



UNIVERSITÀ
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FIRENZE

Urban studies and spatial planning: research approaches and methods

6th Winter School on Research Methodology in Social Sciences

School of Architecture | via della Mattonaia, 8

Complesso le Murate | via dell'Agnolo

17-18 January, 2019 | Florence (Italy)

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Urban studies and spatial planning: research approaches and methods

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School of Architecture (Via della Mattonaia 8) and Complesso le Murate (Via dell’Agnolo)

The structure of the Winter School

A network of scholars from a number of Italian universities, engaged with doctoral courses, have voluntarily set up a PhD learning project on research methodology in the field of planning and urban studies. This is a sort of “research methodology school” that offers graduate students, PhD candidates, young academics and scholars affiliated with doctoral programs the opportunity to interactively build learning and training paths in research methodology.

The school is organized around the following main sections:

- *Basics*. Basic questions will be addressed in this section, including: how to write an academic article or a PhD Thesis, and, how to publish in international scientific journals.
- *Methodological questions*. Parallel workshop will be offered, addressing topics including: questions related to methods of qualitative and quantitative research and to the research-action approach, and, the challenge of working with comparative approaches beyond the stereotyped ‘divides’ that have influenced international research (north/south divide; formal/informal etc.).
- *Research design*. We will address: an overall strategy to integrate the different components of a qualitative study and effectively address the research problem. We will address topics including: questions about what research design is and what it is not, how to make sure all parts are properly in place before “tightening”, and why are you thinking of doing a qualitative study of the topic chosen.

- *Challenges.* We will address hot topics in the field of planning and urban studies this section. Two leading scholars in the field will give a talk addressing their approaches to the topic and their methodological perspective.
- *Pint of research.* Inspired by “Pint of Science” (an initiative started in 2012 by a group of UK based postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers), “Pints of Research” will be offered as an opportunity to meet researches in an interesting, engaging and approachable way: a number of Italian scholars are available for peer-to-peer meetings over a beer, with a limited number of PhD candidates and young academics for exchange and tutoring activities.

The contents of the 6th Winter School

Basics

Academic Publishing and Writing

(Francesco Chiodelli, *Gran Sasso Science Institute*, and Stefano Moroni, *Polytechnic University of Milan*)

The first part of the workshop (“Academic writing”) aims to present PhD students with a series of pointers that will serve as a template for formulating their thesis. The second part (“Academic publishing”) aims to introduce PhD students to the challenging world of publishing in international scientific journals.

Methodological questions

Workshop 1

Introductory qualitative research methods

(Alessandro Coppola and Giulia Pezzi *GSSI, L’aquila*)

The workshop discusses how qualitative research methodologies can be applied to urban planning and urban studies research, walking the students through different methodologies for qualitative data collection. It introduces theoretical and applied orientations to qualitative research, fieldwork strategies, (participant) observation and how to conduct interviews. At the end of the workshop a focus group exercise will allow students to test some of the acquired skills.

Workshop 2

Assembling cities. A mixed-method empirical methodology

(Laura Lieto, *Federico II University of Naples*, and David Ponzini, *Polytechnic University of Milan*)

The workshop engages planning’s constitutive tension toward other discipline domains by looking at new materialism, actor-network theory and assemblage thinking. Its main purpose is to outline a relational understanding of the socio-materiality of city life and provide new theoretical and practical insights for planners, designers and policy-makers engaged in day-to-day challenges.

Workshop 3

Methods of policy analysis in territorial governance (Valeria Fedeli, *Polytechnic University of Milan*, and Umberto Janin Rivolin, *Polytechnic University of Turin*)

The workshop discusses how different methods for policy analysis can be employed in the field of territorial governance and spatial planning. First, it conceptualizes a system of territorial governance and introduces the main theories of policy analysis, with a focus on their methodological aspects. Then, it guides students towards framing research projects that use policy analysis in the field of territorial governance and spatial planning.

