

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**

**EDRS 797**  
**COMBINING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**  
Spring 2012

**Instructor:** Joe Maxwell  
**Office:** West 2004; office hours by appointment  
**Phone:** 703-993-2119 (office)  
**Email:** [jmaxwell@gmu.edu](mailto:jmaxwell@gmu.edu); please use email for most communication.  
**Class meeting:** Thursday 4:30-7:10, location TBA  
**Prerequisites:** Successful completion (with a grade of B or higher) of EDRS 810 and EDRS 812, or equivalent coursework or experience. EDRS 811 is recommended but not required, since the main focus of 811 (more advanced statistical analysis than that covered in EDRS 810) isn't essential for much mixed methods research. If you anticipate using sophisticated statistical analysis for a planned mixed methods study, you need to be familiar with these techniques and their limitations; some of the limitations will be discussed in this course.

**Course Goals**

This course is an advanced seminar on what is usually called “mixed methods” research—research that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study. The main goals of the course are:

1. Understand the most important characteristics of mixed methods research, and the main ways in which this approach differs from single-method research strategies.
2. Understand the most important strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative research, and how to integrate these approaches in doing a mixed method study.
3. Be able to use these understandings to evaluate published mixed methods research.
4. Be able to plan and effectively communicate the design and process of a mixed methods study.

**Expectations**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions at all times.

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

If you are a student with a disability, please let me know how I can best adjust the course to your strengths and needs. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>, or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS].

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Please let me know if you have a preferred email address other than your .gmu address to use for course communication.

### **Campus Resources**

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

### **Assigned Books**

Jennifer Greene, *Mixed Methods in Social Inquiry*. Jossey-Bass, 2007.

Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*. Harper, 1976. Reprinted with a new foreword by Jerome Bruner, 2004.

Thomas S. Weisner (Ed.), *Discovering Successful Pathways in Children's Development: Mixed Methods in the Study of Childhood and Family Life*. University of Chicago Press, 2005.

### **Recommended Reference Books and Journals**

Abbas Tashakkori & Charles Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research (2nd edition)*. Sage Publications, 2010.

Judith L. Green, Gregory Camilli, & Patricia B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research (3rd Edition)*. Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006.

The major journal for papers dealing with the methodology of mixed method research is the *Journal of Mixed Method Research*.

### **Course Structure and Requirements**

Class meetings will be run as seminars. I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and encourage you to share with the class other readings and examples you

have found that are relevant. I will give mini-lectures on topics that I think are not well addressed by the readings, and there will be in-class exercises dealing with certain skills. There will also be opportunities (what, in EDRS 812, I called “consultations”) for discussion of, and feedback on, your own research plans.

Before beginning the readings for a particular week I suggest that you ask yourself what *your* questions and concerns are about the topics for that week and that you list them. After finishing a reading, jot down the author's main points. Then, ask yourself how these relate to your questions or concerns. Did the reading answer your questions? Did it give you new ideas or ways of approaching your study? How can you use what you learned from reading it? If an example of a mixed method study is assigned, analyze it in terms of the methodological readings: How do the latter’s ideas apply? How do they not apply? What are the methodological readings’ implications for this study, and vice versa? How can this example inform your own study?

We will often be reading articles or book chapters presenting different perspectives on the same issue. Think about each author's approach to mixed method research as you read his/her work, and how this fits into the different approaches we have discussed.

## **Grading**

### Written assignments

There will be three written assignments, corresponding to the three modules of the course; each of these will count for 30% of the grade. For each of modules, there will be a choice of several assignments, as described in the Guidelines for the assignments. Alternative assignments to those that I suggest are possible, but you need to discuss these with me and get my approval prior to doing the assignment. Page lengths for written assignments are suggestions only. Length is to be determined by the needs of the individual assignments.

My criteria for evaluating written assignments are: your understanding of the readings (through your discussion of the material and your application of it to your research topic), demonstration of an analytic/critical stance toward the material, appropriate application of the ideas, and clarity in organization and writing. The grading criteria and procedures will be presented and discussed in class. Grading scale: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, F.

### Class participation

Class participation will count for the final 10% of the grade. Class participation grades will be based on informed, relevant, productive, and respectful contributions (questions as well as comments and responses) to class discussions; attendance will be a factor in this part of the grade.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Week

### Topic and readings

#### Module 1: The nature of mixed method research

#### **1/26 Introduction to the course and to mixed method research**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Introduction and Chapters 1-2  
Elbow, The believing game and how to make conflicting opinions more fruitful (Blackboard)  
Maxwell, Using numbers in qualitative research (Blackboard).  
Rabinowitz & Weseen, Power, politics, and the qualitative/quantitative debates in psychology (Blackboard)  
McPhee, *Annals of the Former World*, pp. 19-25, 378-382 (e-reserve)

