Doctorat HEC 2006/2007

COURSE SYLLABUS

Qualitative Methods and Research Design

Instructors:
F Chevalier, E Chiapello, A Fanelli

Course Description:
The aim of the course is to give students the tools to conceptualize their theses and research projects in terms of research questions and design, methodology, data collection and qualitative analysis. As the key skill in research is being able to identify a problem area, and determine research questions and hypotheses, the overall goal of the course is to give students an access to existing research, the possibility to analyze and criticize it, as well as an opportunity to structure their own research questions.

Thus, the course does not address large sample research, focusing instead on all issues where the N is small, with a particular emphasis on the various methods of discourse and text analysis.

In practical terms, the course should allow each student to develop their own research project. Students will read and discuss texts related to epistemology, theory formation and hypothesis testing, proxies and measurement, descriptive and causal inference, longitudinal, comparative and case study research, field data collection, working with texts and analyzing qualitative data.

The course is divided into three main parts: (1) epistemology and research design in the social sciences; (2) qualitative data collection strategies; (3) empirical material analysis.

Course Requirements:

(1) Weekly Readings and presentations. Each week, students will be given an article to summarize, read, and critique in a presentation to the rest of the class;

(2) On the Field Training. Students will be asked to practice different qualitative methodologies (interviews, observation, content analysis..)

(3) Research Paper. At the end of the course, students will be asked to turn in a research paper, which should ideally form the basis of a dissertation proposals or a full empirical research aimed at publication.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Epistemology and Research Design in the Social Sciences;

• Quantitative versus Qualitative Approaches

Qualitative Data Collection Strategies

• Methods of Data Collection
• Interviews
• Observations
• Case studies
• Ethnographies

Empirical Material Analysis

• Language, Discourse, Text Analysis
• Discourse analysis
• Content analysis
• Varieties of text analysis
• Computer aided text analysis