Course Syllabus
SurvMeth 652: Introduction to Focus Group Interviewing
Research Methods
1 credit  Summer 2018
Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques
University of Michigan

Schedule and Location
Date:  July 24 – 25, 2018  
Class times:  9:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Class location:  TBA

Instructors:
Richard Krueger  Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota
Mary Anne Casey  Adjunct Professor, University of Minnesota
E-mail:  rkrueger@umn.edu and casey016@umn.edu

Course Description
This course introduces the skills needed to conduct focus group interviews. Students will learn about the critical components of successful focus group research. They will develop a plan for a focus group study and practice key skills. Attention will be placed on moderating, recruiting, developing questions, and analysis of focus groups. This course will be particularly applicable for those conducting focus group research in academic, non-profit, and government settings.

Course Goals
By the conclusion of the course, participants will be able to:
1. Plan a focus group study
2. Recruit information-rich participants
3. Use beginning moderating skills
4. Develop a focus group questioning route
5. Choose among strategies for analyzing focus group data

Textbooks and Materials
Texts:


Additional Resources – not required


**Assignments**

Student performance will be evaluated based on written assignments (90%) and class participation (10%).

**Requirements and Student Evaluation:**

1. Three written assignments. 90% of course grade.
   - Assignment 1: Develop an introduction for a focus group. 20% of grade.
   - Assignment 2: Develop a questioning route for a focus group study. 40% of grade.
   - Assignment 3: Develop a plan for a focus group study. Include the following elements: Name of the study, purpose or research question, description of the participants, recruitment procedures & incentives, number of groups & locations, resources needed and timeline. Note template on class website. 30% of grade.
2. Participation. 10% of grade
   In class demonstrations and exercises:
   - Giving a focus group introduction
   - Moderating a focus group
   - Developing a plan for a focus group
   - Recruiting for a focus group
   - Pilot-testing focus group questions
   - Analysis of focus group results
   - Solving problems that occur in a focus group

**Grading**
A -- Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B -- Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
C -- Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
D -- Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
F -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

**Course Schedule**

**Tuesday, July 24**
Focus Group Overview, Moderating, Asking Questions
Topics:
- Introduction to focus group interviewing
- Demonstration of focus group interviewing
- Moderator skills
- Role and expectations of the assistant moderator
- Uses of focus groups
- Developing focus group questions
- Capturing data

Readings for Tuesday:
- Chapters 1 – 5 *Focus Groups, 5th edition*

Application exercise:
- Participating in a focus group interview

**Wednesday, July 25**
Analysis, Recruiting, Reporting, Telephone and Internet Focus Groups
Topics:
- The critical first few minutes of a focus group interview
- Recruiting participants
• Planning the focus group study
• Sampling strategies
• Analysis of focus group interviews
• Telephone and Internet focus groups

Readings for Wednesday:
• Chapters 6 – 12

Application exercises:
• Delivering an introduction to a focus group interview

Written assignments due by August 1 to rkrueger@umn.edu
• Develop a plan for a focus group study
• Develop a written version of a focus group introduction
• Develop a focus group questioning route

Electronic submission of assignments
All assignments are due by midnight on August 1st. Students are encouraged to submit assignments electronically. When submitting electronically include your name and the assignment number in the subject line of the email. These should be submitted to rkrueger@umn.edu

Attendance
Students are expected to attend each class session and to participate in class activities.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
University of Michigan
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Information you provide is private and confidential.

University of Maryland
In order to receive services you must contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) office to register in person for services. Please call the office to set up an appointment to register with a DSS counselor. Contact the DSS office at 301.314.7682; http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/

Academic Conduct
Clear definitions of the forms of academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, as well as information about disciplinary sanctions for academic misconduct may be found at the Rackham web site for the University of Michigan: http://www.rackham.umich.edu/policies/academic_policies/section10/ and the University of Maryland Graduate School web site: http://www.graduate.umd.edu/policies/misconduct.html

Knowledge of these rules is the responsibility of the student and ignorance of them does not excuse misconduct. The student is expected to be familiar with these guidelines before submitting any written work or taking any exams in this course. Lack of familiarity with these
rules in no way constitutes an excuse for acts of misconduct. Charges of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will be dealt with very seriously and may result in oral or written reprimands, a lower or failing grade on the assignment, a lower or failing grade for the course, suspension, and/or, in some cases, expulsion from the university.

March 21, 2018