
SPRING 2014
SOC 3111-001: RESEARCH METHODS
M-W-F 9:40 – 10:30
BEH S 114

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Terrence D. Hill, PhD
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the logic and methods of social research. Specific topics include elements of research design, measurement of theoretical constructs, sampling procedures, experimentation, survey research, and qualitative research. The course emphasizes reading and interpreting empirical research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be prepared to:

- (1) Formulate research questions and hypotheses
- (2) Critically evaluate the measurement of theoretical constructs
- (3) Identify the strengths and limitations of various sampling procedures
- (4) Identify the strengths and limitations of quantitative and qualitative research methods

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Teaching strategies include lectures and group discussions.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Singleton, Royce and Bruce Straits. 2010. *Approaches to Social Research, 5th Edition*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

REQUIRED ARTICLES

See course calendar.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING STANDARDS

Exam 1	30%	A = 90% – 100%
Exam 2	30%	B = 80% – 89%
Exam 3	40%	C = 70% – 79%
Extra Credit	5%	D = 60% – 69%
		F = 0% – 59%
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Total	105%	

EXAMS

Students are required to complete three exams. Exams cover lecture material and assigned readings. Exam questions may refer to any assigned reading material, regardless of whether the material was presented in class. Exams may include multiple choice questions, short-answer questions, and essay questions. **Practice exam questions can be found on the following website:**

<http://college.holycross.edu/projects/approaches5/>. Make-up exams are only offered to students with excused absences.

EXTRA CREDIT

This semester I am offering extra credit to the class for meeting my expectations for behavior (see below). If the entire class meets my expectations for the entire semester, I will add 5 extra percentage points to your final course grade. **However, each time any student fails to meet my expectations for behavior, I will subtract 1 extra credit percentage point from the entire class.** In the end, the entire class will receive the same amount of extra credit. This means that extra credit will not be awarded on an individual basis. Because this extra credit policy affects the entire class, the entire class must agree to it. If any student complains about this policy (to anyone) during the course of the semester, no extra credit points will be awarded (to anyone). I sincerely hope that you are able to take advantage of this generous offer.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to attend every class. Students are expected to be on time. Students are expected to be prepared for class, having completed all assigned readings for the week. Students are expected to participate knowledgeably in class discussions. Provided that students attend class, participation is very important. Participation indicates to the instructor that students are actively engaged in the learning process. I strongly encourage questions, comments, and the sharing of ideas as they relate to course material. **Although commonsense knowledge and personal experiences are welcome, it should be emphasized that these are not adequate substitutes for informed discussions.**

Disruptive behavior during lectures and discussions will not be tolerated. All laptops, cell phones, and other potentially disruptive devices should be **turned off and packed away** when class is in session. No reading newspapers or studying for other courses. No socializing. No sleeping. No leaving early or coming late without prior notification. No disparaging remarks. Please be considerate.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Students at the University of Utah are members of an academic community committed to basic and broadly shared ethical principles and concepts of civility. Integrity, autonomy, justice, respect and responsibility represent the basis for student rights and responsibilities. Participation in the University of Utah community obligates each member to follow a code of civilized behavior. In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. Per University of Utah regulations (Policy # 6-400), "A student who engages in academic misconduct," as defined in Part I.B. and including, but not limited to, cheating, falsification, or plagiarism, "may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student's degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing." Please refer to the Student Code for full elaboration of student academic and behavioral misconduct policies (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>).

