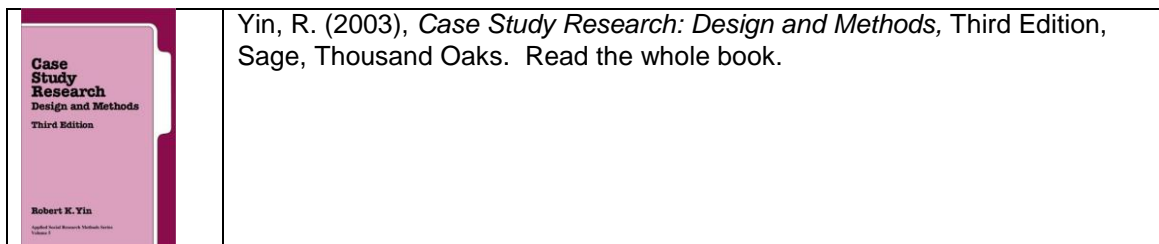
Lacity, M., Rottman, J., and Carmel, E. (2014), "Impact Sourcing: Employing Prison Inmates to Perform Digitally-enabled Business Services," *Communications of the AIS*, Vol. 34, Article 51.

Lacity, M. and Carmel, E. (2015), "Employing U.S. Military Families to Provide Business Process Outsourcing Services: A case study of Impact Sourcing and Reshoring," under review.

Session 5: The Case Study Method

Case study research is one of the most widely adopted research methods within the social sciences. The classic "how to conduct a case study" reference is by Robert Yin. His seminal book is one the most cited reference in all social science research. Yin offers researchers a highly useful protocol for conducting case study research within the social sciences. The protocol includes guidelines for formulating research questions, developing case selection criteria, designing data collection instruments, and documenting case study data. Another major issue with case study research is demonstrating to readers (and journal reviewers) that the case study findings are "valid". The assigned readings by Dubé, L., and Paré, G. (2003) and Klein, H., and Meyers, M. (1999) discuss the validity checks of positivist and interpretive case studies. While protocols and validity checks are useful, researchers who actually do case study research will readily confess that the method is as much "craft" as "science".

Read Prior to class:



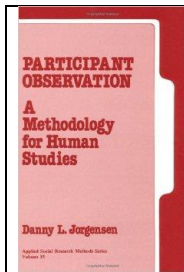
- Dubé, L., and Paré, G. (2003) "Rigor in IS Positivist Case Research: Current Practices, Trends, and Recommendations," *MIS Quarterly*, **27**(4): 597-635.
- Klein, H., and Meyers, M. (1999), "A Set of Principles for Evaluating Interpretive Field Studies in Information Systems," *MIS Quarterly*, **23**(1): 67-94.
- Ellram, L. (1996), "The Use of the Case Study Method in Logistics Research," *Journal of Business Logistics*, **17**(2): 93-138.
- Blome, C. and Schoenherr, T. (2011), "Supply chain risk management in financial crises—A multiple case-study approach," *International Journal of Production Economics*, **134**:43-57.

Session 6: Participant Observation

Participant Observation and Action Research are two invasive research approaches. The researcher becomes deeply involved with the participants as part of the research process.

Participant observation is a method originated by sociologists in the early 1900s. As Western sociologists like Malinowski, Boas, Mead traveled around North America, Australia, Asia, Asia-Pacific Islands, South America, and Africa to learn about different cultures (particularly indigenous cultures), they believed the best way to understand cultures was to actively participate in everyday life and rituals as well as to observe people. Participant observation can entail many types of data collection such as informal interviews, formal interviews, direct observation, participation in the life of the group, group discussions, analyses of personal documents and artifacts produced within the group, and self-analysis.

Read Prior to class:



Jorgensen, D. (1989) Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks. Read the whole book.

Session 7: Action Research

Action research places social scientists in the dual roles of researcher and influencer/consultant. The term “action research” was developed by Kurt Lewin in the US and concurrently and independently developed by the Tavistock Clinic in the UK during the 1940s (Baskerville 1999). Action research was evangelized in the strategic management literature three decades later as a way to address the “crisis” in organizational research caused by the disconnect between rigorous research methods and their usefulness for solving practical problems (Susman and Evered 1978). Action research aims to bridge that gap by meeting two goals: (1) to contribute to an immediate practitioner problem and (2) to contribute to the body of knowledge (Myers 1997). As a method, action research approaches have been conceived of as a five phase process in which the researcher diagnoses a practitioner problem, plans an action to solve the problem, implements the action, evaluates the action, and extracts the learning (Baskerville 1999). Action research approaches are considered “actions” because the researcher implements actual solutions to real organizational problems. Action research approaches are considered “research” because it yields either grounded theory or assesses a prior theory’s effectiveness at diagnosing or improving the practitioner situation.

