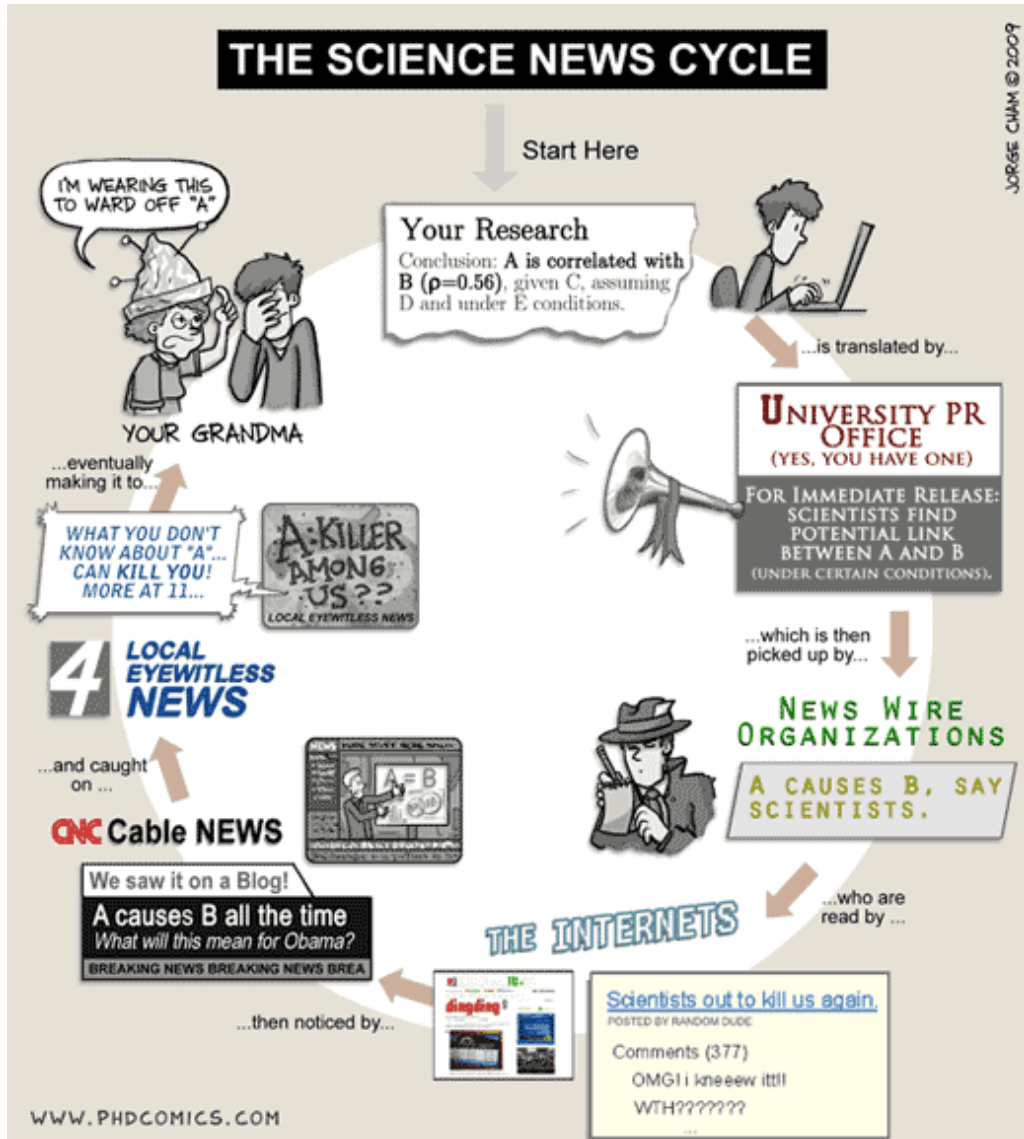

SOC 3111-001: Research Methods
University of Utah
Summer 2014 (May, 12 – July, 30)

Instructor: Jared Fitzgerald
Email: jared.fitzgerald@soc.utah.edu
Class Location: Online in cyber space!
Credit Hours: 3
Office Hours: By appointment (online chat or in person depending on availability)
Office: BEH S 312



Course Description

This course introduces students to systematic methods that organize the research process and multiple forms of research that it includes. The course explains the logic of research design, explores some common forms of data-gathering (such as interviews, surveys, observation, etc.), and links them to issues of data reporting. The course provides basic research skills for use to students as either original producers or critical consumers of social research.

**This is an ONLINE course. You will submit all of your assignments, quizzes, and exams online via Canvas. In addition, it is important to note that all due dates are listed in Mountain Standard Time.*

What should I expect to get from this course?

