UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Edizione 2020-2021

2021-Esc-GlobalClassroom

Course title

Global Classroom Arts-based Research

Topics and course structure

Course Description:

Arts-based research (ABR) is an approach to research that has become more recognized in recent years. Particularly used in the social sciences, arts-based research focuses on a “systematic use of the artistic process…as a primary way of understanding and examining experience…” (McNiff, 2008, p.29) otherwise inaccessible through more traditional forms of knowledge and methods of investigation. In an uncertain world that demands alternative modes of research, ABR can offer a strategy for the study of complex human and social phenomena that reside on the periphery of consciousness and cannot be understood or investigated using typical linear and causal research methods. Such phenomena pervade and effect practice in the social and health sciences in our everyday interactions with patients, clients, students and colleagues thus warranting study.

Despite the increasing visibility and viability of arts-based research generated from multiple disciplines in the health and social sciences and beyond, paradigms that assign value only to measurable, generalizable, and statistically valid ways of thinking, knowing, and investigating, continue to dominate in western culture. This hegemonic worldview has precluded the legitimization of ABR. However, this restrictive hegemony also offers an opportunity to challenge this perspective by constructing a strategy to train arts-based researchers who are able to engage the dialectic between the singular rigor from the scientific community with the openness, uncertainty, and creativity in the artistic inquiry process of research. In this global classroom we will explore issues related to the marginalization of ABR by developing strong global partnerships, presence, and research collaborations. We propose that through the strength and breadth of these collaborations we can begin to build a strategic plan to identify and educate stakeholders, generate new research, and develop methods of dissemination on a global scale.

We have created a new course for doctoral students and interested faculty in which is partnering with the University of Milano-Bicocca, the University of Leuven, and Florida State University to explore: (a) the various definitions of arts-based research in the US and Europe; (b) the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological approaches to ABR across multiple disciplines in the social sciences, education and healthcare; (c) the social and cultural influences impacting the advancement of ABR; (d) a global research agenda specific to ABR; and, (e) the strategies for addressing the advancement of ABR on a global scale. In order to accomplish these goals, we will use a hybrid pedagogical approach integrating technology to conduct distance videoconference classes in which faculty and students will meet to study the current status, trends, approaches, and social and cultural positioning for arts-based research.

Course Purpose within Program of Study / Course Overview

Elective: This is an elective course for doctoral students of any discipline who are interested in learning about arts-informed and arts-based research. Arts-informed and arts-based research can be used as a primary or complementary form of research and can be situated within and across multiple paradigms, disciplines, and methodologies.

Class Structure:

1. **Readings, Discussion and Reflections**: (60 minutes) Each class will begin with students reviewing and reflecting upon their journals and the assigned readings as relative to their emerging collaborative research project. Review of assignments.

2. **Arts-Based Research Workshop**: (60 minutes) Students will breakout into their research teams or dyads and devote the majority of the class working on their arts-based research project. Each class will introduce a new phase of the project and be accompanied by different questions or critical issues for examination relative to arts-based research and the advancement of their projects. Students can work separately or together during this breakout time but must agree on a focus of their collaborative work, document their process photographically and textually, and create a report on their process and progress.

3. **Discussion**: (45 minutes) The whole group will reconvene to hear reports of the breakout group progress, questions, challenges, and goals moving forward.

4. **Reflection and Journal Writing**: (15 minutes) Each student will complete the class by writing or recording in their journal about the progress of their arts-based research project, the learning from the day's class, new questions or insights, goals for the next class, what they have learned so far that is applicable to their own PhD research.

Objectives

Learning Goals/Statement of Expected Learning/Course Objectives: At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Define the continuum of arts-related, arts-informed, and arts-based approaches to research.

2. Clearly articulate the underlying philosophical assumptions relative to arts-related, arts-informed, and arts-based research.

3. Critically assess the philosophy and methodology that are compatible with varying research questions,

objectives, and types of investigations.

4. Identify and describe how and why an arts-related or arts-based research method should be added to a particular research investigation.

5. Identify discipline specific and inter-disciplinary arts-related, arts-informed, or arts-based research projects that would strategically contribute to the advancement of social justice, human understanding and compassion, and construction of global partnerships.

6. Identify and formulate research questions that would drive an interdisciplinary global partnership research project.

7. Conditional Goal: Identify and contact stakeholders and potential funders for global arts-based research projects.

Methodologies

This class meets one time monthly. To ensure that the class runs smoothly, since much of the class is based on collaborative student projects, absences are discouraged. However, there may be instances where an absence may be unavoidable. In those instances, the student who will be absent will be expected to contact their research partner(s), provide them with any assignments due for that class, and collaboratively formulate their joint report on their research project for that class.

Description of Teaching Methods

The course is a Global Classroom which will be conducted using remote videoconferencing technology bringing together student and faculty participants from multiple international universities. The class is designed for doctoral level students and interested faculty from diverse disciplines and professions. The course meets for three hours monthly over a period of five months. The class is conceived as a learning laboratory in which students will discuss, and critically and reflexively evaluate perspectives, philosophical positions, and research questions culminating in the design and construction of their own collaborative research projects using arts-related, arts-informed, or arts-based research. These activities will take advantage of the cross-cultural dimensions and diverse approaches to arts-based research inherent in the students and faculty. These dimensions and approaches are designed to enhance and enrich students' awareness about the social and cultural issues in using arts for research purposes and contribute to the development of global research collaborations in arts-based research. The primary language to be used for collaborative across-country activities will be English. Students' language of choice can be used for individual or within-country activities.

