

Research Methods (SOC1 303)

Fall 2017

Course Information:

Tu & Th | 11:30AM - 12:45PM
Location: Mather Memorial 125
Pre-requisite: SOC1 101
Credit Hours: 3

Instructor:

Professor: Jiao Yu
Department of Sociology
Office Hours: By Appointment
Email: jiao.yu@case.edu

Course Objectives

This course is design to provide an overview of research methods commonly used by social scientists. We will explore a range of approaches to empirical social research used in Sociology. After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the fundamental theoretical and methodological differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs.
- Develop research questions and select appropriate research methods to address them.
- Conceptualize & operationalize variables.
- Understand Criteria for Determining Causation.
- Analyze quantitative data using basic statistics and statistical software.
- Articulate the ethical and political issues surrounding social science research.
- Develop and defend a research proposal.

Required Reading

Required readings

- Babbie, Earl R. (2015). *The Practice of Social Research*. 14th edition. Cengage Learning, Belmont, California, U.S.A.
- Additional required readings will be posted online.

Recommended book

- Schutt, Russell K. (2011). *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research*. 7th Edition. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Course Requirements:

- Class Participation: 100 Points
- Pop quiz: 40 points
- Practicum Assignments 1: 120 Points
- Practicum Assignments 2: 120 Points
- Practicum Assignments 3: 120 Points
- Research Proposal Paper and presentation: 500 Points

Course Grading:

To calculate your final course grade, add up your total points, divide by 1000, and then apply the following scale: A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), F (below 60%).

1. Research proposal assignment

The goal of this class is to provide students a solid foundation to conduct social research. I strongly recommend you to choose a research topic of interest to you that you can further develop into a Senior Capstone Project or Independent Study. For this proposal project, you will ask you to submit a typed, double-spaced **10-13 pages** paper with 12-point Times New Roman font and one inch margins on all sides. This proposal is divided into 4 parts and each part will be individually graded. You will also receive timely feedback on how to revise them for your final paper. The final paper must be submitted online to the instructor by 5pm on the due date.

Proposal 1. Statement of the purpose (100 points)

Proposal 2. Introduction and literature review (150 points)

Proposal 3. Method Section (150 points)

Proposal 4. Final Presentation /Annotated Bibliography (100 points)

2. Practicum assignments

This course contains three practicum assignments, which will help develop your skills on particular research methods topics. Due dates for the assignments are listed on the course schedule. A brief description of each assignment is provided below.

Practicum Assignment 1: Conceptualization and Operationalization (120 points)

Students will conceptualize and operationalize concepts contained within research questions provided by the instructor. The assignment entails a 4-5 pages typed paper that diagrams the research question, describes the concepts, discusses how your operationalization is reliable and valid as well as design several survey questions.

Practicum Assignment 2: Quantitative Data Analysis (120 points)

In this assignment, students will gain experience conducting quantitative data analysis using a statistical software. The instructor will provide a small dataset for the assignment. Students must submit their analysis along with a typed interpretation of the results.

Practicum Assignment 3: Evaluate Articles using Qualitative Research (120 points)

Students will choose one article to evaluate. Evaluation questions and criteria will be provided by the instructor. Students must submit their evaluation as a 1-2 pages typed document.

3. Course participation (100 points)

Class attendance is required. You are expected to actively participate in the course and to be courteous to others at all times. Cell phones and other devices that make noise are prohibited; Turn them off or silence them. We will have students from different backgrounds and perspectives. Students are expected to respect opinions different from their own and allow others the same opportunity to share those.

Students are allowed to miss 2 classes during the semester. For each class, students will receive a participation score: 0=did not attend entire class; 2=attended class but participated little in discussion/activity; 5=active, constructive participation

❖ Important due days

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|----------|--|
| Sept. 7 | Proposal part 1 due- In class |
| Sept. 21 | Proposal part 2 due |
| Oct. 10 | Assignment 1 due |
| Nov. 2 | Assignment 2 due |
| Nov.16 | Proposal part 3 due |
| Nov.28 | Assignment 3 due |
| Nov.30 | Presentation-1 |
| Dec. 5 | Presentation-2 |
| Dec. 14 | Final paper due- hard copy to instructor |

Missed Classes, Exams, and other Deadlines

No make-up grades will be given for class participation or assignments. You are allowed two absences for the total course time. Inform the instructor in advance so that the absences won't affect your final course grade. All assignments must be received by their indicated due date in class. Late assignments will be penalized one point per day and will receive a failing score if turned in more than 5 days late. The final project is due by 5pm on the due date. Projects received after 5pm will not be accepted.

