

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology
SOC 2290 A03
INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS
Fall & Winter Terms 2017-18 (6 credit hours)

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Office Hours: By appointment
Classroom: Room 201 St. John's College
Timeslot: Tuesday & Thursday 11:30am-12:45pm

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course entails an introduction to the philosophy and practice of social science research, and will cover key topics such as the assumptions of scientific inquiry, the conceptualization of research problems, qualitative and quantitative approaches, basic statistical analysis, and computer-assisted statistical analysis with SPSS. The main objective of the course is to provide students with a general understanding of the principles of social scientific research methods such that they are better prepared to: (1) undertake their own research projects, and/or, (2) be critical consumers of published research.

The first half of the course (Fall term) will cover a number of issues related to the research process such as the nature of scientific knowledge, the place of theory and causality, and some basic methodological approaches to asking and addressing research questions. The second half of the course (Winter term) will focus largely on basic statistical methods and techniques for data analysis, with the basic goal of increasing students' statistical literacy.

While this course does not require a strong mathematics background, students will, in the Winter term, need to use a calculator to work through some basic problems and statistical techniques. As most students will be new to the statistical techniques relevant to this course, regular lecture and lab attendance is essential. Course material is presented in a logical sequence with new topics and concepts building upon previous ones; therefore, missing lectures is likely to create cumulative difficulties with mastery of this material, especially in the later stages of the course.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

1. Textbooks

Fall Term:

Babbie, E. & Roberts, L.W. (2018). *Fundamentals of Social Research, Fourth Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Nelson ISBN: 0176570118

Winter Term:

Roberts, L.W., Edgerton, J., Peter, T., & Wilkinson, L.A. (2015). *Understanding Social Statistics*. Toronto: Oxford. ISBN: 0195444292

2. Lab Access (Aplia) Registration Codes

In addition to the textbook, you must obtain registration codes that provide access to the lab assignments, called *Aplia*.

Fall term:

Aplia HomeWork for *Fundamentals of Social Research*, 4th Canadian edition, Babbie & Roberts (**not a textbook, only a registration code**). ISBN: 0176776640

Winter term:

Aplia HomeWork for *Statistics: A Tool*, 3rd edition, Healy (**not a textbook, only a registration code**) ISBN: 0176805230

Note: the Babbie & Roberts, *Fundamentals of Social Research* text has been bundled with the two Aplia HomeWork registration codes at a substantially reduced rate. The ISBN for all three products is: 017683284X.

3. i>clicker

The *i>clicker* response unit is available at the Bookstore. Students must register with the system (on-line) in order to be awarded the *i>clicker* grade. This system will be used consistently throughout the course to assist in evaluating your progress in solving various methods problems and as a tool for the professor to get live feedback from students during the lectures. The *i>clicker* mark is worth 5% of your total grade for the course based on a combination of participation and the number of correct *i>clicker* quiz answers provided by the student during the term. This formula will be clearly explained on the first day of class.

NOTE: Study questions, lecture PowerPoint slides and test marks will be posted on the UM Learn course website.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your final mark is composed of three components:

Tests = 70% (grades will be posted on UM Learn within 2 weeks of each test date)

Aplia = 25% (each assignment will be automatically graded and displayed online; final cumulative mark will be posted on UM Learn at end of Winter term)

Participation (*i>clicker*) = 5% (final mark will be posted on UM Learn at end of Winter term)

1. Tests (70%): There will be 5 unit tests—3 in the Fall term, and 2 in the Winter term. Please note that the tests will cover the reading, lecture, and application materials. Test questions will be drawn from assigned readings and class lectures, and will include both multiple choice and written/calculation responses. The tentative test dates and contribution toward your final grade are as follows:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Test 1	October 10	12%
Test 2	November 14	12%
Test 3	December 7	12%
Test 4	February 13 & 15	17%
Test 5	April 3 & 5	17%

Note: During tests, only a basic, non-programmable calculator is permitted (in Winter term); no other electronic devices are allowed.

Missed Unit Tests: Any student who misses a test or exam is required to provide written documentation of a legitimate reason, such as serious illness or bereavement – any student who misses a test without instructor permission will receive a grade of zero for that test. *This requirement will be strictly enforced.* No student will be allowed to write a make-up test without appropriate written documentation. Any student who does not inform me (by phone/voice mail) of their unavoidable absence *prior* to test time *will not* be allowed to write a make-up test. **There will only be one make-up test date scheduled per term (Friday December 8th and Friday April 6th).** Note: make-up tests will differ from the tests administered in class. Any student who misses a make-up test will receive a grade of zero for that test.

2. Aplia (25%)

There are two Aplia product codes: one for each term. Aplia HomeWork assignments will be due almost weekly, and correspond to a specific unit. Please see Aplia Assignment Schedule on page 5 of course outline for individual due dates.

