COURSE SYLLABUS

Designing an Analytical Study Course

Learn how to design structured, decision-informed research studies that guide effective program and policy analysis.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/designing-an-analytical-study



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Course Outline

Module 1: The Role of a Management Analyst

- Define the responsibilities and functions of a management analyst.
- Understand how analytical studies support decision-making and organizational improvement.
- Recognize the skills and competencies required for effective analysis.

Module 2: Steps in an Analytical Study

- Identify the phases of conducting an analytical study from planning to reporting.
- Understand the iterative nature of analysis and the need for flexibility.
- Link each study step to its role in producing reliable and actionable results.

Module 3: Understanding the Management Situation and Concern (Step 1)

- Clarify the context and background of the issue to be studied.
- Identify stakeholders and their perspectives on the concern.
- Establish the scope and objectives of the analysis.

Module 4: Identifying Research Questions (Step 2)

- Formulate clear and focused research questions to guide the study.
- Ensure research questions are aligned with organizational priorities and needs.
- Differentiate between primary and secondary research questions.

Module 5: Identifying Data Sources for the Research Questions (Step 2)

- Identify available data sources relevant to each research question.
- Evaluate data sources for reliability, validity, and accessibility.
- Determine if additional data collection will be necessary.

Module 6: Developing a Project Plan (Step 3)

- Outline the activities, timeline, and resources needed for the study.
- Assign responsibilities and create a clear workflow.
- Incorporate risk management and contingency planning into the project plan.

Module 7: The NIDA Case Study and Project Plan (Steps 1, 2, 3)

- Apply initial analytical study steps to a real-world case example.
- Develop a project plan based on identified concerns, questions, and data sources.
- Demonstrate integration of planning steps in a cohesive framework.

Module 8: Planning to Use Available Databases and Archived Documents (Step 4)

- Identify and assess existing databases and documents for relevant data.
- Plan methods for extracting and organizing data from secondary sources.
- Address issues of data completeness and accuracy in existing records.

Module 9: Planning to Use Workplace Observation (Step 4)

- Design an observation plan tailored to the research questions.
- Determine observation criteria and recording methods.
- Minimize bias and disruption during the observation process.

Module 10: Planning to Interview (Step 4)

- Develop interview protocols and question guides.
- Select and recruit participants for interviews.
- Ensure ethical considerations and data confidentiality.

Module 11: Planning a Questionnaire Survey (Step 4)

- Design effective survey questions to elicit relevant data.
- Plan sampling strategies and distribution methods.
- Address potential response bias and increase participation rates.