

AXL4102W: GENDER ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Dr. Adelene Africa
Rm: 4.6 Harry Oppenheimer Building
Upper campus
Tel: 021 6502971
e-mail: adelene.africa@uct.ac.za

Introduction

This course aims to provide you with the tools to design and implement a postgraduate research project. It primarily locates itself within a feminist epistemological framework and explores a range of research methods and analytic techniques which are consistent with this paradigm. In particular, the course draws heavily on qualitative theories and methods as a way of exploring what it means to conduct qualitative research.

The course is structured so as to parallel the design and implementation of your research project. While there will be a strong focus on theory, students will also be expected to reflect on their own research experiences during seminar discussions.

Course Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with the requisite skills for planning and conducting their research projects. Through critical reading and discussion, it examines relevant feminist methodological literature so as to provide students with a framework within which to contextualise their work. The course therefore has strong a practical and applied focus so as to encourage the development of rigorous empirical research projects.

Assessment

Literature review: 15%

First draft research proposal: 15%

Final Proposal: 30%

Proposal presentation: 20%

Presentation of Honours research project: 20%

Course Participation

Weekly seminars are compulsory and students are required to prepare the assigned readings and to actively participate in class discussions. Since the course parallels the design and implementation of the Honours projects, students are required to draw on

their research experiences during these discussions. At times students will also be required to present their work-in-progress so as to enhance discussions around particular methodological issues.

*** It is suggested that students consult scholarly journals such as *Gender and Society*; *Men and Masculinities*; *Feminism and Psychology*; *Women's Studies International Forum*; *Feminist Review*; *Qualitative Research and The International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, which publish cutting-edge empirical work in Gender and Women's studies.

Course Assignments

Literature review

First draft research proposal

Final research proposal

Due Date: 30 May 2014

Length: 5000 words

Presentations

Proposal presentation: 14/15 May 2014

Honours project presentation: 15/16 October 2014

Course structure

5 March: Introduction to the course

12 March: Feminisms and Qualitative research

In this seminar we explore what is meant by feminist research. We focus on a qualitative paradigm and examine what this means for the conceptualisation and implementation of an empirical research project

19 March: Planning your research

In this seminar we discuss the conceptualisation of a research project and explore how to refine one's research focus/ research questions.

26 March: Writing a literature review

Over the next three weeks we discuss the nuts and bolts of the Honours research proposal. We start off by focussing on the literature review and explore the structure and content of this aspect of the research proposal.

Mid-semester break

16 April: Crafting a research proposal 1

The following two seminars focus on the construction of the research proposal. Students will be expected to use their research topics as foci for our discussions. These seminars will have a strong practical focus.

23 April: Crafting a research proposal 2

30 April: Data collection methods: Interviewing

In preparation for your fieldwork, we will explore two data collection methods commonly used by qualitative researchers. We will explore the empirical utility of these methods and will discuss the practical implementation thereof.

7 May: Data collection methods: Focus groups

The final three seminars will focus on honing your analytic skills. We will use raw data generated from your fieldwork, as a basis for the interpretive process.

Mid-year vacation

30 July: Data Analysis techniques: Analysing interviews

6 August: Data Analysis techniques: Thematic analysis

13 August: Data Analysis techniques: Thematic analysis

20 August: Collating and presenting your research