

Interdisciplinary Methods Exchange: A Joint-Class Guest Speaker Workshop

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SUGGESTED CITATION

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<https://trails.asanet.org/article/view/interdisciplinary-methods-exchange-a-joint>.

Abstract

This workshop brings scholars in the social sciences together for a 10-week "Interdisciplinary Research Methods Exchange." Scholars speak to a group of social science undergraduate majors about their current and prior research, highlighting their background, education, methodological challenges, and successes. A series of short writing assignments and optional methods assignment for thesis or capstone classes asks students to reflect on their experiences with the speakers, and a pre- and post-survey helps instructors assess whether learning objectives were met. This workshop functions as an integrated part of the course schedule and aims to expose students to the diversity of research topics, approaches, and methods in the social sciences and to increase interest in and knowledge about social science research careers.

Details

Subject Areas: Capstone Courses, Qualitative Methodology, Quantitative Methodology, Research Methods, Statistics

Resource Types: Assignment, Class Activity, Syllabus
Class Levels: College 200, College 300, College 400
Class Sizes: Large, Medium

Usage Notes

This interdisciplinary workshop, when offered in a format that combines two or more social science classes, provides a unique opportunity for students to engage with diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives beyond their own disciplines. By combining classes across the social sciences, the workshop series allows students to engage in meaningful discussions about methods. The joint-class format helps students deepen their understanding of the research methods behind the course materials they read, making methodological concepts more tangible. By comparing methodological approaches across disciplines, students gain insight into both the similarities and differences in how social science research is developed, strengthening their ability to critically assess research and understand how researchers make decisions about methods. We integrated the workshop directly into our regular course schedule. We met once a week as a class and then our second meeting of the week was reserved for the joint class and guest speaker. The workshop functioned as a core component of the class. This structure allowed us to maintain continuity between course content and the workshop topics, while also providing dedicated time for students to engage with guest speakers and related assignments. By embedding the workshop into the existing class schedule, we also ensured a larger attendance for the guest speaker. The joint-class workshop format is also helpful for thesis, capstone, and upper-level courses as students work to develop independent research. We have organized methods assignments and sample syllabi that pair well with the speaker series. The structure and delivery of the assignments depend on the structure of the course and the number of students and guest speakers. As a workshop geared around interdisciplinary scholarship, the workshop will ideally bring together students from various social science majors and academic levels.

Learning Goals and Assessments

LEARNING GOALS

Understand different research methods and research processes in the social sciences and explain why they are important.

Identify common obstacles in social science research and discuss potential solutions to overcome them.

Communicate how social science research is useful in addressing real-world problems.

Explain ethical and practical concerns in social science research

ASSESSMENTS

Students are assessed through weekly writing assignments in which students are expected to reflect on what they have learned from the guest speaker in connection to course reading material and instructor lectures.

Students are assessed through research methods assignments in which they apply information shared from the guest speaker and additional readings and lectures to demonstrate an understanding of the research process.

Students are assessed through a short one-time infographic presentation on a research method. This presentation assignment is designed to help students build presentation skills and share what they have learned from the guest lecture.

Resource Files

PDF

PDF

DOCX