Academic Integrity:

All assignments, projects, and exams must be completed independently. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including course failure. Students should read the University policies on academic integrity at <http://students.case.edu/handbook/policy/integrity.html>-It is my hope that this is an unnecessary statement about academic honesty. You are responsible for producing original work in this course. Intellectual property includes the ideas, words, statements, and concepts that are produced by an individual. It is wrong to take any of these without giving credit where it is due. Since a large part of this course concerns writing, here are a few guidelines for you:

1. If you take 3 or more words in a row from any source, it must be in quotation marks and followed by the author's last name, year of publication, and page number. THIS INCLUDES CONTENT FROM THE WEB. Web content should be cited with the web page, author, and date retrieved.
2. If you take ideas or facts from a source but use your own words, you still must use a citation (author's last name and year of publication) to give credit to the source of the work.
3. You MAY NOT take the words, statements, or ideas of other students who are currently or previously in this class. This includes borrowing the work of another student and simply rephrasing it.
4. The work you produce in this class must be original. You cannot use a paper that you have previously or simultaneously submitted to another class.
5. Do not give copies of your work to other students. If someone copies your work, both of you will be considered guilty and will receive equal discipline for the action.

Consequences for breaches of academic honesty such as those mentioned above will result in failure for the assignment. A second instance will result in failure for the course.

Disability Statement:

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Disability Resources at disability@case.edu to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. Provide a copy of the letter to the instructor within the first 2 weeks of class. More information is available at <http://students.case.edu/education/disability/>

Writing Resource Center:

Students are encouraged to visit the Writing Resource Center for assistance with written assignments throughout the semester, and especially when writing the final project. More information is available at www.case.edu/writing/writingcenter.html

Course Schedule

| Date | Topic | Readings | Assignments |
|----------|---|--|----------------|
| Week 1 | | | |
| Aug. 29 | Introduction to course | -- | |
| Aug. 31 | Overview of social research | Babbie Chpt 1 | |
| Week 2 | | | |
| Sept. 5 | Theory, strategies and questions | Schutt Chpt 2 | |
| Sept. 7 | Literature review (Guest speaker: Dr. Jessica A. Kelley) | TBA | Proposal 1 due |
| Week 3 | | | |
| Sept. 12 | Concepts and operationalization | Babbie Chpt 5 | |
| Sept. 14 | Measurement levels, reliability, and validity | Babbie Chpt 5 | |
| Week 4 | | | |
| Sept. 19 | Recruiting/Sampling research participants | Babbie Chpt 7 | |
| Sept. 21 | Criteria for causal explanations | Schutt Chpt 6 Goldthorpe (2001) | Proposal 2 due |
| Week 5 | | | |
| Sept. 26 | Research ethics and IRB (Guest speaker: Lacey Caporale) | TBA | |
| Sept. 28 | Research design | Babbie Chpt 4 | |
| Week 6 | | | |
| Oct. 3 | Conducting social research at KSL (Guest speaker: Dr. Mark Eddy) | -- | |
| Oct. 5 | Survey research | Babbie Chpt 9 | |
| Week 7 | | | |
| Oct. 10 | Survey research | Software introduction | Assig 1 due |
| Oct. 12 | Cleaning and recoding data | Babbie Chpt 14 | |
| Week 8 | | | |
| Oct. 17 | Frequency distributions, descriptive statistics | Babbie Chpt 14 | |
| Oct. 19 | Measures of association | Babbie Chpt 16 Descriptive Statistics | |
| Week 9 | | | |
| Oct. 24 | Fall break - no class | -- | |
| Oct. 26 | Regression analysis | Babbie Chpt 16 Descriptive Statistics | |

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| Week 10 | | | |
| Oct. 31 | Lab for homework 2 | -- | |
| Nov. 2 | Secondary data analysis | Ross & Wu. 1995 | Assig 2 due |
| Week 11 | | | |
| Nov.7 | Secondary data sources | -- | |
| Nov.9 | Qualitative methods (Guest speaker: Michael Slone) | TBA | |
| Week 12 | | | |
| Nov.14 | Intro to qualitative data analysis | Babbie Chpt 13 | |
| Nov.16 | Content analysis | Babbie Chpt 11 Content Analysis | Proposal 3 due |
| Week 13 | | | |
| Nov.21 | Experiments and evaluation research | Babbie Chpt 12 | |
| Nov.23 | Thanksgiving- no class | -- | |
| Week 14 | | | |
| Nov.28 | Writing research paper | Babbie Chpt 17 | Assig 3 due |
| Nov.30 | In class presentation | -- | |
| Week 15 | | | |
| Dec. 5 | In class presentation | -- | |
| Dec. 7 | Writing Day – No Class – Will Hold Individual Appointments Per Request | -- | |
| Week 16 | | | |
| Dec. 12 | Reading day – no class- Will Hold Individual Appointments Per Request | -- | |
| Dec. 14 | **Final paper due** | | |

- Supplemental Research Articles will be Available on Canvas for these Class Sessions
- The Above Schedule is Subject to Adjustments as the Course Progresses