Sociology 3111 (001)

Introduction to Research Methods

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of social science research. Objectives include:

1. Familiarize students with the different types of methods that are used to accumulate evidence in the social sciences. Examples include survey research, intensive interviewing, participant-observation.
2. Expose students to the logic of data collection and analysis, and
3. Give students an opportunity to conduct their own research and to critique existing social research.

Group discussions, in-class exercises, and traditional lectures will be used to achieve these learning objectives. The course will culminate in a student-organized conference in which students will present and discuss the results of their research project. We learn how to do research, by doing it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Web-CT:
All course materials, including lecture notes and assignment sheets, will be posted on Web-CT. All students are expected to check the course website frequently.

Readings
Two texts are recommended for this course. Additional readings will be made available on Web-CT.

Attendance & Participation:
Given the “hands-on” nature of this course, regular attendance and active participation is expected.

Exams & Quizzes
None.

Assignments
There will be a series of assignments throughout the term, many of them serving as building blocks for your final research project.

Final Research Project:
Students will complete a research project throughout the semester, which includes choosing a unique research topic, designing an appropriate study, collecting and analyzing data, and presenting findings in both a written and oral format. This project will be done in groups.
GRADING

Course grades will be calculated as a weighted average of assignments (45%), final research project (45%), and attendance/participation (10%).

- A (100-93 points)
- A - (90-92 points)
- B + (89-87 points)
- B (86-83 points)
- B - (80-82 points)
- C + (89-87 points)
- C (76-73 points)
- C - (70-72 points)
- D + (69-67 points)
- D (66-63 points)
- D - (60-62 points)
- E (< 60 points)

- All grades will be posted on Web-CT within 7-days of submission.
- It is the student’s responsibility to report and discuss grade discrepancies with the instructor.
- Late assignments may be accepted for partial (half) credit.

SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is “Social Science”?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Research Process ~ Research Ethics</td>
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| 3    | Questions, Theories, Hypotheses ~ Causality & Research Design  
Assignments #1: Research Ethics Certification |
| 4    | Literature Review ~ The Research Report  
Assignments #2: Topic Approval |
| 5    | Measurement  
Assignments #3: Lit Review Assignment |
| 6    | Sampling ~ A Focus on Writing  
Assignments #4: Draft of “Intro” |
| 7-8  | Survey Research |
| 9    | Qualitative Methods  
Assignments #5: Survey Assignment |
| 10   | Other Research Designs & Data Collection Methods  
Assignments #6: Qualitative Assignment |
| 11   | Quantitative Data Analyses |
| 12-13| Data Analysis  
Assignments #7: Draft of “Methods” |
| 14   | Presenting, Writing, Revising  
Assignments #8: Draft of “Results” |
| 15-16| Student Research Forum  
Assignments #9: Self-Evaluation |
| EXAM WEEK | Final Research Report is due |

MORE DETAILED SYLLABUS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS