



Western University
SOCIOLOGY 2206b
Research Methods for Sociology
Winter 2017
Section 002
9 Jan. – 5 April 2017

Classes: Thursdays 6:30-9:30 PM Room: SSC 2020

Instructor: W. Marshall

Office Hours: Mon. 2:30 – 4 PM (other times by appointment)

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TAs: Xiangnan Chai, Gwynne Ng, Brendan Watts

Course Description:

An introduction to the research process and ethical dilemmas faced by sociologists, as well as a survey of the essential procedures used to collect sociological data, e.g. sampling, questionnaire design, and observational field research techniques. (3 hours, 0.5 course)

Mandatory for students registered in Year 2 of an [Honours Specialization](#) offered through the Dept. of Sociology.

Courses on the following anti-requisite list are treated as substitutions for this course as follows:

1. Students who have taken a course from the following anti-requisite list will need to replace Sociology 2206A/B Research Methods in Sociology with an additional 0.5 Sociology course at the 2200 level.
2. Students who have completed [Social Work 2207](#) or the former Social Work 2205 must replace both [Sociology 2205A/B Statistics for Sociology](#) and Sociology 2206A/B Research Methods in Sociology with 1.0 Sociology course(s) at the 2200 level.]

Antirequisite(s):

The former Sociology 231, [Social Work 2207](#) or the former Social Work 2205, [Health Sciences 2801A/B](#) or the former Health Sciences 2800.

Prerequisite(s):

At least 60% average in 1.0 from [Sociology 1020](#), [1021E](#), [1025A/B](#), [1026F/G](#), [1027A/B](#).

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The 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.

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. **It is strongly advised that students complete Soc2205 Statistics for Sociology before starting this course. Students need to have some familiarity with statistics before the completion of this course.**

During this course, the students will learn how to carry out a scientific investigation from the formulation of hypotheses, to the selection of an appropriate methodology, to the actual implementation of the study which yield data which can be analyzed using various quantitative and qualitative techniques.

The course can be divided into 3 major topics:

(1) The first part of this course offers an introduction to the philosophy of science, emphasizing the inter-relationships among theory, methods and statistics. This part of the course also covers the formulation of hypotheses and measurement strategies.

(2) The next part of the course will covers computers and their role in the sociological research process, specifically the pre-packaged program known as "SPSS" (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). This part of the course requires 'hands-on' use of a computer operating under Windows , and the software package SPSS for Windows. (This will normally be carried out by logging in at: myvlab.uwo.ca and then accessing the SPSS program.) It is expected that students have some familiarity with quantitative research statistics, as they will begin to use the SPSS program on their own, early in the course.

(2) The final section of the course covers social science research techniques, i.e. ways in which social scientists gather data, for example, survey designs, interviewing, field observation and experimental designs.

Course goals and objectives:

are based upon the premise that at the end of this course, students will be 'enlightened' consumers, as well as producers of Social Science research.

- They will be able to comprehend the methodology used in academic reports.
- They will be able to identify well-crafted research, and be able to offer constructive criticism of poor designs.
- They will be able to use SPSS for the analysis of large data sets.
- They will be able to differentiate between various qualitative and quantitative research strategies.
- They will be able to design a simple research project which incorporates the key components of a scientific investigation.

The required texts are:

BASICS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches
 (**Third Canadian edition**), by : W. Lawrence Neuman, Pearson Education-Allyn and Bacon, 2015.
 (**N** on the course readings) Cost : \$125.90
 (Older versions of the text may be used, but chapter titles and coverage will not be identical.)

The digital version is available from VitalSource (Rental cost approximately : \$77.95 US):

<https://www.vitalsource.com/products/basics-of-social-research-third-canadian-edition-lawrence-w-neuman-v9780205970094>

The SPSS text is:

William Wagner, **USING IBM SPSS STATISTICS FOR SOCIAL STATISTICS AND RESEARCH METHODS**, 5th ed., Sage Publications, 2015. (**W** on the course readings)
 (Any free Online SPSS tutorials/Study guides may be used by those trying to save money.)

Students should also review their knowledge of Statistics, and have available to them a statistics text book, preferably some version of: Joseph Healey, Statistics, A tool for Social Research, Wadsworth.

While no other books are required for this course, students are encouraged to refer to other texts when they find an especially interesting, or complicated topic, or as a source of additional review questions.

