

**University of Manitoba**  
**Department of Sociology**  
**SOC 2290 A01**  
**INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS**  
**Fall & Winter Terms 2014-15 (6 credit hours)**

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**Office:** 323 Isbister Building  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
**Classroom:** Duff Roblin P230 (Fall); 303 Tier (Winter)  
**Timeslot:** M/W/F 9:30-10:20am

**Required Textbook:**

Babbie, Earl and Benaquisto, Lucia. (2014). *Fundamentals of Social Research*, (Third Canadian Edition). Toronto, ON: Nelson.

There is a companion website for the textbook. It contains a number of useful features to help facilitate your learning in the course including study flashcards, web quizzes, and links to various web resources for students. It is located at:  
[www.nelson.com/babbie3ce](http://www.nelson.com/babbie3ce)

**Supplemental Text:**

Roberts, L., Kampen, K. & Peter, T. (2009). *The Statistics Coach: Learning Through Practice*. Oxford University Press. (not required but some students may find it helpful in second term)

**Please note:** The *i>clicker* response unit is available at the Bookstore. Students must register with the system (either on-line or in class) in order to be awarded the participation grade. This system will be used consistently throughout the term 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 participation mark is worth 5% of your total grade for the course based on a combination of participation and the number of correct answers provided by the student during the term. This formula will be clearly explained on the first day of class.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

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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: a) undertake their own research projects, and/or b) 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 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 and labs is likely to create cumulative difficulties with mastery of this material, especially in the later stages of the course.

### **Course Reading Requirements for Fall Term:**

Unit Test 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4

Unit Test 2: Chapters 5, 6 (pp.159-171; 179-199), 7 & 8

Unit Test 3: Chapters 9, 10, 11 & 13

*Note:* The reading requirements for the tests in the *second term* will be provided to you early in the new year. The second half of this course is primarily concerned with basic methods and techniques for data analysis and interpretation, which are not extensively discussed in the course textbook. Consequently, class attendance is crucial.

Study questions will be posted on D2L.

### **Lab Component:**

There is a mandatory lab component to this course, which comprises 25 percent of your final grade in the course. You must receive a passing grade of 50% or higher in the lab component. You should all have registered for a lab section. You will all be receiving an outline for the lab component when you attend your first lab session.

### **COURSE EVALUATION**

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**Participation:** This 5% portion of your grade is calculated based on class attendance and the answers you provide using the i>licker response unit throughout both semesters. The i>licker questions are asked based on the topic of the lecture, more details are provided in class

**Tests:** 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 each test will occupy two class periods and will include both multiple choice and written/calculation responses. The tentative test dates and contribution toward your final grade are as follows:

	<i>Week</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Test 1	Week 5 (October 6 & 8)	12%
Test 2	Week 10 (November 12 & 15)	12%
Test 3	Week 13 (December 1 & 3)	12%
Test 4	Week 19 (February 11 & 13)	17%
Test 5	Week 25 (April 8 & 10)	17%

*Note:* During tests, only a basic, non-programmable calculator is permitted; 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 (Thursday December 4<sup>th</sup> and Monday April 13<sup>th</sup>).** 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.

**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.*

Unit Test marks will be posted on the course’s D2L companion site.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION**

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### **Class will not be held on the following dates:**

October 13 (Thanksgiving Day Holiday);  
February 16-20 – Mid term break

### **Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline Date:**

March 19, 2015

### **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.

## **Topic Schedule for Fall Term**

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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.

First Day of Class: September 5  
Introduction and Orientation

Week 1: September 8-12  
Lecture Theme: Science as a Way of Knowing  
Readings: Chapter 1

Week 2: September 15-19  
Lecture Theme: Theory Construction  
Readings: Chapter 2

Week 3: September 22-26  
Lecture Theme: Ethics  
Readings: Chapter 3

Week 4: September 29-October 3  
Lecture Theme: Causation  
Readings: Chapter 4

**Week 5: October 6 & 8: Unit Test 1**

Week 6: October 10, 15 & 17 (No class on Oct 13)  
Lecture Theme: Measurement  
Readings: Chapter 5

Week 7: October 20-24  
Lecture Theme: Quantitative Research Designs  
Readings: Chapter 7

Week 8: October 27-31  
Lecture Theme: Sampling  
Readings: Chapter 6 (pp.159-171; 179-199)

Week 9: November 3-7  
Lecture Theme: Survey Research  
Readings: Chapter 8

**Week 10: November 12 & 15 Unit Test 2**  
(November 10 -TBA)

Week 11: November 17-21  
Lecture Themes: Qualitative Designs: Field Research and Qualitative Interviewing  
Readings: Chapters 10 & 11

Week 12: November 24-28  
Lecture Themes: Unobtrusive Research & Qualitative Data Analysis  
Readings: Chapters 9 & 13

**Week 13: December 1 & 3: Unit Test 3 (Monday and Wednesday)**

First class of the winter term is January 7, 2015.