Course Description

Mandatory for all second year students in an Honors Specialization in Sociology, this course introduces students to the process, practice and methods used in investigating the social world. The different aspects of the research process will be covered. Key topics include theory and hypothesis formation, measurement, data collection, data analysis procedures, research ethics, and reporting of results. Students will learn to conduct both quantitative and qualitative sociological research and apply appropriate tools, software and techniques to the study of social phenomena. It is expected that students will gain practical research experience, critically analyzing past research and initiating and conducting new research.

The Department of Sociology requires that all sociology majors be exposed to social theory, statistics, and research methodology. Sociology 2206 is the introductory course in research methods and computers.

Prerequisite(s)
At least 60% in Sociology 1020 or 1021E

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or have written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Antirequisite(s)
The former Sociology 231, Social Work 2206A/B or the former 2205, Health Sciences 2801A/B or the former Health Science 2800.
Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Identify the core differences between qualitative and quantitative research and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each.
- Identify the most appropriate techniques and tools for studying specific social situations.
- Distinguish between poor and well-crafted research methods in sociology.
- Use SPSS to perform basic statistical analysis.
- Design a suitable research project that incorporates a proper hypothesis, literature review, and outline of methods.
- Thoughtfully analyze and evaluate published research from a methodological perspective.

Required Text(s)

Required Supplementary Readings
Occasionally additional readings will be assigned in addition to textbook chapters. All of these readings will be posted on the course website.

The following are additional materials that may be useful for students interested in reading from other sources/authors.


The Recommended SPSS Text is:

Method of Evaluation
Students will be evaluated based on assignments and exams.

Assignments, Mid-term and Final Exams

Midterm Test:
The midterm is worth 30% of the final mark and will be held on Monday, Oct. 20 at the beginning of class. The test will be a combination of a multiple choice quiz and short answer questions. It will cover only the material
from the beginning of the semester until the midterm. The materials will be drawn from the assigned readings and all material covered in class. The use of electronic devices is not permitted during exams.

Final Exam:
The final exam, worth 40% of the final mark, will be held during the December examination period (date and location TBA.) The final exam will focus on the last half of the semester, although some questions may be cumulative. The format will be similar to that of the midterm.

Research Assignment:
Three brief research assignments, worth 30%, is required for this course. These assignments will culminate into a type of Research Proposal.

Assignment #1:
The first assignment will consist of a problem statement for an interesting sociological topic, identification of your main variables and the statement of a hypothesis (5%).

Assignment #2:
For the second assignment, students will be required to locate 3 relevant research articles and write annotations for them (annotated bibliography). This will be followed by a paragraph that sums up their "literature." (10%)

Assignment #3:
For the third and final assignment, students will be expected to suggest a possible sample and research design, noting any ethical considerations. This assignment can be viewed as a first step in a future research project. (15%)

Detailed instructions on what is expected from students and how these assignments should be completed will be provided in class and online.

Evaluation Breakdown
The Grading scheme for this course will be as follows: Total 100%

Mid-term Exam: =30%
Assignment 1: =5%
Assignment 2: =10%
Assignment 3: =15%
Final Exam: = 40%

Grade Guidelines
Department of Sociology guidelines require a particular course grade distribution. For 2200-level courses, the course mean is to be between a 66-70%, and there are to be more B’s than A’s. This may require curving or otherwise adjusting your course grade. As much as possible, your earned course grade will be the grade you receive. Your final grade, for the most part, depends on your ranking relative to other students. Students who
require further clarification on their grades must wait at least 24 hours from the time they receive their assignments to contact me.

**How to Contact Me**

I will be available to respond to questions regarding the course, requirements and materials during office hours. You are also welcome to communicate with me through email. I request, however, that you refrain from emailing me with questions that have already being addressed online, by this course outline and in class. Only urgent enquiries will receive attention and a response within 48 hours of receipt. All non-urgent enquiries can be addressed in class or during office hours.

**How to get important information**

Sakai OWL (http://owl.uwo.ca) will be used to post course information, content, reminders, and important instructions regarding deadlines, expectations, requirements, etc. It is expected that you check OWL regularly to ensure that you are kept up to date on new and revised course content. During the course, I may post or email additional content and/or materials that may aid in your learning and understanding of course topics.

**Important Policies**

**Policies for Assignment Deadlines:**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on dates noted. Students must submit paper copies of their assignments in class. Late assignments will only be accepted without penalty with appropriate documentation. Assignments received after the due date will have their grade reduced by a rate of 10% per day.

**A Note on Plagiarism:**

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking:**

Students may be required to submit their assignments to turnitin.com on the class WebCT website after they are completed. These papers will be subject to submission for textual originality.

**Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:**

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.
**Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness**
Western’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at [https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm). Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: [http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html)

**Accessibility Options:**
Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

**Scholastic Offences**
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Mental Health**
Students who are in [emotional/mental distress](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/) should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.
# Course Schedule and Reading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Syllabus and Course Overview</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Doing Social Research: Linking Theory and Methods</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Doing Social Research: Linking Theory and Methods</td>
<td>Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Appendix B</td>
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<td>September 17</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>Designing a Study</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Appendix B</td>
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<td>September 24</td>
<td>Literature Review and Sources</td>
<td>Chapter 17 &amp; 18</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Quantitative Research Sampling</td>
<td>Chapter 3, Chapter 12</td>
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<td>October 1</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT#1 DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Sampling/Ethics in Social Research</td>
<td>Chapter 4, 5, 11</td>
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<td>October 8</td>
<td>Survey Research and Questions</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td>October 15</td>
<td>Other Sources of Data</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>MID TERM EXAM (IN CLASS)</td>
<td>All materials covered in class</td>
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<td></td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Computers and SPSS (LAB)</td>
<td>Appendix A</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Computers and SPSS (LAB)</td>
<td>Appendix A</td>
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<td></td>
<td>October 29</td>
<td>Using SPSS (LAB)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Chapter 8, Chapter 10</td>
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<td>November 5</td>
<td>Interviewing</td>
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<td>November 5</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE (IN CLASS)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Field Research and Ethnography</td>
<td>Chapter 6&amp;9, Chapter 16</td>
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<td>November 12</td>
<td>Content Analyses</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Historical Comparative Research</td>
<td>Handout</td>
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<td>November 19</td>
<td>Indigenous Methodologies</td>
<td>Handout</td>
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NB. All dates are approximations and may have to be adjusted

This timetable is a guideline and is subject to change!

**Please check the Sociology Department web site (http://sociology.uwo.ca/) for class cancellations or changes**

Expectations

1. Read the course syllabus and assignments carefully
2. Read OWL carefully – there will be a lot of relevant information on the course as well as important updates
3. You must write exams on scheduled days/times. There is no “ideal” time for an exam to be scheduled. Do not wait until the last minute to begin studying. Students will be entitled to write make up exams in exceptional circumstances only
4. If you require assistance with writing, please see the Writing Support Centre (http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/). Neither your TA nor I will edit assignments for you.