

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology
Fall/Winter Term (6 Credit Hour Course) 2012-2013

SOC 2290 RESEARCH METHODS A01 (CRN 11007)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:30 or by appointment

Class: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:30 - 10:20 in Room 215, Tier Building

Required Texts:

Fall term: Roberts, L., Kampen, K. & Peter, T. (2009). *The Methods Coach: Learning Through Practice*. Oxford University Press.

Winter term: Roberts, L., Kampen, K. & Peter, T. (2009). *The Statistics Coach: Learning Through Practice*. Oxford University Press.

Supplemental Texts (not required, but may offer further assistance):

Babbie, E. & Benaquisto, L. (2010). *Fundamentals of Social Research*, 2nd edition. Nelson Education Ltd.

-- Any general text on Social Research Methods can be useful to compliment what you are learning in class. More recommendations can be provided on request.

Course Objectives & Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to social science research methods and develop the skills required for generating knowledge, conducting research, engaging with sociological theories, and designing effective social policy. The goal of the course is to provide students with the basic knowledge needed to undertake social research projects while also developing their ability to understand sociological research methods, appreciate the process of knowledge construction, and comprehend published social science research.

The first half of the course explores the study of assumptions, principles, and techniques of various research methods used in sociology. The intended outcome is for students to become familiarized with the general principals of research methods and their application in the collection of data for analysis. The second half of the course will focus on basic statistical methods and techniques for data analysis. The primary goal in the second half will be to enhance students' statistical literacy.

There is a mandatory lab component for this course, which is worth 25% of your final grade. More information regarding lab preparation and evaluation will be given to you by the lab instructor during your scheduled lab session.

Please note that this is not a math course. You will be using a calculator to systematically work through basic problems and concepts. You do not need any advanced mathematical training to do well in this course. Given that most students will not be familiar with statistical techniques, regular class attendance is essential. Course material is presented in a logical sequence; therefore, missing class may result in difficulty with future material.

Course Evaluation

Grades

Percentage	Letter Grade	Descriptive Scale	GPA
90 to 100	A+	Exceptional	4.5
80 to 89	A	Excellent	4.0
76 to 79	B+	Very Good	3.5
70 to 75	B	Good	3.0
66 to 69	C+	Satisfactory	2.5
60 to 65	C	Adequate	2.0
50 to 59	D	Marginal	1.0
0 to 49	F	Failure	0.0

Note: Senate Policy #1307 requires "A post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will encourage equitable correspondence between grades and level of performance in all sections." Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve such equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

Test 1	October 10 th , 2012	12.5%
Test 2	November 7 th , 2012	12.5%
Test 3	December 4 th , 2012	12.5%
Test 4	February 13 th AND 15 th , 2013	18.75%
Test 5	April 8 th AND 10 th , 2013	18.75%
Lab		25.0%

Tests

There are three unit tests covering class lectures and assigned readings. Each test includes a mixture of multiple choice and written responses and/or mathematical problem solving. The specifics of each test will be discussed in class. The subject matter on the tests will draw from both assigned readings and class lectures.

Required Reading

Test 1: Methods Coach Chapters (1, 2, 3, & 4) as well as lecture units (1, 2, 3, & 4)

Test 2: Methods Coach Chapters (6, 7, 8, 9, 11, & 12 – with some overlap from lecture units: 2, 3, & 4) as well as lecture units (5, 6, 7, & 8)

Test 3: Methods Coach Chapters (10 – with some overlap from lecture unit 8) as well as lecture units (9, 10, 11, 12, & 13)

Details for Tests 4 & 5 will be distributed in early January. The second term will involve two tests, spanning two days. These will be focused on statistical calculations and therefore require more time.

Missed Tests

Any student who misses a test or exam must provide a doctor's note (or appropriate equivalent). **This will be strictly enforced.** No student will be allowed to write a make-up test without a doctor's note (or some form of written documentation). Any student who does not inform me (by phone/voice mail/office hours) **prior** to test time (that they will be absent for the test) **will not** be allowed to write a make-up test. This also will be strictly enforced. Missed tests must be written **within one week** of original test date. The instructor will inform the student of when and where the make-up test will be written. **No alternate date** will be given; as such, it is the student's responsibility to show up at the specified date and time, without exception.

Lab

There is a separate lab component for the course, which will have its own course outline. All preparation and evaluation will be done by the methods lab instructor.

Student Conduct & Academic Regulations of the University

Voluntary Withdrawal

The final date for voluntary withdrawal from this course is March 20th, 2013. There are no refunds on this date – see the Fall/Winter Calendar for details.

Academic Integrity

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Personations at Examinations' (section 5.2.9) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (8.1) found online under UManitoba Catalogue 2011-2012 (General Academic Regulations, Section 8. Academic Integrity). The Faculty of Arts also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Electronic Devices

Students are required to **silence all electronic devices** (cellular phones, Blackberries, I-phones, pagers, etc.) when in the classroom. If there is a reason that you require your device to remain on 'ring' mode (i.e., sick child at daycare), please inform the instructor prior to class. Students are not permitted to send or receive text messages during class. **A student found texting during class will be asked to leave.** Students are welcome to bring laptop computers to class for note-taking purposes only. Students found using social networking sites or surfing the Internet during class will be asked to leave. Finally, please remove earphones during class lectures.