Fall term student access link: <http://login.nelsonbrain.com/course/GUNU-9EDK-5NMX>

Winter term student access link: <http://login.nelsonbrain.com/course/GJA7-6VJU-LRUL>

Each Aplia HomeWork assignment allows students up to 3 attempts – please note, a different question will be provided, but with the same concept, in order to discourage students from randomly guessing. The final grade for the assignment will be based on the score that is equal to or higher than subsequent attempts (i.e., do no harm).

3. Participation (5%)

This portion of your grade is calculated based on class attendance and the answers you provide using the *i>clicker* response unit throughout both semesters. The *i>clicker* questions are asked based on the topic of the lecture, more details will be provided in class.

Grade Key:

Total Percentage	Letter Grade
90+	A+
80-89	A
75-79	B+
70-74	B
65-69	C+
60-64	C
50-59	D
0-49	F

Note: In accordance with University and Faculty of Arts policies and the University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307, department and programs are required to utilize a final grades review and approval process of multi-sectioned undergraduate courses before course grades are rolled into Aurora student. Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve this equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed. At the discretion of a Department's Council, the Faculty of Arts policy states there may also be a review and approval of proposed final grades of other undergraduate courses.

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION

Class will not be held on the following dates:

October 5 (Fall mid-term break); February 20 & 22 (Winter Mid term break)

Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline Date:

January 16, 2018

Academic Integrity:

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, exam personation, ("Personation at Examinations" (Section 5.2.9) and "Plagiarism and cheating" (Section 8.1)) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/index.html> . Ignorance of the regulations and policies regarding academic integrity is not a valid excuse for violating them.

Unclaimed Term Work Disposal:

Any term work that has not been claimed by students will be held for four (4) months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. At the conclusion of this time, all unclaimed term work will become property of the Faculty of Arts and be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.

Conduct in Class:

Excessive talking, late arrivals, or early departures are impolite and distracting for both the instructor and classmates. Please be considerate and respectful of the needs and rights of others in the class. Students are required to silence all electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, pagers, PDAs, etc.).

Persistent disruption will result in disbarment from the course. Any student who has a legitimate reason for leaving the class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class.

Accommodations:

Special Needs: Special needs services are provided through Student Accessibility Services (474-6213). Students with special needs (who require aids, other supports, or require extra time to write a test) should introduce themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the term in order to arrange suitable testing times.

Holy Days: 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. At least three weeks notice of absence should normally be given where special arrangements are sought.

APLIA ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Fall Term due dates		
Chapter	Title	Due Date
1	Human Inquiry and Science	09.17.17
2	Paradigms, Theory, and Research	09.24.17
3	Ethical Issues for Social Researchers	10.01.17
4	Research Design and the Logic of Causation	10.15.17
5	Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement	10.22.17
6	The Logic of Sampling	10.29.17
7	Experiments	11.05.17
8	Survey Research	11.12.17
9	Non-Reactive Research	11.19.17
10	Field Research	11.26.17
11	Qualitative Interviewing	12.03.17
13	Qualitative Data Analysis	12.10.17
Note: Unlike UM Learn DropBox, Aplia does not save late assignments, so there will be no record that you completed the assignment (if late). All Aplia assignments are due by 11:45 pm CST , on the due date (Sunday).		

**Winter term Aplia schedule will provided in the new year

TOPIC SCHEDULE FOR FALL TERM

Below is a list of dates, topics and readings for the fall term. A list for the winter term will be distributed in the new year.

Date(s)	Topic	Readings
September 7	Introduction and Orientation	
September 7 & 12	Science as a Way of Knowing	Lecture Unit 1 Chapter 1
September 14 & 19	Theory & Research	Lecture Unit 2 Chapter 2
September 21 & 26	Ethics	Lecture Unit 3 Chapter 3
September 28 & October 3	Causation	Lecture Unit 4 Chapter 4
October 5	**No class (term break)**	
October 10	Unit Test 1	Lecture Units: 1, 2, 3 & 4 Chapters: 1, 2, 3, & 4
October 12, 17	Measurement	Lecture Unit 5 Chapter 5
October 19, 24	Sampling	Lecture Unit 6 Chapter 6
October 26, 31	Quantitative Research Designs: Experiments	Lecture Unit 7 Chapter 7
November 2, 7, 9	Quantitative Research Designs: Survey	Lecture Unit 8 Chapter 8
November 14	Unit Test 2	Lecture Units: 5, 6, 7 & 8 Chapters 5, 6, 7, & 8
November 16	Non-Reactive Methods	Lecture Unit 9 Chapter 9
November 21, 23, & 28	Qualitative Designs: Field Research and Qualitative Interviewing	Lecture Units 10 & 11 Chapters 10 & 11
November 30	Qualitative Data Analysis	Lecture Unit 12 Chapter 13
December 5	Review	
December 7	Unit Test 3	Lecture Units: 9, 10, 11, & 12 Chapters: 9, 10, 11 & 13

First class of the winter term is January 4, 2018.

Note: The topic schedule for the *winter term* will be provided to you early in the new year.