

The University of Manitoba

Department of Sociology

SOC 2290 Introduction to Research Methods, Summer 2013

10:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., Monday to Friday

Section A01, CRN 30150

Room 202 Isbister

Instructor: Karen Kampen

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Credit hours: 6

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Office Hours: By appointment

* Please consider my door open any time. I am normally in the office every day.

Materials

Required textbook: Babbie, Earl and Lucia Benaquisto (2014). *Fundamentals of Social Research* (3rd Canadian edition). Scarborough: Thomson/Nelson.

Recommended textbook: Kranzler, John H. (2011). *Statistics for the Terrified* (5th edition). Toronto: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Course Objectives and Description

"Supposing is good, but finding out is better." - Mark Twain

Has the number of children gunned down doubled every year since 1950? Is Canada's child poverty rate only 10%, or is it closer to 17%? Who decides what sorts of people meet the definition of "mentally ill"? How can we know the truth about anything? This course takes an approach that not only provides you with the fundamentals of social research and statistics, but also aims to help you critically sort through the masses of information that all of us are bombarded with daily.

The above quotation has two implications. First, sociology is often assumed to be based upon "common sense". However, this is far from the truth, and social research has often dispelled commonly held myths about our world. Second, studying research methods is ideally a process of "learning by doing" rather than passively absorbing information. With these ideas in mind, the central aim of this course is to help students learn what social research methods are and how to apply them, both as consumers of research as well as potential producers of research.

While the prospect of taking Research Methods tends to be daunting to many students, if approached in a systematic and lively manner, it can be enjoyable. I had a lot of fun putting this course together, and I hope that you will enjoy it.

Classroom Format

- A thematic lecture based upon on the relevant material, or occasional films
- Conceptual and statistical hands-on exercises that apply lecture material
- Substantial class time will be set aside for assistance with lab assignments

Evaluation

1) Unit tests (18.75% per test x 4 tests = 75%). Each test will be based upon the Babbie and Benquisto textbook readings as well as in-class material. Students who opt to purchase the Krantzler text might find it very useful in helping them to understand statistics but they will not be tested directly on it. Tests are not strictly cumulative, but you will need to remember earlier concepts in order to comprehend later ones. Test format may include a variety of formats such as multiple choice and short-answer questions. Please note that during tests, *only a basic, non-programmable calculator (and not iPhones or similar electronic devices) is permitted for use during the test.*

Test #1 (Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5): **May 13**

Test #2 (Chapters 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11): **May 27**

Test #3 (Chapter 14 & 15, & Chapter 16 pp. 436-443): **June 10**

Test #4 (Chapter 16 pp. 443-459, & Chapter 6): **June 25**

2) Lab Component (25%). This course has a mandatory lab component. Evaluation will be based upon two assignments. Each assignment is worth 12.5% of your final grade. The first assignment (due on **May 29**) will involve collecting your own data. These data will be collected in class. Due to the substantial course weight of this assignment, it is recommended that students who miss all of the in-class data collection withdraw from the course. There will be no additional opportunities to collect these data. The second assignment (due on **June 25**, with a proposal worth 20 points due on **May 29**) will involve analysing an existing set of data. Both assignments must be submitted in hard copy unless otherwise specified. The policy for all sections of SOC 2290 dictates that **students must receive a passing grade of 50% or higher in the lab component in order to pass this course**. Your grade in the lab is independent of your grade in the remaining course component. Students who fail the lab will fail this course and will be required to retake the entire course (not just the lab component) in order to obtain credit for SOC 2290.

Policy on Missed Tests, Late Assignments, and Class Absences

Attendance in class is required in order to receive credit. Please take some time to review the relevant section of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar (General Academic regulations -> Attendance and Withdrawal) that discusses attendance and begins with: “Regular attendance is expected of all students in all courses.” The instructor reserves the right to deny marks to students who miss class without documented medical or compassionate reasons. Any student may be required to withdraw from the course for persistent absences. Attendance may be recorded at any time and for the purposes of assessing marks and participation. In particular, there are no make-up dates for assignment data collection, nor any acceptable alternate means of collecting our data outside of classroom time.

