

**SOCIOLOGY 312: ELEMENTS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
FALL 2012: SECTION 001**

Lecture:	Mon./Wed. 1:00 to 2:40
Lecture location:	Faner 1226
Instructor:	Justin A. Martin
Office:	Faner 3421
Telephone:	618.453.2494 (department)
E-mail:	justin.martin@siu.edu
Office Hours:	Mon., Wed.: 9:00am – 12:45pm Other times by appointment

Catalog Description:

The student is introduced to a variety of research methods in the social sciences including use of the library, techniques of observations, and elementary steps in quantitative measurements and analysis. Satisfies the CoLA Writing-Across-the-Curriculum requirement.

You will be exposed to and conduct various qualitative and quantitative methods of social research in the context of sociological substantive interests. You will engage your sociological imagination to produce a working document useful in the completion of a research project. I have designed this course to familiarize you with the various methods of research used in the sociological discipline. Our emphasis will be on demonstrating knowledge of these methods through praxis. We have the following as our goals:

1. To portray the gap between ideas and reality, or “Why do sociological research?”
2. To illustrate the nature of deductive and inductive methods, or “How do scientists do research?”
3. To convey the need for integrity and honesty, or “Can you prove *anything* with sociological research?”
4. To develop the understanding that research is a tough intellectual task, or “Is there a free lunch?”
5. To outline the limitations of science, or “What questions can we answer?”
6. To analyze the indirectness of measurement, or “Can people be treated as numbers?”
7. To identify causal relations, or “What causes what?”
8. To describe the problem of generalizability, or “Where do the findings apply?”

Course Content and Requirements:

I have designed this course to answer the questions posed by our eight goals and to help you better understand how social researchers conceive of and implement research designs. You will learn to become a better consumer of sociological studies, and, ideally, you will use the knowledge gained as you further your educational or vocational careers. The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable revisions to this syllabus as he deems necessary.

Grading Criteria:

Your grade for this course will be determined based on the following criteria:

Participation & Class leadership	40 pts. total
Assignments	50 pts. total
Final Paper	<u>55 pts.</u>
	145 total points

Students who earn 90% or more of the points will earn an “A.”

Students who earn 80% to 89% of the points will earn a “B.”

Students who earn 70% to 79% of the points will earn a “C.”

Students who earn 60% to 69% of the points will earn a “D.”

Students who earn less than 60% of the points will earn an “F.”

Attendance & Participation:

Because a major basis for this class is discussion, your attendance is key to the smooth functioning of the class and the benefit of your peers. At this point in your academic career, you should not need to be told that your attendance at every class meeting is expected. Beyond merely attending class sessions, you are expected to participate in the discussions, present your research findings, and participate in peer reviews. Further, for at least one of the assignments you will work in a group, and when assigned a reading to discuss, you will most likely have at least one partner. You are expected to make a positive contribution to all group and classroom work. Your class participation grade will include informal presentations of the work you have completed on your assignments, your final research proposal, and your leadership of the class during class discussions. More information on my expectations for your presentations and class-discussion leadership will be forthcoming; however, let me state that at this point in your academic career it is expected that you are becoming more confident in the presentation of your work. Exercising this skill will be of benefit to you in your academic and/or vocational careers.

For each class meeting we will engage in a classroom discussion of the assigned readings for that day. We will divide the presentations of the readings at the beginning of the term. On your assigned days you are expected not only to have read the readings carefully but also have constructed at least three substantive and/or critical discussion questions from the reading. Please come to class prepared with an outline of the reading to be distributed to your peers. You will be responsible for leading the class in an informed and engaging discussion; however, you should expect that everyone else in the room has done the reading as well. Therefore, it is not necessary that you detail your presentation. You are expected to discuss and foster discussion with your peers the highlights and lowlights of the reading. The following guidelines may assist you in developing your discussion outline.

- Your job is to develop at least three possible discussion questions that you can discuss in groups to help everyone understand the main points of the assigned reading. Don't worry about the small details. Your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and to share reactions to the text. Be prepared with your own brief answers to your questions. You will be responsible for facilitating the group discussion.

- Your job is to locate a few special passages that are important in the reading assignment. These may give key information, back up the information given, or summarize the author's key points. They might also be passages that you find interesting for some reason, or are controversial or contradictory with other passages or other information learned in class.
- Your job is to challenge the ideas in the article by developing a list of critical, thoughtful questions and arguments that might be raised by critics of the authors or by those with different points of view.

Assignments

In addition to the final paper, five assignments will be due throughout the semester (see course schedule). These assignments are intended to give you experience with the various research methods we will be discussing in class. We will be working on constructing and designing the appropriate instruments for you to use in your assignments in class; however, you are expected to carry out the assignment on your own time. In addition to informally presenting your findings and methods in class, you will be required to write a two to four page report of the method you used, the challenges you faced, and the results of your exercise. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Final Paper:

The final paper for this course is a research proposal, which typically represents the first three sections of a research report: an introduction, a review of the literature, and the research design. In contrast to the assignment reports, your final paper is intended to be polished and closely resemble a published research report as possible. We will be working on drafts of your research proposal throughout the semester. The proposal should be based on a research question of your choosing and be one which reflects your sociological interests. More details and discussions in class of my expectations will be forthcoming.

Because we will be working on this paper throughout the semester, I have high expectations for the final draft. In addition to the University's statement on Ethical Conduct and Plagiarism, let me state emphatically that academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Evidence of plagiarism in your final research paper will result in a failing grade for the paper, and, therefore, for the course.

Emergency Procedures:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus and is available on the BERT website at www.siu.edu/emergency.bert.html, Department of Public Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building

Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Statement:

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of your instructor as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted during the first week of the semester along with a request for special accommodations. Contact SIU Disability Support Services (DSS) to facilitate requests:

Woody Hall B-150, Carbondale IL 62901, Mail Code: 4705. DSSsiu@siu.edu

Phone: 618.453.5738 Fax: 618.453.5700 TTY: 618.453.2293

Acknowledging Differences:

During the semester, students will have the opportunity to share thoughts, opinions, and beliefs about their life experiences. The differences in these perspectives that each student brings to the discussion will add to the richness of the course. Students should communicate in ways that acknowledge and respect such differences. While it is natural and expected that many of us will have differing opinions, we must always respect our fellow students in the class and the opinions they hold. I expect and encourage students to be critical of each other's ideas, but it is unacceptable to be dismissive or and/or combative with other students in the class.

Classroom Decorum:

I have an obligation to maintain a classroom environment that allows students to learn to the best of their abilities. While I encourage students to ask questions and make comments in class, I will not tolerate or permit behavior that is disruptive, distracting, or demeaning. If you cell phone must be on for medical, child care, or other reasons, please set it to silent or vibrate.

Ethical Conduct:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but also to the development of ethically sensitive and responsible persons. The university seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and policies governing individual conduct that encourages independence and maturity. By accepting membership in this university, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change. All rights and responsibilities exercised within this academic environment shall be compatible with these principles. Acts of Academic Dishonesty are a breach of the student conduct code. Dishonesty includes: 1) Plagiarism, representing the work of another as one's own work; 2) Preparing work for another that is to be used as that person's own work; 3) Cheating by any method or means; 4) Knowingly and willfully falsifying or manufacturing scientific or educational data and representing the same to be the result of scientific or scholarly experiment or research; 5) Knowingly furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters; 6) Soliciting, aiding, abetting,

concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code. If you are in doubt or have questions regarding behavior that may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with your instructor or refer to the SIU Handbook, available at: <http://www.siu.edu/~policies/policies/conduct.html>

Required Course Materials:

Bearman, Peter. 2005. *Doormen*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0-226-03970-1.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. ISBN: 978-0-7619-7353-9

Czaja, Ronald and Johnny Blair. 2005. *Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures*. Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge. ISBN: 0-7619-2746-8

Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2011. *Constructing Social Research*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge. ISBN: 978-1-4129-6018-2

D2L = Additional readings will be announced in class and posted on D2L to be read as assigned and discussed in class

Recommended for further reading:

American Sociological Association. 2007. *Style Guide*. 3rd Ed. Washington DC: American Sociological Association. (Major components online at: <http://www.asanet.org/Quick%20Style%20Guide.pdf>.)

Bart, Pauline and Linda Frankel. 1986. *The Student Sociologist's Handbook*. 4th ed. New York: Random House.

Becker, Howard S. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bernard, H. Russell. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 2nd ed. Walnut Creek CA: AltaMira Press.

Galvan, Jose L. 2006. *Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 3rd ed. Glendale CA: Pyczak Publishing.

Kutsche, Paul. 1998. *Field Ethnography: A Manual for Doing Cultural Anthropology*. Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall.

Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. New York: Wadsworth.

Turabian, Kate L. 1996. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.)

TOPICS & READINGS

Week One: Introduction

8/20 Syllabus, division of labor, et al.
8/22 Ragin & Amoroso, Chapter 1 & 2

Week Two:

8/27 Ragin & Amoroso Chapter 3,
Selections from *Craft of Research* on D2L

8/29 D2L Weber, Max. "Science as Vocation" *From Max Weber*

Week Three: Ethics

9/3 **Labor Day: No Class**
9/5 Humphreys, Laud. 1970. "Tearoom Trade."
Ragin & Amoroso Chapter 4
IRB Certificate & Application due

Week Four: Scientific Epistemology

Research topic due
9/10 Selection from Kuhn: Chapters 3, 6
9/12 Selection from Kuhn: Chapter 11

Week Five: Qualitative Methods, Epistemology

9/17 Selection from Becker: Epistemology & Tricks of the Trade
9/19 Ragin & Amoroso: Chapter 5

Week Six: Qualitative Methods, Fieldwork

Introduction due
9/24 Selection from Emerson: Introduction
9/26 Selection from Emerson: Geertz & Goffman

Week Seven: Qualitative Methods, Analysis Part 1

Literature review articles due
10/1 Charmaz, Chs. 1 & 2
10/3 Charmaz, Chs. 3 & 4;

Altheide, David. "Ethnographic Content Analysis."

Participant Observation assignment due

Week Eight:

10/8

Fall Break

10/10

No Class

Week Nine:**Qualitative Methods, Analysis Part 2****Literature review due**

10/15

Charmaz, Chs. 5 & 6

10/17

Charmaz, Chs. 7 & 8

Content Analysis assignment due

Week Ten:**Qualitative Methods, Example**

10/22

Bearman, Chapters 1-5

10/24

Bearman, Chapters 6-8 & Appendix

Interview assignment due

Week Eleven:**Comparative & Unobtrusive Methods**

10/29

Ragan & Amoroso, Chapter 6;

Altheide, David. 1987 "Ethnographic Content Analysis." *Qualitative Sociology* 10(1):65-78.

10/31

Lee, Juliet P., Roland S. Moore, and Scott E. Martin. 2003.

"Unobtrusive observations of Smoking in Urban California Bars."

Journal of Drug Issues 33(4):983-999.;Bridges, J. S. 1993. "Pink or Blue: Gender-stereotypic Perceptions of Infants as Conveyed by Birth Congratulations Cards." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 17:193-205.

Week Twelve:**Quantitative Methods, Survey Design Part 1****Research design due**

11/5

Ragan & Amoroso, Chapter 7;

Czaja & Blair, Chapter 1

11/7

Czaja & Blair, Chapters 2, 3

Week Thirteen:**Quantitative Methods, Survey Design Part 2**

11/12

Czaja & Blair, Chapters 4, 5, 6

11/14

Czaja & Blair, Chapters 7 & 9

Survey assignment due

Week Fourteen:

11/19

No Class

11/21

No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Week Fifteen:**Experimental Design & Action Research**

- 11/26** Feder, Jolin and Feyerherm. 2000. "Lessons from Two Randomized Experiments in Criminal Justice Settings." *Crime & Delinquency* 46(3):380-400.
- Kelly, Moen & Tranby. 2011. "Changing Workplaces to Reduce Work-Family Conflict: Schedule Control in a White Collar Organization." *American Sociological Review* 76(2):265-290.
- 11/28** Melrose, M. J. 2001. "Maximizing the Rigor of Action Research: Why Would You Want To? How Could You?" *Field Methods* 13(2):160-180.
- Couch, S. 2004. "A Tale of Three Discourses: Doing Action Research in a Research Methods Class." *Social Problems* 51(1):146-153.
- Daniel, Francois-Joseph. 2011. "Action Research and Performativity: How Sociology Shaped a Farmer's Movement in the Netherlands." *Sociologia Ruralis* 51(1):17-34.

Week Sixteen:
12/3

Mixed Methods & Internet Research

Waskul & Douglass. 1996. Ethics & Internet Research;

Fontes, Thiago and Michelle O'Mahony. 2008. In-Depth Interviewing by Instant Messaging. *Social Research Update* 53.;

Grinyer, Anne. 2007. "The Ethics of Internet Usage in Health and Personal Narratives Research." *Social Research Update* 49.

12/5

Rank, M. R. 1992. "The Blending of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Understanding Childbearing Among Welfare Recipients." In *Qualitative Methods in Family Research*, Gilgun, Daly and Handel, eds. Newbury Park: Sage.;

Northcote, J. 2011. "Young Adults' Decision Making Surrounding Heavy Drinking: A Multi-staged Model of Planned Behavior." *Social Science & Medicine* 72:2020-2025.;

Wrap up course.