Course Description and Course Objective:

This is the first in the Anthropology-Sociology two-course sequence in Research Methods. This course provides a general introduction to the research process by addressing issues on research design, data collection, and basic analysis of data and interpretation of results. We will focus on two methodological approaches, surveys and in-depth interviews. During this course, students will read materials describing and employing these methods; practice conducting social research; and do presentations and write papers on consuming, conducting, and critiquing social research.

Readings


Selected articles available on Academic Volume

I will ask you to prepare ahead of time for the readings that will be specifically discussed in class, but I expect you always to be prepared to discuss the weekly readings in relation to one another and to the lecture material.

Grading

Participation 10%
Lab Exercises 25%
Presentation/Discussion 10%
Literature Review 30%
Application and Analysis 25%

Grading Scale

A+ 99-100   B+ 87-90   C+ 77-79   D+ 67-69   F 59 or lower
A  95-98     B  83-86   C  73-76   D  63-66
A- 91-94     B- 80-82   C- 70-72   D- 60-62
Course Requirements

1. **Attendance**: You are expected to attend and participate every class period. However, you can miss up to 2 days of class for emergencies or illnesses with no penalty. For **every class missed after two absences**, your final grade will be reduced a third of a letter grade (e.g. four absences, grade reduced from a B+ to a B-).

2. **Class Participation**: Class discussions are an important element in this course. What you get out of the course is as much dependent upon the preparation and participation of you and your classmates as it is upon my instruction. What you learn from one another can be as valuable as the lecture and reading materials. You will also complete class exercises and connect them to course material. You will be graded on the **level and quality** of your participation in these activities.

3. **Lab Exercises**: The lab exercises will give you a chance to apply and practice the concepts and methods we have discussed in class. Some of the lab exercises will provide you with an introduction to data analysis with computers and the opportunity to familiarize yourself with SPSS, a common statistical package for surveys social science research. Other exercises will give you experience in writing in-depth interview questions, conducting interviews, and analyzing the qualitative data. These exercises will require you to accomplish certain tasks and to do short write-ups about them. Lab exercises will be completed outside of class, and they will be due by the end of each week that they are assigned. **Throughout the semester, there will be 8-10 lab exercises.**

4. **Presentation/Discussion**: Each student will do 1 class presentation/discussion. Each student will choose a social science research article from the *Sociological Abstracts* database. You will summarize and critique the articles in your presentations and lead class discussion on the related methodological issues. **One to two students will present each class period during the first half of the semester, between September 21st and October 12th.** You will sign up for presentation dates; guidelines for the presentations/discussions will be handed out in class.

5. **Literature Review**: Each student will develop a research question that they want to explore based on their interests. Students will use *Sociological Abstracts* and other related academic databases to find peer-reviewed, journal articles that have addressed their research question topic. **Before fall break, students will turn in descriptions of their research questions and their interests in addressing those questions; an annotated bibliography; and a detailed outline of their literature review. The final literature review will be due Friday, October 20th by 5pm.** Details about sources, organization, and format for the final literature review paper will be handed out in class.

6. **Application and Analysis Assignment**: Your final exam will be a take home assignment that will require you to apply the knowledge and skills you have obtained throughout the course to analyze and interpret social science data. This assignment will be **due on your final exam day, December 12th, by 8pm.**
1. Please avoid disrupting class by arriving late or leaving early.

2. You are responsible for all announcements and assignments made in class.

3. You are required to check your e-mail once a day for any updates from me.

4. If anyone has special needs that require modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements, please contact me in the beginning of the semester and provide documentation from disability services, so that suitable accommodations can be made.

5. Academic misconduct and dishonesty (such as cheating or plagiarism) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the Honor Code.

6. Please do not ask me any questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus.

**Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29, 31</td>
<td>What is Social Science Research?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Babbie 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esterberg 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5, 7, 12</td>
<td>Paradigms, Theory, and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Babbie 2</td>
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<td>Esterberg 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>LIBRARY DAY: Meet Darlene Brooks in Barrett Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 19, 21</td>
<td>Reading and Writing Social Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Babbie 15</td>
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<td>Esterberg 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 26, 28</td>
<td>The Ethics and Politics of Social Research</td>
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<td>Babbie 3</td>
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<td>Esterberg 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Sociological Association Code of Ethics (Esterberg, Appendix)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ellis: “Emotional and Ethical Quagmires in Returning to the Field”</td>
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<td>Allen: “Spies Like Us: When Sociologists Deceive Their Subjects”</td>
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<td>October 3</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
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<td>Babbie 4. pp. 86-89; 107-114</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 5, 10</td>
<td>The Logic of Sampling</td>
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<td>Babbie 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Causality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Babbie pp. 90-107</td>
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Pavalko and Artis: “Women’s Caregiving and Paid Work: Causal Relationships in Later Midlife”

Stack and Gundlach: “The Effect of Country Music on Suicide”

October 17  
**Fall Break**  
No Class

October 19, 24  
*Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement*  
Babbie 5

October 26  
*Indexes, Scales, and Typologies*  
Babbie 6

October 31  
*Survey Research*  
Babbie 9, Appendix G  
TBA

November 2, 7  
*Quantitative Data Analysis*  
Babbie 14, 16

November 9, 14  
*Qualitative Field Research*  
Babbie 10  
Esterberg, 5

November 16, 21  
*Qualitative Data Analysis*  
Babbie 13  
Esterberg,

November 23  
Thanksgiving Break  
No Class

November 28, 30  
*Qualitative Data Analysis*

Berkowitz and Padavic: “Getting a Man or Getting Ahead”

Nenga: “Social Class and Structures of Feeling in Women's Childhood Memories of Clothing, Food, and Leisure”

December 5  
**Standpoint Methodologies**

DeVault: “Talking Back to Sociology: Distinctive Contributions of Feminist Methodology”

Collins: “Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment”

December 12  
**Application and Analysis Assignment due by 8pm**