By the end of this course, you will:

- Be familiar with the various methods of research utilized in sociology.
- Be able to formulate a research question and hypotheses.
- Be a better consumer of academic research, but also of information in general.
- Be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Required Book(s)

Babbie, Earl. 2013. *The Practice of Social Research, 13th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

There will also be a few research articles and book excerpts that you will be required to read.

What will I do in this class?

1. **Exams:** There will be three exams throughout the course. Each exam will be worth 20% of your final grade. They will be a mix of multiple choice questions, true false questions, and short answer questions. The due dates for the exam will be posted in the course calendar as well as on the class's Canvas page.
2. **Research Proposal:** At the end of the semester you will be required to create a research proposal. The combined portions of this assignment will be worth 20% of your final grade. More information on this assignment and its subcomponents will be available on Canvas shortly after the beginning of the semester. This project will be subdivided into different parts throughout the semester:
 - a. **Topic Approval:** This assignment will be a short paragraph detailing a topic you are interested in studying. You will also provide a preliminary research question and why it is significant.
 - b. **Preliminary Bibliography:** This assignment will be a short list of bibliographic references to show that you are beginning some research on your topic. The list must contain *at least* 10 references from social science journal articles.

- c. **Annotated Bibliography:** For this assignment, you will provide a short summary of 5 important sources you will use in your research proposal. These summaries will explain why the article is of importance to your research proposal.
 - d. **Peer Review:** In this assignment, you will be required to review a rough draft of another student's research proposal. You will provide them with constructive criticism and possible insights that they may be overlooking.
 - e. **Final Research Proposal:** This will be the final result of the previous work. The final proposal will be between 4-5 (double-spaced) pages. Here you will outline your final research question, hypotheses, proposed methods, and a short literature review.
3. **Discussion Participation:** An important aspect of learning is the ability to discuss various issues with other students. As this is an online class and we are unfortunately unable to utilize in person, face-to-face interactions. Thus, it will be doubly important that students participate in the online discussions regarding the reading assigned for a given week. The discussion part of your grade will be worth 20%. This is a weekly participation grade. This means that you will not be graded on the content of your posts but rather your effort to engage in discussion.

**If you are having trouble with any of the above assignments or are having anxiety about the exams or assignments, do not hesitate to contact me. This class is designed for you to be able to be a better consumer/creator of research, not for you to stress out!*

Grading and Evaluation

- 1. **Exams:** 60% of final grade (600 points)
- 2. **Research Proposal (and its Subcomponents):** 20% of final grade (200 points)
- 3. **Discussion Participation:** 20% of final grade (200 points)

Course Grade	Total Points	Percentages	Course Grade	Total Points	Percentages
A	930-1000	93-100%	C	730-769	73-76%
A-	900-929	90-92%	C-	700-729	70-72%
B+	870-899	87-89%	D+	670-699	67-69%
B	830-869	83-86%	D	630-669	63-66%
B-	800-829	80-82%	D-	600-629	60-62%
C+	770-799	77-79%	E	0-599	0-59%

Can I get extra credit?

You bet you can get extra credit! Up to four times, you will be able to submit an extra credit assignment that will give you 2.5%. These assignments involve you finding a news media article where they are reporting scientific research and write up a 2 page (double-spaced) review of the media representation of the research. There will be more information posted on the class's Canvas page.

The Fine Print

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

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, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, is a serious offense. The following regarding academic integrity and plagiarism is taken from the University of Utah's Student Code: "Academic misconduct" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Other Resources

1. If you are a **student veteran**, I want you to know that the University of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.
2. If you are a member of the **LGBTQ community**, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.
3. If **English is your second language**, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (<http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/>); the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program ([4](http://writing-</div><div data-bbox=)

program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Course Schedule

** TENTATIVE SCHEDULE, WILL CHANGE PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF SEMESTER*

Date	Assignment Due	Reading
Week 1 (May 12 – 16)		Babbie, Ch. 1
Week 2 (May 19 – 23)		Babbie, Ch. 2-3 TBA
Week 3 (May 26 – 30)	Topic Selection	Babbie, Ch. 4-5 TBA
Week 4 (June 2 – 6)	Exam 1	TBA
Week 5 (June 9 – 13)	Preliminary Bibliography	Babbie, Ch. 6-7 TBA
Week 6 (June 16 – 20)		Babbie, Ch. 8-9 TBA
Week 7 (June 23 – 27)	Annotated Bibliography	Babbie, Ch. 10-12 TBA
Week 8 (June 30 – July 4)	Exam 2	TBA
Week 9 (July 7 – 11)		Babbie, Ch. 13-14 TBA
Week 10 (July 14 – 18)	Peer Review	Babbie, Ch. 15-16 TBA
Week 11 (July 21 – 25)		Babbie, Ch. 17 TBA
Week 12 (July 28 – 30)	Final Exam Final Research Proposal	