#### **2/2 Qualitative and quantitative**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapter 3  
James, Inside-out perspective (Blackboard)  
Blumer, Sociological analysis and the “variable” (Blackboard)  
Kidder & Fine, Qualitative and quantitative methods: When stories converge. In Mark & Shotland, *Multiple methods in program evaluation* (e-reserve)

#### Recommended:

Hammersley, Deconstructing the qualitative-quantitative divide, in Hammersley, *What's wrong with ethnography?* (e-reserve).  
Minta et al., Hunting associations between badgers and coyotes (Blackboard)

#### **2/9 Paradigm issues**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapters 4-5 and Interlude 1  
Oakley, Paradigm wars (Blackboard).  
Maxwell, Paradigms or toolkits? Philosophical and methodological positions as heuristics for mixed methods research (Blackboard)  
Maxwell & Mittapalli, Realism as a stance for mixed methods research (Blackboard)  
Sleeter, Epistemological diversity in research on preservice teacher preparation for historically underserved children (Blackboard)

Recommended:

Reilly, Paradigm reflection memo (Blackboard)

Shulman, *Paradigms and Programs* (excerpt on Blackboard)

Greene & Caracelli, Making paradigmatic sense of mixed methods practice. In Tashakkori & Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research, 1st ed.* (e-reserve)

Phillips, Postpositivistic science: Myths and realities. In Guba, *The paradigm dialog* (e-reserve)

Maxwell & Lincoln, Methodology and epistemology: A dialogue (Blackboard)

Pitman & Maxwell, Qualitative approaches to evaluation. In LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, *Handbook of qualitative research in education* (e-reserve)

## **2/16 Mixed methods social research**

Weisner, Introduction, in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*.

Goldenberg, Gallimore, & Reese, Using mixed methods to explore Latino children's development, in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*.

Castle, Fox, & Souder, Do professional development schools make a difference? A comparative study of PDS and non-PDS teacher candidates (Blackboard).

Fricke, Taking culture seriously: Making the social survey ethnographic, in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*.

## **2/23 Writing about mixed method research**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapter 10 and Interlude 3

Marshall & Barritt, Choices made, worlds created: The rhetoric of AERJ (e-reserve)

Bem "Writing the empirical journal article" <http://dbem.ws/WritingArticle.pdf>

Sandelowski, Tables or tableaux? The challenges of writing and reading mixed methods studies. (e-reserve)

Recommended:

APA Publication Manual

Maxwell, "Guide to the APA Publication Manual: The most important things to remember." (Blackboard)

Howard S. Becker, *Writing for social scientists*. University of Chicago Press, 1986.

John S. Nelson, Allan Megill, and Donald N. McCloskey (Eds.), *The Rhetoric of the Human Sciences*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.

## **Module 2: Design, analysis, and validity**

### **3/1 “Scientific research” and mixed methods**

#### ***Module 1 assignment due***

Platt, Strong inference (e-reserve)

James, Jeter vs. Everett (Blackboard)

Maxwell, Causal explanation, qualitative research, and scientific inquiry in education (Blackboard)

Eisenhart, Hammers and saws for the improvement of educational research (Blackboard)

Recommended:

Scriven, A Summative Evaluation of RCT Methodology: & An Alternative Approach to Causal Research (Blackboard)

Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*, Chapter 1 (e-reserve).

Chatterji, Evidence on “what works”: An argument for extended-term mixed-method (ETMM) evaluation designs (Blackboard)

Conrad (Ed.), *Critically evaluating the role of experiments*.

Lewontin, The analysis of variance and the analysis of causes, in Block (Ed.), *The IQ controversy* (e-reserve)

Maxwell, Re-emergent scientism, postmodernism, and dialogue across differences (Blackboard)

Maxwell, Explanation (Blackboard)

Maxwell, Scientism (Blackboard)

Pawson & Tilley, *Realistic evaluation*.

Raudenbush, Learning from attempts to improve schooling: The contribution of methodological diversity (Blackboard)

### **3/8 Research design and research problems**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapters 6-7 and Interlude 2

Maxwell & Loomis, Mixed method design: An alternative approach (Blackboard)

Maxwell, *Qualitative research design*, chapter 3

Kling et al., “Bullets don’t got no name,” in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*

Recommended:

Maxwell, Literature reviews of, and for, educational research (Blackboard)

### **3/15 Spring break**

**3/22 Data analysis**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapter 8

Maxwell, Some notes on key concepts in quantitative analysis. Unpublished class notes (Blackboard)

Nix & Barnette, The data analysis dilemma: Ban or abandon. A review of null hypothesis significance testing (Blackboard)

Boaler & Staples, Creating mathematical futures (Blackboard)

Weiss et al., Working it out: The chronicle of a mixed-method analysis, in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*.

Recommended:

Matthew Miles & A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage Publications, 1994.

