This course provides an overview of the theory and practice of conducting social science research. The primary objectives of the course are:

a.) to familiarize students with different types of methods that are used to accumulate evidence in the social sciences (e.g., survey research, qualitative interviewing, field-work, comparative-historical analysis, and archival research)

b.) to expose students to the ethics and logic of data collection and analysis,

c.) to make students aware of the various sources of error that are inherent in research methods,

d.) to give students an opportunity to develop their own research proposal.

Group discussions, in-class exercises, and guest speakers who detail their ‘real-life’ research experiences will be used to achieve these learning objectives. By the end of the course, each participant should have the skills, knowledge, and experience to write a proposal for funding agency or proposal for a thesis or dissertation project.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS**

**Seminar Format:**
The seminar format means that students will be expected to share the burden of discussing and presenting the reading material. In other words, this course is not a traditional lecture format, and the success of the course depends on the hard work of each seminar participant.

**Readings**
In addition to the six textbooks listed below, additional readings will be made available through web-CT and/or the electronic reserves at the Marriott Library.

1. The Craft of Research, 3rd Edition  
   By Booth, Colomb, Williams; Published by University of Chicago Press  
   ISBN: 978-0226065663

2. A Very Short, Fairly Interesting & Reasonably Cheap Book on Qualitative Research  
   By David Silverman; Published by Sage  
   ISBN: 978-1412945967

   By Floyd Fowler; Published by Sage  
   ISBN: 978-1-4129-5841-7

4. Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences  
   By Mahaoney & Rueschemeyer; Published by University of Cambridge Press  
   ISBN: 978-0521016452

5. How to Sample in Surveys, Second Edition  
   By Arlene Fink; Published by Sage  
   ISBN: 9780761925774
Grading & Evaluation:
Please refer to the assignment sheet for objectives, instructions, and grading criteria for each assignment. All assignments are due at the start of class on the day they are due. Late assignments may be accepted, with permission of instructor, but will be subject to a penalty (usually half credit).

Final course grades will be assigned based on a weighted average of 1) the student’s weekly participation in the seminar (e.g., how well prepared each is to discuss the assigned reading material), 2) a take-home midterm exam which will be given about two thirds of the way through the semester, and 3) a final research proposal and its various associated assignments. The assignments associated with the development of an independent research proposal will comprise approximately 50% of the final grade, the midterm exam 35%, and participation will make up the remaining 15% of the final grade.

Schedule:

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| 1-2  | Introductions & Syllabus Review  
What is Social Research?  
What is a Research Proposal? |
| 3    | Goals & Strategies of Social Research  
Research Ethics & the IRB  
Choosing a Research Topic |
| 4    | Finding Information About Your Topic  
Measurement & Error  
Questions, Theories, Hypotheses |
| 5    | Using & Finding Secondary Data Sources  
Making & Supporting Claims |
| 6-7  | Research Design & Sampling |
| 8    | Survey Research Methods |
| 9    | Qualitative Research Methods |
| 10   | Comparative Research Methods |
| 11   | Data Collection Methods, Review & Comparison |
| 12   | Measurement & Error, revisited  
The Art of Scientific Writing |
| 13   | Data Analysis & Data Management |
| 14   | Good Proposals: The Key to Obtaining Funding for Your Research  
Revisions: The First Draft is Never the Final Draft |
| 15   | STUDENT PRESENTATIONS |
| 16   | STUDENT PRESENTATIONS |

*MORE DETAILED SCHEDULE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS*