

Elements of Sociological Research (Soc 312) Spring, 2012

Professor: Muhammed Asadi

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Office Hours: 1:45-2:45pm M,T,W and by appointment.

Class Time and Location: Monday and Wednesday, 3-4:40p, Communications 1020

Sociological processes affect the scientific research endeavor and the methodology chosen and applied in doing research. Science itself, as a mode of knowledge acquisition, cannot be understood without reference to the society in which it becomes ascendant. We will look at the objective and subjective aspects of doing sociological research and go over the theoretical and conceptual foundations of research and the procedures that are used in the various phases of the research process. The key to sociological research, which historically was rooted in studying social problems, is in the empirical validity of measures, their reliability and the resulting replication that ensures that people can understand and report social phenomenon without actually living every situation, even though such 'living' experiences might add depth to sociological understanding and inform research interests.

Texts Required

The Basics of Social Research, 3rd edition, by Earl Babbie (cheap copies are available online. You must have the book by end of the 4th week of class)

The Logical of Survey Analysis, 1968, by Rosenberg. (pdf copy of section you need is available free online at <http://researchmethods.asadi.org>)

On Intellectual Craftsmanship (<http://craftsmanship.asadi.org>), online power point use internet explorer (Firefox does not work with this).

Readings Assignments

Students are responsible for all the contents of the materials assigned as well as all lecture material. The following chapters will be covered/assigned. One or more chapters will be covered in each class session.

Chapters

1. Human Inquiry and Science
2. Paradigms, Theory and Research.
3. The Nature of Causation/causality and Chapter One from Rosenberg
4. The Ethics and Politics of Social Research
5. Research Design
6. Conceptualization, operationalization and measurement

First Examination: February 27, 2011 (tentative)

7. Indexes, Scales, and Typologies
8. The logic of Sampling
9. Experiments
10. Survey Research

Second Examination: March 28, 2012 (tentative)

11. Field Research
12. Unobtrusive Research/Secondary Data
13. Evaluation Research
14. Qualitative Data Analysis
15. Quantitative Data Analysis
16. On Intellectual Craftsmanship

Final Exam: May 8, 2012, 5:50-7:50pm

Examinations: Three examinations, objective type, will be administered. They are worth 75% of your grade (25% apiece). Your research project, a 15 page paper, following the research design we discuss in class, is worth 20% of your grade. Attendance is mandatory and together with the surprise quizzes and worth 5% of your grade. Two unexcused absences are allowed, after that each unexcused absence takes half a percent off your grade up to and including 5%.

Quizzes: You may have surprise quizzes, so come to class with your reading for the day done.

Assignments:

Research Project: Each student will be required to conduct a research project by applying the steps of the scientific research process and design. Research project outline will be provided. The project is due by April 17, 2011

Extra Credit Article Review: Students can write a critical evaluation (review) of a scientific article chosen from a peer-reviewed journal (go to jstor.org) by applying the scientific process for a 3% extra credit, added to the grade calculation. Article Review is due April 17, 2011

All Assignments, including examinations, are due on the scheduled dates. Late reports or make-ups of any kind will be considered incomplete for grading purposes.

Grading/Weights: Weights are allocated as follows:

Three examinations	75%
Attendance *	5%
Research Project	20%
Article Review	3% (extra credit)

The grading scale for this course will be based on the following percentage distribution.

A = 90+, B= 79-89, C=69-78, D < 68

Attendance and Make-ups

Students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. Leaving class early will be counted as an absence.

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, available on the BERT'S website at www.bert.siu.edu, 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.

NOTE: If it is deemed necessary at some point in time, the professor, taking into consideration the students' views, may introduce some changes in this syllabus.

