***This is a preliminary syllabus. A final syllabus will be posted prior to the beginning of Spring 2012 classes.***

Sociology 3111 (section 002) Research Methods / Sociology 6965 (section 002) Survey Methods
3 credit hours
Spring 2012
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 12:25 PM - 1:45 PM
Location: ARCH 228

Instructor: Dr. Akiko Kamimura, Ph.D., M.S.W., M.A.
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  • I prefer to only be contacted through Canvas email.
Office Hours: By appointment

Course description:
This research method course focuses on principles and standard practices of survey design and provides students with the knowledge and skills to be able to properly design research surveys. The course includes theory of social science research, designing survey instruments, and planning a survey research study. Sampling and nonresponse issues are also addressed.

Objectives:
At the end of the course, the student will be able to:
- Understand theory of social science research
- Choose desirable data collection modes
- Understand sampling in surveys
- Develop, evaluate and ask survey questions
- Decrease survey nonresponse
- Do post-collection survey data processing
- Understand research ethics in surveys

Teaching and learning methods:
Teaching strategies include lecture and discussion. Students are expected to read course materials prior to the class, raise questions, and come prepared to discuss the issues on topics of the day.

Grading:
Undergraduate students:
Assignments (66 %: 6 points*11)
Exam (20%)
Class participation and attendance (14%)

Total 100 points
Graduate students:
Assignments (55 points: 5 points*11)
Presentation (10%)
Paper (20%)
Class participation and attendance (15%)

Grading Scale:
100-93 points: A
92-90 points: A-
89-87 points: B+
86-83 points: B
82-80 points: B-
79-77 points: C+
76-73 points: C
72-70 points: C-
69-67 points: D+
66-63 points: D
62-60 points: D-
59 and below: F

Assignments:
All assignments are to be completed on Canvas. No late assignments will be accepted.
Single-spaced (Times New Roman, 12 pts) or text entry on Canvas.

Assignment #1: Research topic and questions
Describe your research topic and questions that you will work on throughout the assignments (1 page)

Assignment #2: Mail survey, online survey, telephone survey
Describe advantages and disadvantages of using mail survey, online survey and telephone survey for your project (2-4 pages)

Assignment #3: Focus group, case study, mixed method, choosing the appropriate method
Identify which data collection method (mail, online, telephone, focus group, case study or mixed method) would be most desirable for your project (1-3 pages)

Assignment #4: Sampling
Describe the target population and identify the sampling frame that would be suitable for your project. (1-3 pages)

Assignment #5: Non-response
Describe the strategies to reduce non-response rate for mail survey and telephone survey for your project (2-4 pages)

Assignment #6: Survey Questions & Answers
Pick mail survey or telephone survey. Then write survey questions for your project. (2-5 pages)

Assignment #7: Survey Interviewing
Describe the strategies to minimize the effect of interviewers for your project (1-3 pages)

Assignment #8: Management and Supervision
Write a brief data collection protocol for telephone interviewers for your project (2-3 pages)

Assignment #9: Research Ethics
Describe issues of research ethics that might be raised in your project (2-4 pages)

Assignment #10: Post-collection Process
Describe potential challenges of post-collection processing in your project (1-3 pages)

Assignment #11: Evaluation of Student Presentations
Fill-out a short evaluation form for each student presentation

Exam (undergraduate students only):
Exam is to be completed on Canvas. No late exam will be accepted.
Single-spaced (Times New Roman, 12 pts) or text entry on Canvas.
Open book (The student can see any course materials and own class notes but should not collaborate with other people.)
Available on Canvas from 5 pm Apr 19 (Th) to 9 am Apr 26 (Th)

Presentation (graduate students only):
Present your project based on the assignments #1-10.

Paper (graduate students only):
Paper is to be completed on Canvas. No late paper will be accepted.
Double-spaced (Times New Roman, 12 pts) or text entry on Canvas.
Exchange assignments #1-7 with your classmate. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of his/her project. Provide recommendations to improve his/her project.

Readings:
Required text books:

Optional text books (for graduate students):

All other reading materials are available on Canvas.

Faculty and student responsibilities:

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content.

According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible
classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

The student must understand and be familiar with the University of Utah Student Code http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html. The failure to comply with the student code, including academic misconduct, may result in the serious consequence such as failure in the course, and/or expulsion from the university.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

Class and Reading Schedule:
*This outline is tentative and subject to change at any time.

**Week 1: Elements of Social Research (Jan 10 & 12)**
Ragin pp. 5-54

**Week 2: Process of Social Research & Qualitative and Quantitative methods (Jan 17 & 19)**
Ragin pp. 55-104, 131-154

Assignment #1: Research topic and questions (Due 9am Jan 24, Tuesday)

**Week 3: Introduction to Surveys (Jan 24 & 26)**
Groves pp. 2-7, 30-33, 39-49

**Week 4: Methods of Data Collection (overview, mail survey, online survey, telephone survey) (Jan 31 & Feb 2)**
Groves pp.150-158
Mangione pp. 1-7
Lavrakas pp. 1-26
Best pp. 1-4
Assignment #2: mail survey, online survey, telephone survey (Due 9am Feb 7, Tuesday)

**Week 5: Methods of Data Collection (focus group, case study, mixed method, choosing the appropriate method) (Feb 7 & 9)**
Groves pp. 150-158
Assignment #3: focus group, case study, mixed method, choosing the appropriate method (Due 9am Feb 14, Tuesday)

Week 6: Sampling (Feb 14 & 16)
Groves pp. 69-94
Mangione pp. 38-59
Lavrakas pp. 27-57
Best pp. 13-35
Assignment #4: sampling (Due 9am Feb 21, Tuesday)

Week 7: Non-response (Feb 21 & 23)
Groves pp. 192-210
Mangione pp. 60-87
Assignment #5: non-response (Due 9am Feb 28, Tuesday)

Week 8: Survey Questions & Answers (Feb 28 & Mar 1)
Groves pp. 217-253
Mangione pp. 8-37
Assignment #6: Survey Questions & Answers (Due 9am Mar 6, Tuesday)

Week 9: Evaluation of Survey Questions (Mar 6 & 8)
Groves pp. 259-286

Week 10: Survey Interviewing (Mar 20 & 22)
Groves pp. 291-324
Assignment #7: Survey Interviewing (Due 9am Mar 27, Tuesday)

Week 11: Management and Supervision (Mar 27 & 29)
Lavrakas pp. 124-161
Mangione pp. 88-105
Lavrakas pp. 59-97
Best pp. 36-73
Assignment #8: Management and Supervision (Due 9am Apr 3, Tuesday)

Week 12: Research Ethics (Apr 3 & 5)
Groves pp. 371-400
Assignment #9: Research Ethics (Due 9am Apr 10, Tuesday)

Week 13: Post-collection Process (Apr 10 & 12)
Groves pp. 329-346
Assignment #10: Post-collection Process (Due 9am Apr 17, Tuesday)

Week 14: Graduate student presentations and Review (Apr 17 & 19)

Week 15: Exam/ Paper (Apr 24)
Assignment#11: Evaluation of student presentations (Due 9am Apr 24, Tuesday)

Exam (undergraduate students) (Due 9am Apr 26, Thursday)

Paper (graduate students) (Due 9am Apr 26, Thursday)

Updated 10/18/2011