

Course Syllabus (version 1.9.24)
SurvMeth 652: Introduction to Focus Group Interviewing
Research Methods
Summer 2024 -- June 11 – June 12
Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques
University of Michigan
An online class taught by Richard Krueger, Ph.D.

Course description

This is a Summer Scholar course on planning, conducting, and analyzing focus group interviews. It is designed to help students, researchers, and community members develop the skills needed to conduct defensible research.

The course will be presented in two sections.

Section 1 (June 11) will be an overview of focus group interviewing research. In this session we will cover the basics of in-person focus group interviewing. Topics would include planning, developing questions, recruiting, moderating and analyzing the focus group study. Special attention is placed on conducting focus group research in the academic, public and non-profit environments.

Section 2 (June 12) will build on Session 1 and introduce the strategies for conducting on-line focus group research. The course will introduce protocol for planning, conducting and analyzing results from on-line groups using Zoom.

Instructor

Name: Richard A. Krueger, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota
Email: rkrueger@umn.edu

Goal

The goal of the course is to help students learn how to use focus group interviewing as a research method.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the core ingredients of a successful focus group.
2. Identify situations where focus groups could be useful.
3. Develop a plan and questions for a focus group study.
4. Develop strategies for capturing and analyzing focus group data..
5. Identify characteristics of information-rich participants and recruit participants.
6. Conduct an online focus group interview.

Course Outline / Daily Schedule

Date	Time	Topic
June 11 Session 1	8:30 – 12 noon	<p>CLASS BEGINS 8:30</p> <p>Course and student introductions</p> <p>Introduction to focus group interviewing</p> <p>A review of key elements in a focus group interview</p> <p>An overview of key elements</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>BREAK 9:15</p> <p>Developing questions</p> <p>Inviting and recruiting</p> <p>BREAK 10:15</p> <p>Moderating</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Quality elements of focus group interviewing</p> <p>BREAK 11:15</p> <p>Q & A</p> <p>FINISH 12 NOON</p>
June 12 Session 2	8:30 – 12 noon	<p>CLASS BEGINS 8:30</p> <p>Introductions to online focus group interviewing</p> <p>Key features of online focus group research</p> <p>BREAK 9:15</p> <p>Planning the online focus group</p> <p>Recruiting & inviting for the online group</p> <p>Introduction & Ground Rules</p> <p>BREAK 10:15</p> <p>Moderator Strategies</p> <p>Online questions</p> <p>Capturing data and analysis</p> <p>BREAK 11:15</p> <p>Special issues</p> <p>Quality control checklist</p> <p>Q and A</p> <p>FINISH 12 NOON</p>

- Zoom meetings on June 11 and 12 are on Eastern Time – Ann Arbor time zone

Class Materials

PowerPoint slides

PowerPoint slides presented in class

PowerPoint slides for 20 YouTube video presentations. These are the slides that accompany the 20 short video segments.

20 short video segments

A series of 20 short (4 – 10 minute) video presentations by Richard Krueger on the basics of focus group interviewing. Internet locations available before class begins.

2 video demonstrations

Short focus groups are demonstrated in two video presentations. One presentation is specifically on moderating skills and the second presentation is an actual focus group on healthy living. Internet locations available before class begins.

4 video lectures

Lectures by R. Krueger and Mary Anne Casey on Developing Questions, Recruiting Participants, Moderating the Focus Group and Analyzing Focus Group Results (34 – 46 minutes each). Internet locations available before class begins.

Textbook

Krueger, R.A. & Casey, M.A. (2015). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. 5th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (5th edition is recommended but 4th edition is acceptable. A free pdf copy of the 4th edition is available from the instructor upon request.)

Course Sessions and Readings

Internet locations of resources will be sent to students 2 weeks before class begins.

How to Proceed – The following sequence is recommend:

INTRODUCTION – We recommend doing the Introduction section before class begins.

01 - What is a focus group? (4:34 minutes)

02 - What makes it research? (3:56 minutes)

Reading: Chapter 1 “Overview of focus groups”

PLANNING

03 - Planning the focus group study (2:59 minutes)

Reading: Chapter 2 “Planning the focus group study”

DEVELOPING QUESTIONS

- 04 - Types of questions in a focus group (6:59 minutes)
- 05 - Developing questions for a focus group (7:52 minutes)
- 06 - Examples of focus group questions (7:18 minutes)
- Video Lecture: Developing Questions (46:10 minutes)
- Reading: Chapter 3 “Developing a questioning route”

RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS

- 07 - Locating focus group participants (9:15 minutes)
- 08 - Recruiting focus group participants (8:57 minutes)
- Video Lecture: Recruiting Participants (34:55 minutes)
- Reading: Chapter 4: “Participants in a focus group”

MODERATING

- 09 - Moderating skills – Before the group (7:34 minutes)
- 10 - Moderating skills – During the group (9:38 minutes)
- 11 - The role of the assistant moderator (5:26 minutes)
- 12 - Tips for moderating – Part 1 (7:23 minutes)
- 13 - Tips for moderating – Part 2 (7:04 minutes)
- Video Lecture: Moderating the Focus Group (34:27 minutes)
- Video Demonstration: Moderating a Focus Group (30:13 minutes)
- Video Demonstration Focus Group (32:04 minutes)
- Reading: Chapter 5: “Moderating skills”

ANALYSIS

- 14 - Capturing data during the focus group (4:37 minutes)
- 15 - Taking field notes in focus groups (7:50 minutes)
- 16 - Transcribing focus groups (7:09)
- 17 - Analysis basics ((6:38 minutes)
- 18 - Classic analysis (6:10 minutes)
- 19 - Deciding what is important in the focus group analysis (5:31 minutes)
- 20 - Preparing a focus group report (6:37 minutes)
- Video Lecture: Analysis (41:04 minutes)
- Reading: Chapter 6: “Analyzing focus group results” Chapter 7: “Reporting”

Additional References

- Byseth, J., et al. (2003) *Moderating to the max*. Ithaca, NY: Paramount Market Publishing.
- Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Grob, G.F. (2015). Writing for impact. In K. Newcomer et al. (Eds.). *Handbook of practical program evaluation*. 4th Ed. (pp 739-764). Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley
- Guest, G., A. Bunce and L. Johnson. (2006). "How many interviews are enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability." *Field Methods* 2006; 18; 59.
- Hennink, M.M. (2007). *International focus group Research: A handbook for the health and social sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M.A. (2015). Focus group interviewing. In K Newcomer & H. Hatry (Eds.), *Handbook of practical program evaluation*. 4th Ed. (pp. 500 - 528). Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.
- Krueger, Richard A. (September / October 2006), "Analyzing focus group interviews." *Journal of Wound Ostomy and Continence Nursing Society* pp 478 - 481.
- Krueger, Richard A. (1998). *Analyzing and reporting focus group results*. (Volume 6). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Krueger, Richard A. (1998). *Developing questions for focus groups*. (Volume 3) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Krueger, Richard A. (1998). *Moderating focus groups*. (Volume 4) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Krueger, Richard A. and Jean A. King (1998). *Involving community members in focus groups*. (Volume 5). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Morgan, D. (1998). *Planning focus groups*. (Volume 2) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Walkowski, J. (2023). *Mr. Online's Playbook: 125 Pro Tips for Online Qualitative Research Projects*. Rochester, NY: Paramount.