Maxwell & Miller, Categorizing and connecting strategies in qualitative data analysis (Blackboard)

Gigerenzer, Mindless statistics (Blackboard)

Thompson, Statistical significance and effect size reporting: Portrait of a possible future (e-reserve)

Kaplan, Fill in the numbers <<http://www.slate.com/id/2233353?wpisrc=newsletter>>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exploratory\\_data\\_analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exploratory_data_analysis)  
<http://www.itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/eda/eda.htm>

### **3/29 Validity and generalizability**

Greene, *Mixed methods in social inquiry*, Chapter 9

Maxwell, Using qualitative research for causal explanation (Blackboard)

Leibovici, Effects of remote, retroactive, intercessory prayer (Blackboard)

Weisner et al., Behavior sampling and ethnography (Blackboard)

Becker, Generalizing from case studies. In Eisner & Peshkin, *Qualitative inquiry in education* (e-reserve)

Recommended:

Conrad & Conrad, Reassessing validity threats in experiments: Focus on construct validity (e-reserve)

Hammersley, *What's wrong with ethnography?*, Chapters 5, 7, and 8.

Maxwell, Chapter 8: Validity (Blackboard).

Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, *Experimental & quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*, particularly Chapters 2-3 and 11-12.

## **Module 3: Integrating approaches, methods, and data**

### **4/5 Strategies for integrating approaches**

#### ***Module 2 assignment due***

Bryman, Barriers to integrating quantitative and qualitative research (Blackboard)

Trend, On the reconciliation of qualitative and quantitative analyses: A case study. In Cook & Reichardt, *Qualitative & quantitative methods in program evaluation*. (e-reserve)

Maxwell, Diversity and methodology (Blackboard) ?

Recommended:

Shulman, Summary and prognosis, in Shulman, *Paradigms and programs* (e-reserve)

Yanchar & Williams, Reconsidering the compatibility thesis and eclecticism: Five proposed guidelines for method use (Blackboard)

#### **4/12 Examples: Integrating data collection methods**

- Kaplan & Duchon, Combining qualitative and quantitative methods in information systems research: A case study (Blackboard)
- Maxwell, Sandlow, & Bashook, Combining ethnographic and experimental methods in evaluation research: A case study (e-reserve)
- Rank, The blending of qualitative and quantitative methods in understanding childbearing among welfare recipients, in Hesse-Biber & Leavy (Eds), *Approaches to qualitative research* (e-reserve)
- Zentella, Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in the study of bilingual code switching (e-reserve)

#### **4/19 Presenting integrated analyses and results**

- Morse, Tylko, & Dixon, Characteristics of the Fall-Prone Patient (e-reserve)
- Morse & Tylko, The Use of Qualitative Methods in a Study Examining Patient Falls (e-reserve)
- Milgram, *Obedience to authority*. Harper & Row, 1974

Recommended:

- Tolman & Szalacha, Dimensions of desire: Bridging qualitative and quantitative methods in a study of female sexuality, in Hesse-Biber & Leavy (Eds), *Approaches to qualitative research* (e-reserve)

#### **4/26 More examples of integrating analyses and results**

- Irwin, Data analysis and interpretation: Emergent issues in linking qualitative & quantitative evidence (e-reserve).
- Muth, Conceptualizing incarcerated literacy learners: Pragmatic and dialectical uses of assessment data. Unpublished paper (Blackboard)
- Gibson-Davis & Duncan, Qualitative-quantitative synergies in a random-assignment program evaluation, and the commentary by Huston, in Weisner, *Discovering successful pathways*.

Recommended:

#### **5/3 Final class: Presentations of mixed method designs/learning**

*Module 3 assignment due*

## Full references

- Castle, S., Fox, R., & Souder, K. "Do professional development schools make a difference? A comparative study of PDS and non-PDS teacher candidates." *Journal of Teacher Education* 57 (1), pp. 65-80 (Jan/Feb 2006)
- Cook, T., & Reichardt, C. (Eds), *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluation Research*. Sage, 1979
- Dillman, D. A. , J. D. Smyth, & L. M. Christian, *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. Wiley, 2008. (Strongly recommended for those considering using surveys.)
- Guba, E. (Ed.), *The Paradigm Dialog*. Sage Publications, 1990.
- Hammersley, M., *What's Wrong with Ethnography?* Routledge, 1992.
- Howe, K., *Closing methodological divides*. Kluwer, 2003.
- James, B., "Inside-out Perspective", in *The Bill James Baseball Abstract, 1984*, pp. 5-8. Ballantine Books.
- Kaplan, B. and Duchon, D.s, "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Information Systems Research: A Case Study." *MIS Quarterly* 12, pp. 571-586 (1988).
- Lewontin, R., "The Analysis of Variance and the Analysis of Causes" *American Journal of Human Genetics* 26:400-411 (1974). Reprinted in Block and Dworkin (Eds.), *The IQ Debate*.
- Mark, M. M., and Shotland, R. L. (Eds.), *Multiple Methods in Program Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987.
- Marshall & Barritt, Choices made, worlds created: The rhetoric of AERJ. *American Educational Research Journal* 27(4), 589-609 (Winter 1990)
- Maxwell, J. A., Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review* 62(3), 279-300 (Fall 1992).
- Maxwell, J. A., "Re-emergent scientism, postmodernism, and dialogue across differences." *Qualitative Inquiry* 10, 35-41 (February 2004)
- Maxwell, J. A., "Causal explanation, qualitative research, and scientific inquiry in education." *Educational Researcher* 33(2), 3-11 (March 2004)
- Maxwell, J. A., "Explanation." In L. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008.

