

# Research Methods

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Last Updated: Thu, 12/18/2025

**Course prefix:** PUBP

**Course number:** 3130

**Section:** MG

**CRN**

28431

**Instructor first name:** Michelle

**Instructor last name:** Graff

**Semester:** Spring

**Academic year:** 2026

**Course description:**

This course introduces methodological concepts through the lens of pragmatism, the perspective that research should be problem-centered, consequence-focused, and supportive of applied action. You will not only learn about methodological concepts and their interrelationship, but also their application in support of comprehension and good policy decisions. Assignments will help develop hands-on skills, especially data collection, analysis, and communication that will serve you throughout your academic and professional careers.

For students majoring in public policy this course is important as preparation for your Task Force class. One of the key skills that we will focus on is developing research proposals that clearly specify research designs aimed at informing the policy process. This is a skill set that you will use during the first semester of your Task Force year as you work with a client to develop, specify, and present a research design that can address an applied policy problem.

**Academic honesty/integrity statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

**Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):**

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area of instruction. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in

foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward the following broad Orienting Question: How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable you to meet the following Learning Outcomes: Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Inquiry and Analysis
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion
- Problem-Solving
- Teamwork
- Time Management