

SOP77100 — Research Methods

Module Information	
Module Code	SOP77100
Module Title	Research Methods
Department	Sociology
Year Group	MPhil Rece, Ethnicity and Conflict
Module Personnel	Larissa Meier
Academic Year	2026–27
Credit Weighting	10 credits (full year)
Semester	Semester 2
Contact Hours	1 lecture per week

Module Content	
Module Description	This module is designed to support students in developing their dissertation research projects, with a particular focus on formulating a clear research question and designing a coherent research strategy. The core aim is to guide students through the early stages of their individual projects, helping them to move from a broad idea to a well-defined and feasible research proposal. Students will present both an initial research idea and a more developed proposal in class, fostering a collaborative learning environment where peer feedback and group discussion enhance individual progress. Students are asked to choose a researchable topic relatively early during the seminar and to develop it into a convincing dissertation project thorough the class. To support this process, the module offers short readings and targeted inputs on key topics such as how to locate oneself in a literature, grounded research, the logic of comparative research, the selection of respondents, taking field notes, interviewing, coding, and analyzing data. Depending on students' methodological preferences, tailored applied introductions will be provided. In addition, the module engages with important questions of research ethics, including the responsibilities of researchers working in diverse contexts, and critically examines the intersections of science with issues of ethnicity, racism, and

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	inequality. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation for their dissertation research and a deeper understanding of the broader implications of academic inquiry. Classes will be organized largely as a research workshop where the research ideas and challenges of all participants are discussed and reflected upon. The method of peer evaluation, which allows students to offer feedback to one another will be used in order to encourage collective learning and engagement. The readings provided may have to be adjusted according to participants' specific interests and needs.
Module Learning Aims	
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module students should be able to: • Formulate a clear, focused, and researchable question for their dissertation project. • Design a coherent and feasible research plan aligned with their research question. • Critically evaluate and apply different qualitative research methods. • Reflect on ethical challenges in research and understand the role of power, inequality, and positionality in knowledge production. • Present and develop their research ideas through peer feedback and collaborative discussion.
Indicative Reading / Resources	The readings for each class will be made available on Blackboard. The following textbooks offer excellent and accessible introductions to conducting and analysing qualitative research: Bryman, A., (2016) Social Research Methods, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Lareau, Annette. 2021. Listening to People: A Practical Guide to Interviewing, Participant Observation, Data Analysis, and Writing It All Up. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. Luker, Kristin. 2008. Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut. Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press.

Assessment	
Assessment Components	Dissertation proposal 60%, Presentation dissertation 40%
Assessment Details	

Additional Information	
Prerequisites	First Part Research Methods
Co-requisites	None
Any other information	