Read Prior to class:

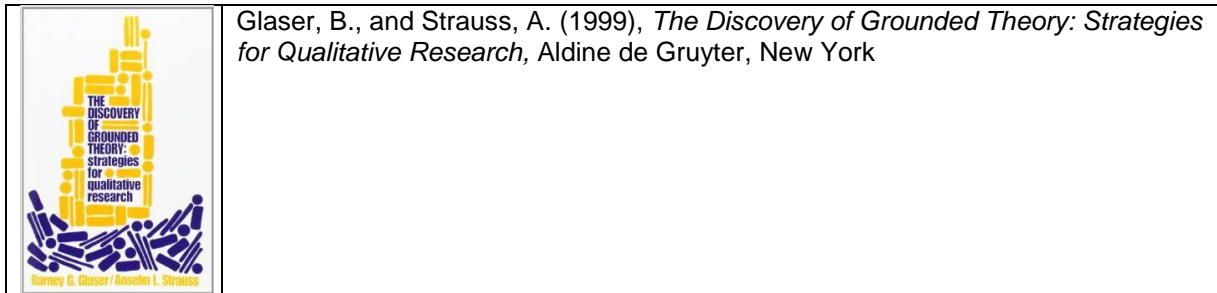
- Susman, G. and Evered, R. (1978), "An Assessment of The Scientific Merits of Action Research," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, **23**(4): 582-603.
- Westbrook, R. (1995), "Action research: a new paradigm for research in production and operations management," *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, **15**(12): 6-20.

Session 8: Methods that Build Theory: Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is an inductive research method, aiming to create general principles from specific examples. Grounded theory uses a general method of comparative analysis. The method entails iterative discovery—constant cycles of data collection, data coding, and analysis that suggests which data to gather next (theoretical sampling). The researcher keeps collecting data until theoretical saturation occurs. This method assumes a progression of theory development where researchers first gather data, then generate a substantive theory that describes a particular *empirical* area of inquiry. From substantive theory, a formal theory can be developed to describe a *conceptual* area of inquiry.

Clayton Christensen is among the most famous of all business school professors. He is known for his work on disruptive innovation, and in the selected reading, he talks about the process of building theory.

Read Prior to class:



- Christensen, C. (2006), "The Ongoing Process of Building a Theory of Disruption," *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, **23**: 39-55.
- Binder, M., and Edwards, J. (2010), "Using grounded theory method for theory building in operations management research: A study on inter-firm relationship governance," *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, **30**(2): 232-259

Session 9: Beyond Either/Or: Integrating Paradigms

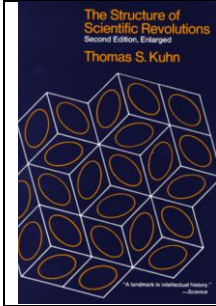
Read Prior to class:

- Lee, A. S. (1991), "Integrating Positivist and Interpretive Approaches to Organizational Research," *Organization Science*, 2(4): 342-365.
- Carter, C., Sanders, N., and Dong, Y. (2008), "Paradigms, revolutions, and tipping points: The need for using multiple methodologies within the field of supply chain management," *Journal of Operations Management*, **26**(6):693-696.
- Hirschheim, R., and Goles, T. (2000) "The Paradigm is Dead, the Paradigm is Dead....Long Live the Paradigm: The Legacy of Burrell and Morgan", *OMEGA*, **28**: 249-268.

Session 10: Nature of Scientific Inquiry

According to E.D. Klemke in his introduction to *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science*, edited by Klemke, Hollinger, and Kline, 1988, the Philosophy of Science is "*the attempt to understanding the meaning, method, and logical structure of science.*" The Philosophy of Science studies the nature of matter (ontology), the nature of mind (philosophical psychology), and the relationship between matter and mind in the process of perception and knowledge creation (epistemology). In these introductory readings, we will read that historically, science is not an incremental acquisition of knowledge, but rather a punctuated series of revolutions and evolutions of thought and wrought with politics. Popper teaches that we can only falsify theories induced from observations, but never prove them.

Read Prior to class:



Kuhn, T. (1970), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

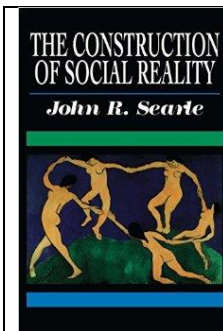
- Popper, K. (1988), "Science: Conjectures and Refutations," *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science*, edited by Klemke, Hollinger, and Kline, pp. 19-27.

Session 11: The Social Construction of Reality

The idea that "social reality is constructed" means that humans interact in a social system to create, over time, concepts or mental representations, and that these concepts eventually become habituated, institutionalized, and embedded into society. The first modern book on this notion was *The Social Construction of Reality* by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in 1966. But my favorite book on this subject is the assigned reading, *The Construction of Social Reality*, by John Searle. The back cover of Searle's book brilliantly captures the issue of the Social Construction of Reality:

"In the Social Construction of Reality, eminent philosopher John Searle examines the structure of social reality (or those portions of the world that are facts only by human agreement, such as money, marriage, property, and government) and contrasts it to a brute reality that is independent of human agreement. Searle shows that brute reality provides the indisputable foundation for all social reality, and that social reality, while real, is maintained by nothing more than custom and habit."

Read Prior to class:



Searle, J. (1997), *The Construction of Social Reality*, The Free Press, New York.

Session 12: Oral Presentations—Participant Observation

Session 13: Qualitative Research—Coding Review

Session 14: Qualitative Research—Project Presentation

Syllabus References:

Baskerville, R. (1999). Investigating Information Systems with Action Research. *Communications of The Association for Information Systems*, 2(19):1-32.

Dudovskiy, J. (2015). Interpretivism. <http://research-methodology.net/research-philosophy/interpretivism/>

Susman, G. and Evered, R. (1978), "An Assessment of The Scientific Merits of Action Research," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, **23**(4): 582-603.

Myers, M., (1997). Qualitative Research in Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly*, **21**(2): 241-242.

Walsham, G. (1993). *Interpreting Information Systems in Organizations*. Wiley, Chichester.