DISABILITY SERVICES

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation is provided to students with known physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, please contact the Center for Disability Services (<http://disability.utah.edu/>) - 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
<u>Week 1</u> Jan. 6, 8, 10	<i>Course Overview</i> READ: Course Syllabus
<u>Week 2</u> Jan. 13, 15, 17	<i>Introduction to Social Research and the Nature of Scientific Inquiry</i> READ: ASR (Chapters 1 and 2)
<u>Week 3</u> Jan. 20 , 22, 24	<i>Research Ethics</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 3); Goode (2002); Martinson (2005)
<u>Week 4</u> Jan. 27, 29, 31	Exam 1 Review Exam 1 (Covering Material from Weeks 2 and 3)
<u>Week 5</u> Feb. 3, 5, 7	<i>Elements of Research Design</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 4); Uecker (2008)
<u>Week 6</u> Feb. 10, 12, 14	<i>Measurement</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 5); Lyubomirsky (1999)
<u>Week 7</u> Feb. 17 , 19, 21	<i>Sampling</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 6); Crosnoe (2009)
<u>Week 8</u> Feb. 24, 26, 28	Exam 2 Review Exam 1 (Covering Material from Weeks 5-7)
<u>Week 9</u> Mar. 3, 5, 7	<i>Experimentation</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 7); Lucas (2003)
<u>Week 10</u> Mar. 10, 12, 14	No Class! Spring Break! Woohoo! Party!
<u>Week 11</u> Mar. 17, 19, 21	<i>Experimental Designs</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 8); Sherman (1984)
<u>Week 12</u> Mar. 24, 26, 28	No Class Independent Study and Review
<u>Week 13</u> Mar. 31, Apr. 2, 4	<i>Survey Research</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 9); Schieman (2006)
<u>Week 14</u> Apr. 7, 9, 11	<i>Survey Instrumentation</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 10); Duff (2007)
<u>Week 15</u> Apr. 14, 16, 18	<i>Introduction to Qualitative Research</i> READ: Bryman (2008); Hunt (2009)
<u>Week 16</u> Apr. 21, 23	<i>Field Research</i> READ: ASR (Chapter 11); Adler (1992)
<u>Week 17</u> TBA	Exam 3 (Covering Material from Weeks 9-16)

NOTES: Dates, topics, assignments, and due dates are subject to change. SC = *Social Causes of Psychological Distress*.

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Adler, Patricia, Steven Kless, Peter Adler. 1992. "Socialization to Gender Roles: Popularity among Elementary School Boys and Girls." *Sociology of Education* 65:169–187.

Bryman, Alan. 2008. "The Nature of Qualitative Research." Pp. 366–399 in *Social Research Methods*, 3rd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Crosnoe, Robert. 2009. "Low-income Students and the Socioeconomic Composition of Public High Schools." *American Sociological Review* 74:709–730.

Duff, Brian, Michael Hanmer, Won-Ho Park, Ismail White. 2007. "Good Excuses: Understanding who Votes with an Improved Turnout Question." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 71:67–90.

Goode, Erich. 2002. "Sexual Involvement and Social Research in a Fat Civil Rights Organization." *Qualitative Sociology* 25:501-534.

Hunt, Geoffrey, Kristin Evans, Molly Moloney, Noelani Bailey. 2009. "Combining Different Substances in the Dance Scene: Enhancing Pleasure, Managing Risk and Timing Effects." *Journal of Drug Issues* 39:495–522.

Lucas, Jeffrey. 2003. "Theory-Testing, Generalization, and the Problem of External Validity." *Sociological Theory* 21:236–253.

Lyubomirsky, Sonja and Heidi Lepper. 1999. "A Measure of Subjective Happiness: Preliminary Reliability and Construct Validation." *Social Indicators Research* 46:137–155.

Martinson, Brian, Melissa Anderson, and Raymond de Vries. 2005. "Scientists Behaving Badly." *Nature* 435:737–738.

Schieman, Scott and Leonard Pearlin. 2006. "Neighborhood Disadvantage, Social Comparisons, and the Subjective Assessment of Ambient Problems among Older Adults." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 69:253–269.

Sherman, Lawrence and Richard Berk. 1984. "The Specific Deterrent Effects of Arrest for Domestic Assault." *American Sociological Review* 49:261–272.

Uecker, Jeremy, Nicole Angotti, Mark Regnerus. 2008. "Going Most of the Way: 'Technical Virginity' among American Adolescents." *Social Science Research* 37:1200–1215.