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National Center of Competence in Research –
The Migration-Mobility Nexus

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Université de Neuchâtel

Core Course #7

“Building Empirical Evidence: Ethical and Inclusive Strategies for Data Collection”

17 April 2024

University of Neuchâtel

Doctoral students are asked to register [here](#) until 12 April 2024

 Swiss National
Science Foundation

The National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCRs)
are a funding scheme of the Swiss National Science Foundation

Core Course #7

“Building Empirical Evidence: Ethical and Practical Strategies for Data Collection”

This course is part of the first pillar of the Doctoral Program of the nccr – on the move. We welcome all members of the NCCR community and doctoral students enrolled in a CUSO program to join us. For doctoral students enrolled in the Certificate in Migration and Mobility Studies, participation in this course is worth 1 ECTS.

General Description

This problem-based course is designed to equip participants with ethical and practical strategies for data collection in social sciences. The course is organized around critical discussions in groups, and the outcome of these discussions should allow participants to have ready-to-go checklists and written materials they can use for their research. The course is primarily designed for qualitative researchers, but many of the questions discussed are also of great importance for quantitative data collection.

Throughout the course, we will work on the following questions that are meant to stimulate debate:

1. How can we plan data collection methods that are *safe* and *fair* both for the researcher and for the people who are the object of the research?
2. How does the identity of the researcher impact their fieldwork?
3. How can researchers adequately prepare for data collection?
4. What are creative ways of gathering and producing data together with those who are the object of the research?
5. Are there strategies to give back research findings to those who are the object of the research?

The course seeks to ‘walk’ participants through different stages of data collection. Participants will gain hands-on experience in preparing and conducting data collection, writing up reflections on their research ethics, and reviewing each other’s work. Part of each session will involve working in smaller groups, discussing and responding to particular hypothetical fieldwork situations; as well as practicing facilitating group discussions and conducting interviews on sensitive subjects.

The course is organized around four substantive sessions. The first two sessions are dedicated to **ethical considerations**, through which participants gain skills in designing fieldwork, approaching research participants, planning the interview process, tracking participant observation, making fieldnotes, and writing up data. The third session is dedicated to **inclusive strategies of data collection**, through which participants are provided ideas on participatory and inclusive

approaches to knowledge production, which can lead to more socially relevant and impactful research outcomes. The fourth session is dedicated to **strategies of restitution of research for those who have been the object of it.**

At the end of the course, participants will have developed strategies to account for ethical challenges, practical hurdles, and research restitution. They will also critically understand these issues through debates and exercises that question existing practices. Finally, participants will leave the course with written material they can use in their work, including checklists and short essays regarding ethical and practical strategies.

Practical Information

The Course takes place in presence (no online participation) on **Wednesday 17 April 2024** at the University of Neuchâtel, Av. Abram-Louis Breguet 2, 2000 Neuchâtel, room 2.310. Please register through [this link](#) no later than 12 April 2024. Applications by members of the nccr – on the move will be prioritized, and registrations will be treated on a first come first served basis. Lunch is included for all the participants, and travel expenses to and from Neuchâtel will be reimbursed for members of the nccr – on the move. If you have further questions, please contact Robin Stünzi via email at robin.stunzi@nccr-onthemove.ch.

About the Instructor

Lorenzo Piccoli leads the work of the Migration Policy Centre on teaching and training together with the School of Transnational Governance. He holds a PhD in Social and Political Sciences from the European University Institute (2018). He has previously worked as Scientific Coordinator at the Swiss National Center of Competence in Research for Migration and Mobility Studies (2019 - 2021) and as Research Associate at the Global Citizenship Observatory (2018 - 2021). His research focuses on the politics of inclusion and exclusion of international migrants from fundamental rights, such as healthcare, voting, and welfare.

Timetable

9:15 – 10:45

The Ethics of Data Collection

Plenary (25 minutes): Debate on the following questions:

- Are you concerned with the ethics of your research?
- What does ethical research mean to you?
- What are the ethical questions that might emerge during your research?

Exercise (45 minutes): Simulation of different scenarios, reflection on the ethical issues they raise, and development of a checklist for ethical research that includes issues:

- Positionality
- Epistemic exploitation
- Extractive research
- Safe setting
- Power dynamics
- Informed consent
- Financial compensation for research subjects
- Expectation management
- Strategies to deal with trauma and unexpected incidents
- Reporting of critical situations and illicit practices
- Supervision

Debate (20 minutes): What's the point? Ethics authorization as a form of protection or as a constraint against free research

10:45 - 11:15

Coffee break

11:15 – 12:45

Creation and Development of Ethical Protocols

Data Protection (30 minutes): Pseudonymization, data storage, data responsibilities, open data

Writing Session (30 minutes): Elaboration of a short text that answers the following questions:

- What are the ethical questions that might emerge during your research?
- What are the risks you might face during your fieldwork and how can you minimize these risks?
- What risks does your data collection pose to your research participants and how can you minimize these risks?

- How will your gender, ethnicity and other subjective identities impact your data collection?
- How might your health and mental health be impacted by your data collection?
- How will you gain access to your data? How will you give back?

Peer-review (30 minutes): Feedback in groups

12:45 - 14:00 Lunch Break

14:00 – 15:30 **Inclusive Strategies of Data Collection**

Doing Inclusive Research with Christina Mittmasser, Oliver Pedersen, Oleksandra Tarkhanova (45 minutes): Presentation of three strategies of inclusive research

Group discussion (45 minutes): Discussion on the following issues:

- How to establish contact with research participants
- How to negotiate access to the field and prepare knowledge of the context where fieldwork is conducted
- How to create data together with research participants
- What is the role of intermediaries and local interviewers
- Online vs in person data collection

15:30 - 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 - 16:30 **Restitution of Research**

Group work (45 minutes): Good practices of research restitution

16:30 - 17:00 **Conclusion**

Feedback (15 minutes)

Wrap (15 minutes)