

Speaking Notes
PADM 5502
January 16, 2019
Dr. Neubauer

WHERE WE ARE

- This is our first class meeting
- This is our course home page: <http://www.robertcat.net/spring2019/padm5502/site/>
- We will use GeorgiaView (D2L) also, but I don't plan to host the entire course there.
- This is listed as a hybrid course.
- We are going to need access to SPSS software and will need to meet in a computer lab later in the semester. We will see how that works out.

TEXTBOOK

Public Administration Research Methods: Tools for Evaluation and Evidence-based Practice by Warren S. Eller, Brian J. Gerber, and Scott E. Robinson. ISBN-13: 978-0415895309

NOTES

Scholars are EXPECTED to do research and publish articles in "the right" journals.

There is less expectation for PRACTITIONERS to do scholarly research.

Research is important for several reasons.

- We all need to be able to understand and interpret research findings. Otherwise, we are subject to being taken advantage of by others.
- So many programs not are expected to be EVIDENCE-BASED.
- Politicians and others have reasons to want to know what citizens think about things.
- Sometimes even practitioners want to UNDERSTAND things poised as hypotheses.
- Research is the basis of NEEDS ANALYSIS, which is important for administrative purposes and to support requests for money from various sources.

Another important thing -- research requires clarity of thought and clarity of expression. These are vital critical thinking skills.

And, it is good to understand something about PROBABILITY THEORY and STATISTICAL METHODS used to test hypotheses.

A few beginning highlights . . .

Primary and secondary research

Qualitative and quantitative research

Pure research and applied research

The physical sciences and the social sciences

Research focused on one case in contrast to aggregate research

Experimental research, observation and survey research

Designing and constructing a SURVEY RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

CODING people's responses to items on a survey research instrument

CLEANING AND ENTERING DATA into software

Applying STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES that are appropriate for use with the kind of data

Identifying the presence or absence of STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE between pairs of variables

Understanding difference between CORRELATION and CAUSATION

Interpreting and reporting findings correctly, citing the presence or absence of statistical significance when testing hypotheses

CONCLUSION TODAY

This is not "rocket science," but it is important social science and has both qualitative and quantitative/statistical aspects. Any professional public administrator (or other well-educated person) should know these things.

We are going to use software called SPSS. You may or may not have access to SPSS in your career. It is good tool for our purposes. I do this the "old school" way using the SYNTAX EDITOR in SPSS. The THINKING SKILLS required to do this are valuable. I am not trying to teach you to click buttons. I want you to THINK about what you want to do and how to do what needs to be done using SYNTAX rather than buttons.

We will focus on survey instruction design and implementation during the first half of the semester and the statistical analysis of survey data the second half of the semester.