- Maxwell, J. A., "Scientism." In *International encyclopedia of the social sciences*. Farmington, MI: Thomson Gale, 2007.
- Maxwell, J. A., "Understanding and validity in qualitative research." *Harvard Educational Review* 62, 279-300 (Fall 1992). Reprinted in AM Huberman and MB Miles (Eds.), *The qualitative researcher's companion*, pp. 37-64. Sage Publications, 2002
- Maxwell, J. A., "Using qualitative methods for causal explanation." *Field Methods* 16(3), 243-264 (August 2004).
- Maxwell, J. A., "The value of a realist understanding of causality for qualitative research." In N. Denzin (Ed.), *Qualitative inquiry and the politics of evidence*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008.
- Maxwell, J. A., Using numbers in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 16(6), pp. 475-482 (2010).
- Maxwell, J. A., Paradigms or toolkits? Philosophical and methodological positions as heuristics for mixed methods research. *Midwest Educational Research Journal* 24(2), 27-30 (Spring 2011).
- Maxwell, J., & Lincoln, Yvonna, "Methodology and Epistemology: A Dialogue." *Harvard Educational Review* 60(4): 497-512 (November 1990).
- Maxwell, J. A. & Loomis, Diane, "Mixed methods design: An alternative approach." In Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, pp. 241-271. Sage Publications, 2003.
- Maxwell, J. A., and Miller, Barbara A., "Categorizing and connecting strategies in qualitative data analysis". In P. Leavy and S. Hesse-Biber (Eds.), *Handbook of emergent methods*, pp. 461-477. New York: Guilford Press, 2008
- Maxwell, J. A., and Mittapalli, Kavita, Realism as a stance for mixed method research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 2nd edition, pp. 145-167. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010.
- Maxwell, J. A., Sandlow, Leslie J., and Bashook, Philip G., Combining ethnographic and experimental methods in evaluation research: A case study. In David Fetterman & Mary Ann Pitman, *Educational evaluation: Ethnography in theory, practice, and politics*. Sage Publications, 1986.
- McPhee, J., *Annals of the former world*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998.
- Nix, T. W., & Barnette, J. J., The data analysis dilemma: Ban or abandon. A review of null hypothesis significance testing. *Research in the Schools* 5(2), pp. 3-14 (1998)
- Pawson, R. & Tilley, N., *Realistic evaluation*. Sage Publications, 1997.

- Pitman, M. A., & Maxwell, J. A., "Qualitative approaches to evaluation". In MD LeCompte, WL Millroy, and J Preissle (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research in education*, pp. 729-770. Academic Press, 1992
- Platt, J. R., "Strong Inference". *Science*, 146, pp. 347-353 (Oct 16, 1966). Reprinted in H. S. Broudy et al (Eds), *Philosophy of Educational Research*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973.
- Rabinowitz, V. C., & Weseen, S., Power, politics, and the qualitative/quantitative debates in psychology. In D. Tolman & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *From subjects to subjectivities: A handbook of interpretive and participatory methods*, pp. 12-28. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
- Ragin, C., and Becker, H. S. (Eds.), *What Is A Case?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Sandelowski, M., Tables or tableaux? The challenges of writing and reading mixed methods. In Tashakkori & Teddlie, *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Sage Publications, 2003.
- Sayer, A., *Method in social science: A realist approach*, 2nd edition. Sage Publications, 1992
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T., *Experimental & quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.
- Shulman, L., Paradigms and Programs. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, 3rd edition. Macmillan, 1986. Reprinted separately by Macmillan, 1990.
- Trend, M., On the reconciliation of qualitative and quantitative analyses: A case study. In T. Cook & C. Reichardt (Eds.), *Qualitative & quantitative methods in program evaluation*. Sage, 1979.
- Thompson, B.. Statistical significance and effect size reporting: Portrait of a possible future. *Research in the Schools* 5(2), pp. 33-38 (1998)
- Zentella, A. C.. Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in the study of bilingual code switching. In E. H. Bendix (Ed.), *The Uses of Linguistics. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol 583 (1990).