There are no individual make-up tests in this course. Any student who misses a test for any reason will have the option of answering a series of questions in lieu thereof, on a single date during the Final Examination Period. Questions may be based upon any of the material covered in the course, and may be in any format (e.g. multiple choice, essay, short-answer.) Students who miss more than one test will be asked to withdraw from the course.

Late assignments are accepted, but in fairness to fellow classmates, they are subject to a **10% (i.e. 2.5% of course mark) per day penalty including weekends.** Students who request extensions for documented medical or compassionate reasons must submit to me their current assignment draft to me along with a written request for an extension, and may be required to apply to the Faculty of Arts for an Incomplete in the course.

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.

Grade Distribution

| | |
|---------|----|
| 90-100% | A+ |
| 80-89% | A |
| 75-79% | B+ |
| 70-74% | B |
| 65-69% | C+ |
| 60-64% | C |
| 50-59% | D |
| <50% | F |

Please note that the *University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307* requires a "post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will ensure an 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 this equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, or 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.

Companion Website

Where possible, practice test questions and skeleton lecture notes will be available on D2L (<https://universityofmanitoba/desiretolearn.com>). Test and assignment marks will normally be posted there.

Additional Considerations

- Students are expected to read the relevant chapter before class, and to participate in any in-class exercises.
- 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.
- In accordance with university policy, term work (assignments and tests) will be held for four months from the end of the final examination period. At the end of that period, these works become property of the Faculty of Arts and will be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.
- A final note: U1 recommends that for every hour spent in the classroom, students should spend two hours on independent study. *You should be prepared for a commitment of 30 hours per week in order to be successful in this course.*

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- Note: The standard themes used in all sections of SOC 2290 are listed on the following calendar, and are accompanied by the relevant chapter reading(s). We will spend the first term focusing on research design and general modes of observation, while in the second term we will delve into statistics.

| May 2013 | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 Science as a Way of Knowing (Ch. 1) | 7 Doing Social Research (Ch. 2) | 8 Research Design and Causation (Ch. 4) | 9 Principles in Social Science Research (Ch. 5) | 10 Principles in Social Science Research, continued (Ch. 5) |
| 13 Test #1 | 14 Unobtrusive Research (Ch. 9) & Begin Assignment #1: Pre-testing | 15 Assignment #1: Data Collection | 16 Assignment #1: Data Collection & SPSS Lab | 17 Assignment #1: SPSS Lab Day |
| 20 (NO CLASS) | 21 Experimental Research (Ch. 3 & 7) | 22 Survey Research (Ch. 8) | 23 Survey Research (Ch. 8) | 24 Qualitative Research (Ch. 10, 11) |
| 27 Test #2 | 28 <i>Begin Assignment #2</i> | 29 Assignment #1 DUE; Assig. #2 Proposal DUE | 30 (NO CLASS) | 31 (NO CLASS) |
| June 2013 | | | | |
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| 3 Intro. to Statistics (Ch. 14, pp. 394-402) | 4 Measures of Central Tendency & Dispersion (Ch. 14, pp. 403-411) | 5 Normal Curve & z-scores (no readings) | 6 Bivariate relationships; Lambda & Gamma (Ch. 14, pp. 411-420; Ch. 16, pp. 437-443) | 7 Multivariate relationships & the Elaboration Model (Ch. 15) |
| 10 Test #3 | 11 Work on Assignment #2 | 12 Work on Assignment #2 | 13 Work on Assignment #2* | 14 Work on Assignment #2 |
| 17 Correlation & Regression (Ch. 16, pp. 443-447) | 18 Introduction to Inference: Sampling and probability (Ch. 6) | 19 Sampling & probability (Ch. 6) | 20 Inferential statistics: Chi-square, t-test (Ch. 16, pp. 447-459) | 21 Work on Assignment #2 |
| 24 Course Review (time permitting) | 25 Test #4; Assignment #2 DUE | 26 (NO CLASS) | 27 (FINAL EXAM PERIOD) | 28 (FINAL EXAM PERIOD) |

** Please bring something on which to save your work (e.g. a Memory Key), as well as a valid INS userid and password. If you do not have these yet, you can get them at www.umanitoba.ca/claimid. Please test them out before the lab to ensure that they are in working order. You will not be able to access SPSS without them.*

*** Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline: June 13, 2013 ***