Online and offline teaching materials

Class Components

The class is designed to be a participatory, student driven seminar in which we will be using the following teaching methods.

? **Readings:** Readings about arts-informed and arts-based research philosophical perspectives, methods, credibility, and representation and dissemination will accompany each class and inform the discussions as well as

the developing research projects.

? **Arts-Based Research workshops (collage, assemblage, dance, painting…):** Arts-based inquiry practices will be integral to each class as students explore how the arts inform each phase of research from conceptualization, question, organization, data generation, data analysis, data synthesis, interpretation, representation, and dissemination. Students work in trans-global pairs or small groups to investigate and document how different arts process, media, levels of skill, and team collaboration might be used during the varying stages of a research project.

? **Discussion:** Each class will include a discussion amongst all students and faculty at the conclusion of the class and following the small group arts-based research collaborations. Students and faculty will be expected to report on their progress, identify new questions, raise ethical issues, describe challenges, identify critical decisions at every phase of their research planning and implementation.

? **Reflection and Journal writing:** At the conclusion of the discussion, students will record their reflections and document their learning in their journals. The journal can be written, visual, video, aural, or multi-media.

? **Assignments:** Between class assignments, readings, and discussion boards parallel the in-class content and work to progress the development of the research project through the stages of conceptualization, topic formation, gap analysis, design and methods, data generation, data analysis, synthesis and final representation**.**

Programme and references for attending students

Programme and references for non-attending students

Assessment methods

This is not a graded class. Evaluation will occur through written comments and suggestions from faculty and through peer interaction and evaluation. The assignments will be presented in performative and written form and each will be evaluated using the following categorical rubric:

Comprehensiveness	Demonstrates apparent dedicated study and mastery course concepts through ***active participation*** in all aspects of ***reading, data generation, analysis, and synthesis process evident in experiential, journal/reflective writing, and group discussions***.
Initiative	Demonstrates initiative in ***independently seeking out information*** relevant to the course and emergent interests. Demonstrates ***motivation, drive, and energy*** to learn beyond the classroom and beyond the comfort zone by initiating discussions, volunteering new ideas, and introducing relevant literature in the class
Articulation	Demonstrates the ability to ***critically reflect upon and translate into oral and written form the artistic inquiry experiences***. Demonstrates writing competence through organization, clarity, coherence and evidence based

	conclusions. Also adheres to APA style 7th Edition.
Relevance	Demonstrates ability to describe how ***the data generated in the class are connected to current theory and practice in their professional field*** through written descriptions in assigned papers. Demonstrates ***overall knowledge of current research*** in their field.
Creativity	Demonstrates the ability to engage in ***creative, reflective, and dialectical thinking and artistic inquiry*** in the arts-based experientials, reflective writing, and oral contributions to the class. Demonstrates the ability to ***engage in new and unfamiliar approaches*** to the arts and interpersonal expressive process, the ability to ***reflect upon and articulate their experience*** in written form. Demonstrates the ability to ***challenge pre-existing assumptions*** and think outside the box.
***Critical Thinking and Synthesis**	Demonstrates the ability ***to think reflectively, critically, and systematically*** as observed in participation in class experientials, discussions, and written assignments. Observable ability to ***critically analyze and synthesize data from the class in written and oral contributions,*** Observable ability to ***identify relevant literature and synthesize with data from the class***. Demonstrates the ability to ***critically evaluate and challenge*** pre-existing theoretical and philosophical assumptions within their field of arts therapies. Demonstrates the ability to postulate new theoretical and research questions.

Final Collaborative Research Project

The final collaborative research project is the result of the work of the research dyads or teams who have worked at each phase of their research project during and between classes.

The research project should include both textual and arts-based or performatory elements. The following need to be included in the final project:

? Introduction to arts-based or arts informed research relative to the project

? Philosophical assumptions

? Rationale and contributions

? Ethical Issues and Challenges

? Research questions

? Research strategies

1. ? Research methods o Data generation
2. o Data analysis
3. o Final synthesis
4.

5. ? Results
6. ? Discussion
7. ? Credibility and authenticity
8. ? Performance and/or dissemination strategies
9. ? Strategies for identifying stakeholders and funders

Office hours

Correspondence:

Dr. Nancy Gerber, Ph.D, ATR-BC ngerber@fsu.edu

Phone: 215-863-1268

Dr. Elisabetta Biffi elisabetta.biffi@unimib.it

Dr. Franca Zuccoli franca.zuccoli@unimib.it

Dr. Jacelyn Biondo, Ph.D., BC-DMT, LPC Jb859@drexel.edu

Dr. Sara Coemans sara.coemans@kuleuven.be

Dr. Karin Hannes karin.hannes@kuleuven.be

Dr. Richard Siegesmund richard.siegesmund@gmail.com

Lucia Carriera l.carriera@campus.unimib.it

Office Hours: By appointment

Primary Contact Method: Email

Programme validity

Course tutors and assistants

Lucia Carriera