

Advanced Sociological Research Methods Syllabus

Course Information

Advanced Sociological Research (SOC4306)

Spring 2017

Monday and Wednesday: 10AM -11:15AM

Class Location: [GR 3.606](#)

Professor Contact Information

Zachary R. Simoni, PhD

Office location: [GR 2.232](#)

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00 PM – 3:00 pm and by apt.

Telephone: 972-883-3809

E-mail: zrs160030@utdallas.edu

Course Description

This course is designed as an advanced course in sociological research methods. Advanced topics in research methods and data analysis are examined with an emphasis on project based learning. Smaller assignments will culminate into a complete research paper that incorporates theory, review of literature, data analysis and research findings. Projects will focus on a range of topics including, but not limited to, education, race and ethnic relations, culture, the family, health care, and workplace diversity.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

This course will introduce you to advanced sociological research methods used by the scientific community, and teach you to develop sociologically relevant research questions. Most importantly, you will develop and conduct your own research project throughout the course of the semester. The methods you will learn are used by sociologists, social scientists in general, as well as medical researchers and other scientists.

Specific objectives include the following:

- Design a research project
 - Develop academic writing skills within the discipline of sociology
 - Use theory to create a logical research project
 - Garner an advanced understanding of research methods
 - Understand ethical issues when collecting sociological data
 - Understand how research can lead to fascinating and impactful careers
-

Required Textbooks and Materials

1. Babbie, Earl. (2015) The practice of social research, 14th edition. Wadsworth Cengage Press.
 2. Additional materials will be provided on the Blackboard Learn Coursesite
-

Course Requirements

Your final grade will be based on:

4 Quizzes (25 pts. each)	100 points	Grade Scheme	
3 Large Assignments (50 and 25 pts.)	125 points	100-97%	A+
4 Small Assignments (10 pts. each)	40 points	96-93%	A
Project Presentation	20 points	92-90%	A-
Final Paper	100 points	89-87%	B+
		86-83%	B
		82-80%	B-
Total	385 points		

Assignments

This class relies on project based learning to better understand advanced sociological research methods. Thus, students will develop their own research project based upon a topic of their choosing. There are **three large assignments** due throughout the course in order to better develop these skills. Directions for each assignment are listed on Blackboard Learn under "Assignments." In addition, there are **four small assignments** due throughout the course. They will be given in-class or in-lab.

Quizzes

There are **four quizzes** meant to assess grasp of important concepts and ideas related to research methods. They will be taken in class. Questions are based off of both the text and in class lectures. Make-up quizzes will not be given without documentation of a serious illness, death in the family, or required university-sponsored event. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make arrangements with me to schedule your make-up; don't wait for me to come to you. Do not be late for a quiz. If you show up after the first person has already finished and left the room you will not be permitted to take the quiz, and you will receive a 0. Please be on time so you have the entire class period to take the quiz.

Project Presentation

Good researchers know how to convey their findings to both the lay public as well an academic audience. Thus, students will be required to give a 15 minute presentation on their projects at the end of course. Directions are located below:

Final Paper

Because this course relies on project based learning, the primary assessment will focus on a well-developed research project testing or evaluating a research question of your choosing. Each research project must have the following sections: Introduction, Review of Literature, Methods, Results and Discussion. Assignments will help students organize the final paper. The final paper

should incorporate all sections into a cohesive paper. For instance, the introduction will discuss aspects of the literature review as well as the methods sections.

Course & Instructor Policies

Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to attend class lectures, participate in class discussions and exercises and read required material. It is important that you actively engage in the class. You need to do more than just show up. Arriving late and leaving early is not acceptable. If a student is consistently late, I reserve the right to ask that student to leave. Attendance will be recorded.

Late Assignments

A one grade deduction will be made for each day an assignment is late. In the cases of a prolonged illness or emergencies, other arrangements will be made. It is important to communicate with me in this case. It is not the instructor's job to inform you of zeros on assignments.

Accommodation of Religious Beliefs:

Religious beliefs shall be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements. Please notify me in advance if there is a conflict.

Reasonable Accommodations:

It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 3.200. They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.

Make-up Policy:

Because of the online nature of this course, only in extreme cases will make-ups be provided. REMEMBER, not all quizzes and discussions are used to calculate final grades.

Academic Honest Policy:

Faculty expect all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not limited to, acts of abetting, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Candidates are expected to honor the Academic Code of Conduct as detailed UT Dallas Student Catalog 2015-2016. Please consult this resource for additional information regarding the specific procedures to be undertaken when a student violates the UT Student Code of Conduct - UTDSP5003.

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Course Calendar

*Calendar subject to change at Professor's discretion

Let me make it clear: if you cheat or plagiarize you will fail the course and your name will be forwarded to the University Compliance Office. Please don't do it.

Etiquette:

Respect fellow students and myself. Topics in this class may become sensitive and someone (including myself) may say something with which you disagree. Critical discussion is encouraged, but respect differences of theoretical perspective.

Reservation:

I reserve the right to make changes in this syllabus to better serve the class's needs. Any changes will be announced in advance.

Classroom Etiquette

I expect a level of dignity and respect for your fellow classmates and myself. While I will allow the use of computers for note-taking, I will not tolerate distractions from technology in class. Please do not make incoming or outgoing phone calls, text messaging, surf the web, gaming, or instant messaging during class. If you are expecting an important phone call (e.g., from a child care provider or a job interview), you must inform me of this before class, set your phone to vibrate, and sit near a door so that you can leave immediately if you receive a call. I have the right to deny the use of cell phones, pagers, and any other communication devices during class. Moreover, as a result of advances in technology such as text messaging, any use of cell phones during quizzes will be considered academic misconduct and may result in an "F" for the quiz/exam or an "F" in the course.

DATE	DAY	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENTS AND QUIZZES
Week 1				
1/9	M	The Nature and Process of Social Research	Babbie: 1 and 17	
1/11	W			
Week 2				
1/16	M	NO CLASS: MLK DAY	NO CLASS: MLK DAY	
1/18	W	Ethics and IRB	Babbie: 3	*get IRB training certified!
Week 3				
1/23	M	Research Design	Babbie: 4	
1/25	W			
Week 4				
1/30	M	Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement	Babbie 5	Quiz 1
2/1	W			
Week 5				
2/6	M	Indexes and Scales	Babbie: 6	
2/8	W			Front End Assignment Due
Week 6				
2/13	M	Survey Research	Babbie: 9	Quiz 2
2/15	W	In Lab (Qualtrics)		Submit IRB Form today!
Week 7				
2/20	M	Sampling	Babbie: 7	
2/22	W			
Week 8				
2/27	M	Qualitative Field Research	Babbie 10	Quiz 3
3/1	W			
Week 9				
3/6	M	Qualitative Field Research	Babbie 13	
3/8	W			
Week 10				
3/13	M	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
3/15	W	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
Week 11				
3/20	M	Unobtrusive Research	Babbie 11	
3/22	W			Quiz 4
Week 12				
3/27	M	Quantitative Research	Babbie 15	
3/29	W	In Lab (data management)		
Week 13				
4/3	M	Quantitative Research	Babbie 16	Methods Assignment Due
4/5	W	In Lab (data analysis)		
Week 14				
4/10	M	In Lab		
4/12	W	In Lab		

Week 15				
4/17	M	In Lab		
4/19	W	In Lab		
Week 16				
4/24	M	In Lab		
4/26	W	In Lab		Unobtrusive Research Assignment Due
Week 17				
5/1	M	Finals Week	Finals Week	
5/3	W			Project Presentations in Class Papers Due