Classroom Disruptions

Students should recognize that excessive talking, late arrival, or early departures from the classroom are disrupting for both the instructor and classmates. Please be considerate of others in the class. Continual disruption by a student may result in disbarment from the course. Please notify the instructor prior to class if you need to leave early or if you have to come late to the next class.

Accommodations

Special Needs

Students with special learning needs (who for legitimate reasons require extra time to write a test, or who require aids or other supports) should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the term in order to arrange suitable accommodation.

Religious Holidays

The university recognizes the right of all students to observe recognized holidays of their faith, which fall within the academic year. With instructor discretion, necessary arrangements can be made to ensure studies are not jeopardized. The instructor should be notified of a student's intended absence in advance and at least three weeks notice of absence should normally be given where special arrangements are sought.

Course Schedule

The course schedule is a general guideline. At times, we may start the next lecture unit midway through class, which, for example, could mean starting a class earlier than listed on the course schedule. It is students' responsibility to ensure that they have all materials for lectures, which will be available through the course website.

Date(s)	Event	Lecture Unit & Chapter(s)
September 7	First day of class	Introduction to course
September 6-19	Registration revision period	
Week of September 10	Science as a way of knowing	Lecture unit 1
Week of September 17	Doing social research	Lecture unit 2; Methods Coach, #1
Week of September 24	Research design & causation	Lecture unit 3; Methods Coach, #2
Week of October 1	Principles in social research	Lecture unit 4; Methods Coach, #3 & 4
October 8	NO CLASSES	
October 10	Unit Test #1	Lecture units 1, 2, 3, & 4 and Methods Coach chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4
October 12	Ethics in social research	Lecture unit 5 (carry over to next week)
Week of October 15	Quantitative research designs: Experiments	Lecture unit 6; Methods Coach, #12
Week of October 22	Quantitative research designs: Surveys	Lecture unit 7; Methods Coach, #6
Week of October 29	Quantitative research designs: Unobtrusive methods	Lecture unit 8; Methods Coach, #7, 8, 9, & 11
November 7	Unit Test #2	Lecture units 5, 6, 7, & 8; Methods Coach chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, & 11
November 9	Qualitative research designs: Introduction	Lecture unit 9 (might carry over to next week)
November 12	NO CLASSES	
Week of November 12	Qualitative research designs: Field research	Lecture unit 10; Methods Coach, #10
Week of November 19	Qualitative research designs: Grounded theory	Lecture unit 11
Week of November 26 & December 3	Qualitative research designs: Others; and Qualitative data analysis	Lecture unit 12 and Lecture unit 13
December 5 Last Day of Class	Unit Test #3	Lecture units 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13 and Methods Coach chapter 10

Winter Term (details TBA)		
Date	Event	Lecture Unit & Chapters
December 22 – January 2	University closed	
January 7	First day of class for winter term	
January 7 - 18	Registration revision period	
February 18	Louis Riel Day (university closed)	
February 18 - 22	Mid-term break	
February 13 & 15	Test #4 (Wednesday & Friday)	TBD
March 20	Last day for voluntary withdrawal from fall/winter term courses	
April 8 & 10	Test #5 (Monday & Wednesday)	TBD
April 10	Last day of class for winter term	

Corresponding Units with Methods Coach Textbook

For each chapter from the *Methods Coach*, the following lecture units will help you complete the “Application” section (in addition to reading each “Tune-up” section). Details for the winter term using the *Statistics Coach* textbook will be distributed in early January.

Methods Coach Chapter	Lecture Unit #
Ch. 1: The building blocks: Variables and hypotheses	Unit 2: Doing social research
Ch. 2: Errors in reasoning	Unit 1: Science as a way of knowing Unit 3: Research design and causation
Ch. 3: Conceptual and operational definitions	Unit 4: Principles in social science research
Ch. 4: Levels of measurement	Unit 4: Principles in social science research
Ch. 6: Survey design issues	Unit 7: Survey research
Ch. 7: Content analysis: Instrument pre-testing	Unit 2: Doing social research Unit 4: Principles in social science research Unit 8: Unobtrusive research
Ch. 8: Content analysis: Collecting the data	Unit 4: Doing social research Unit 8: Unobtrusive research
Ch. 9: Content analysis: Processing the data	Unit 8: Unobtrusive research
Ch. 10: Qualitative field observation	Unit 8: Unobtrusive research Unit 10: Field research Unit 13: Qualitative data analysis
Ch. 11: Using existing and official statistics	Unit 8: Unobtrusive research
Ch. 12: Causal thinking	Unit 3: Research design and causation Unit 6: Experimental research