

SOC 312 COURSE SYLLABUS
ELEMENTS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
SPRING 2007

Room: Pulliam #310
Class Time: M & W: 2:00-3:40
Office Hours: M & W 9:00-11:00
Mailbox: Faner 3384

Instructor: Melissa Powell
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Phone: 453-7632
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Required Text:

Babbie, Earl. 2005. *The Basics of Social Research* (3rd Edition).

In addition to the above text, required reading material will be made available through Electronic Course Reserves which can be obtained online: <http://www.lib.siu.edu/hp/>.

Course Description and Objectives: In this course, students are introduced to a variety of research methods in the social sciences including the use of the library, techniques of observation, elementary steps in quantitative and qualitative measurements and analyses, and an understanding of the utility of such methods.

Students will:

1. be able to explain the connection between theory and research as demonstrated in their writing
2. have an understanding of the techniques as well as strengths and weaknesses of a variety of qualitative and quantitative social research methods
3. be able to collect, analyze, and present sociological research results.
4. be knowledgeable of the ethical concerns associated with scientific research and to practice within these guidelines.

Course Requirements

Attendance: Attendance in the lectures and discussion sessions are required. Experience has proven that students who regularly miss class do poorly on the exams and in the course. Exams, quizzes, and other graded activities that take place in lecture cannot be made up without a written excuse from a qualified professional.

Reading Assignments: Regardless of your motivation to attend college, you are here and YOU MUST READ! This undisputed fact is relevant not only to this course but to every course that you will take at this or any other institution. Not only will reading enrich your life, it will also increase your confidence in course material, participation in class, and performance on exams. You will know in advance what material you are required to read BEFORE attending class.

Quizzes: Throughout the semester quizzes covering both the readings and lecture material will be administered. These quizzes are designed to both encourage your participation and familiarize you with the format and material that will be covered on upcoming exams. THESE QUIZZES MAY OR MAY NOT BE ANNOUNCED IN ADVANCE.

Homework: Throughout the course students will be asked to complete both in-class and homework assignments that will worth up 10 points each. It is not my responsibility to inform students of missing assignments due to absences, rather it is up to you to contact me for this information. Points will be deducted daily for late assignments.

Research Proposal: The goal of this course is to provide you with the skills necessary in order to perform sociological research independently. Thus, you will be required to demonstrate your competency through the construction of a formal proposal on the topic of your choice. Through this assignment you will create a document that shows your mastery of research methods in the social sciences. This proposal will be 8 to 12 pages in length. I will guide you through process of creation of this document by having you hand in the proposal in four developmental stages: 1) The Research Question/Thesis Statement; 2) The Literature Review; 3) Methods Section; and 4) The Final Draft. Detailed descriptions of each of these will be provided throughout the semester.

Stages of the Proposal Paper: As part of this course you will learn to prepare a research proposal. Through this assignment you will create a document that shows your mastery of research methods in the social sciences. The proposal will resemble research proposal that you may be required to develop as part of your future occupation. Generally, this proposal will be 8 to 12 pages in length. I will guide you through process of creation of this document by having you hand in the proposal in four developmental stages: 1) The Research Question; 2) The Methods Selection; 3) The Draft of Literature Review; and 4) The Final Draft. Each stage builds upon the earlier stages and upon comments I will give.

Grading:

<i>Attendance/Participation</i> (4 absences allowed):.....	40 pts
<i>Quizzes and Homework</i> :.....	100 pts
<i>Exams</i> (2 @ 100pts):.....	200 pts
<i>Stages of Research Proposal:</i>	
Research Question and Outline:.....	20 pts
Methods Section:	20 pts
Literature Review (Draft):.....	20 pts
Final Draft:.....	100 pts
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Total.....	500 pts

Standardized Scores	Final Grade
450 - 500	A
400 - 449	B
350 - 399	C
300 - 349	D
0 - 299	F

Cheating: All SIUC policies regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be upheld in this course. A grade of "0" will be recorded for all works in which you were found to have been involved in any acts of academic dishonesty. If you are not familiar with the definitions and consequences of cheating or with your rights, refer to your *Student Conduct Code*, see an academic advisor, or ask me.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One

Wednesday, January 18

Introduction to the Course

Week Two

Monday, January 22

Read Before Class: Babbie Ch. 1 “Human Inquiry and Science”

Wednesday, January 24

Reading TBA

Guest Lecturer: Todd Powell-Williams

Week three

Monday, January 29

Read Before Class: Babbie Ch. 2 “Paradigms, Theory, and Research”

Wednesday, January 31

Read Before Class: Campbell “Public Masculinity and Drinking in Rural New Zealand” CR

Week Four

Monday, February 5

Read Before Class: Babbie Ch. 3 “The Ethics and Politics of Social Research”

Wednesday, February 7.

Weis and Fine “Qualitative Research, Representations, and Social Responsibilities” CR

Week Five

Monday, February 12

Research Question Due!

Conducting Library Research: A Hands-On Approach

Wednesday, February 14

Read Before Class: Babbie Ch. 4 “Research Design”

Week Six

Monday, February 19

Read Before Class: Babbie Chapter 5 “Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement”

Wednesday, February 21

Read Before Class: May and Dunaway, “Predictors of Fear of Criminal Victimization at School Among Adolescents” CR

Week Seven

Monday, February 26

Read Before Class: Chapter 6 “Indexes, Scales, and Typologies”

Wednesday, February 28

Read Before Class: Chapter 7 “The Logic of Sampling”

Week Eight

Monday, March 5

Putting Concepts into practice: Lab

Wednesday, March 7:

Exam One

Week Nine

NO CLASS—SPRING VACATION

Week Ten

Monday, March 19

Draft of Literature Review Due!

Read Before Class: Babbie Chapter 9 “Survey Research”

Additional Readings TBA

Wednesday, March 21

Week Eleven

Monday, March 26

Read Before Class: Babbie Ch. 10 “Qualitative Field Research”

Wednesday, March 28

Geertz, C. “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight” CR

Strand & Weiss pp. 213- 235, “Neither Real Americans nor Real Asians? Multigeneration Asian Ethnics Navigating the Terrain of Authenticity.”

Week Twelve

Monday, April 2

Weis and Fine “Reflections on the Politics and Methods of Qualitative Work”

Wednesday, April 4

Read Before Class: Chapter 12 “Unobtrusive Research”

Strand & Weiss pp. 161- 179 & 197-211, “Race, Gender, and Status: A Content Analysis of Print Advertisements in Four Popular Magazines” OR “Capital Punishment and Deterrence: Examining the Effect of Executions on Murder in Texas.”

Week Thirteen

Monday, April 9

Methods Selection Assignment Due Today!

Read Before Class: Babbie Chapter 13 “Qualitative Data Analysis”

Wednesday, April 11

Putting Concepts into Practice: Lab

*(IF USING QUALITATIVE METHODS) Analysis homework due

Week Fourteen

Monday, April 16

Read Before Class: Babbie Chapter 14 “Quantitative Data Analysis”

Wednesday, April 18

*(IF USING QUANTITATIVE METHODS) Analysis homework due

Week Fifteen

Monday, April 23

Read Before Class: Babbie Chapter 15 “Reading and Writing Social Research”

Wednesday, April 25

Review for Exam

Week Sixteen

Monday, April 30

Exam Two

Wednesday, May 2

Formatting your Research Proposal & Course Wrap-up

Final Draft of Research Paper Due at time of Final Exam: Tuesday May 12 by 3:10 pm