Research design

(Camilla Perrone, *University of Florence*, Laura Saija, *University of Catania*, and Francesco Lo Piccolo, *University of Palermo*)

This section explores under which conditions a knowing process can be considered “research” likely to generate meaningful ‘scientific’ knowledge. Since this is a contested terrain, participants will engage in an informed debate on the various ways in which a scholar can legitimately, both from an epistemological and an ethical point of view, identify a research question, select or develop research methods, carry-out data collection and analysis or interpretation, etc.

Pint of Research: Meet researchers at the pub!

Around 15 scholars will be available for a meeting held over a beer (or a glass of wine). A list of available scholars and their research topics is available on the website of the Winter School

Attendance and registration

The participation is free of charge.

Attendees are asked to register by **21 December 2018** on the website <https://researchmethodolog.wixsite.com/rms2019>. When registering at the Winter School, attendees are required to specify the following details: name, surname, affiliation, role; which workshop among No. 1, 2 and 3 they would like to attend; which researcher they would like to meet during “Pint of Research”

The Winter School will provide students with 6 credits (to be agreed with the sending universities). Participants will also be given of an additional certificate of attendance of activities related to the “Complementary Skills”, issued by the IUSAFF (Istituto Universitario di Studi Superiori dell'Ateneo di Firenze) equivalent to 6 credits.

Participation grants are not available; for organizational reasons, the Winter School cannot provide any form of support (e.g. invitation letters) in order to obtain VISA.

More information is available on the website of the Winter School.

Provisional Programme

JANUARY 17

8.30 - 09:00 Registration

09:00 – 9.15 Opening

Camilla Perrone (University of Florence)

09:15 – 9.30 Institutional Welcome

09:30 - 13:00 **Basics**: Academic Writing

Francesco Chiodelli, *Gran Sasso Science Institute*, and Stefano Moroni, *Polytechnic University of Milan*

13:00 - 14:30: Lunch Break

14:30 - 17:00 **Basics**: Academic Publishing

Francesco Chiodelli, *Gran Sasso Science Institute*, and Stefano Moroni, *Polytechnic University of Milan*

18:00 - 19:30 **Pint of Research**: Meet researchers at the pub!

20:00 Light dinner at the Pub

JANUARY 18

09:00 – 13:00 **Methodological questions**: Parallel workshops (W1, W2, W3)

Workshop 1 – Introductory qualitative research methods

(Alessandro Coppola and Giulia Pezzi GSSI, L'aquila)

Workshop 2 – Assembling cities. A mixed-method empirical methodology

(Laura Lieto, Federico II University of Naples, and David Ponzini, Polytechnic University of Milan)

Workshop 3 – Methods of policy analysis in territorial governance

(Valeria Fedeli, Polytechnic University of Milan, and Umberto Janin Rivolin, Polytechnic University of Turin)

13:00 - 14:00: Lunch Break

14:30 - 15:00 **Further opportunities for PhD candidates**

Matteo Basso and Filippo Magni, *IUAV University of Venice*; Camilla Perrone, *University of Florence*

15:00 - 17:30 **Research Design**

Camilla Perrone, *University of Florence*, Laura Saija *University of Catania*, and Francesco Lo Piccolo, *University of Palermo*

17.30 – 17.45: **Conclusions**

Contacts and promoters

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The Winter School is promoted by the University of Florence (Doctoral Program on Urban and Regional Planning, Doctoral School of Architecture), *with the support of Gran Sasso Science Institute* (Doctoral Programme in Urban Studies and Regional Science) and *the participation of a network of Italian universities*: University of Florence, University of Cagliari, University of Catania, Gran Sasso Science Institute - L'Aquila, IUAV - Venice, Polytechnic University of Milan, Polytechnic University of Turin, Sapienza University of Rome, University of Roma Tre, University of Molise, University of Naples, University of Palermo, University of Sassari