All of the following are excellent references, hat cover the same material as the text, but in other ways, which you may find more to your liking:

1. The Practice of Social Research
by: Earl Babbie, Wadsworth Publishing Co.
2. Methods of Social Research
by: K. Bailey, Free Press.
3. Survey Research , a computer-assisted introduction
by: William Sims Bainbridge, Wadsworth Publishing Co.
4. Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences
by: Bruce Berg, Allyn and Bacon Inc.

5. First Steps, A Guide to Social Research
by: Michael Del Balso and Alan Lewis, Nelson Pub.
6. Research Methods, Rules for Survey Design and Analysis
by: Winston Jackson, Prentice - Hall.
7. Doing Field Research
by: J. M. Johnson, Free Press.
8. Research Decisions, Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives
by: Ted Palys, Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich.
9. The Sociologist as Detective
by: William Sanders, Praeger Press.
10. The Research Craft
by: Williamson, Karp, Dalphin and Gray, Little - Brown and Company Ltd.

Style Manuals : (These are brief but useful manuals for students who are unsure of the techniques of essay writing, including the basics of referencing, punctuation and grammar.)

Whenever necessary page references, notes and bibliographies should be given in standard sociological format, e.g.

Johnson, William A, et al, The Sociology Student Writer's Manual (5th edition), Upper Saddle River, NJ, Pearson Education/ Prentice Hall, 2006.

Buckley, Joanne, Fit to Print, The Canadian Student's Guide to Essay Writing, Toronto : Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Northey, Margot and Lorne Tepperman, Making sense, A student's guide to writing and style (3rd ed), Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Finnbogason, Jack & Al Valleau, A Canadian Writer's Pocket Guide, ITP Nelson.

With the increase in access to computers and the Internet it is also suggested that students familiarize themselves with the following (Due to the rapid rate of change on the internet (almost daily), these are now all rather dated, but offer a good starting point nonetheless.)

- 1) Christine Hine, "Internet Research and Unobtrusive Methods" <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU61.pdf>
- 2) "Sociology Internet Guide" <http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/sociology/guide/index.html>
- 3) Doing Internet Research: critical issues and methods for examining the net,
Ed by: S.G. Jones, Sage Publications. (Portions available for free online.)

The grading scheme for this course will be as follows :

2 Assignments (@ 15 % each)	30%
Mid-term test (Saturday Feb. 11, 2017 – 9-11 AM in HSB 40).....	30%
Final examination (April : DTBA)	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Evaluation Breakdown

Assignments

In a course such as this, regular practise and feedback are the best ways to ensure that the student has mastered the material covered. This feedback will be accomplished, in part, through the two assignments. We may or may not discuss the assignments in class, but students can always meet with the teaching assistant or with the instructor to discuss them. Each assignment is worth 15 percent of your final grade, for a total of 30 percent. **YOU MUST HAND IN A HARD COPY OF THE ASSIGNMENT; ANY ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO (0).**

ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DATES NOTED BELOW. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PENALIZED AT THE RATE OF 10 PERCENT OF THE ASSIGNMENT VALUE PER DAY LATE. ANY ASSIGNMENT NOT RECEIVED WITHIN 5 DAYS OF THE DUE DATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED EXCEPT WITH APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION. Please read the “Official Information” at the end of this outline for more information.

While it is expected that students will discuss the assignments among themselves, all work submitted shall be the work of the individual student. Just as it is unacceptable to copy from published sources, copying another student’s work is unacceptable! Students who plagiarize each other’s work will receive a grade of zero.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Faculty mail boxes are inaccessible to undergrad students, thus assignments accepted outside of class time cannot be left in mailboxes or at the main office – students MUST use the Sociology drop box located opposite 5406 SSC.

Mid-term Test:

There will be one mid-term test on Saturday, February 11, 2017. The specific materials for which you are responsible for this test will be announced in class, but will likely include all that has been covered to that point in the course, lectures as well as text readings. The test is worth 30 percent of your course grade. The midterm test (as well as the Final exam) will be composed of multiple choice and true/false questions, covering theoretical constructs as well as applications. The tests are Scantron graded.

Scantron Exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams are subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Attendance and Classroom Environment

Regular class attendance is essential to learning at the university level, especially in a course like this one, where considerable practice of important concepts occurs in the classroom, and where each element of the course serves as a building block for what follows. I strongly encourage you to come to class regularly in order to maximize your opportunities to learn.

Final Examination

The final examination will be during the April exam period. It will be TWO hours in length and be in the same format as the mid-term test. The final exam is cumulative; students are responsible for ALL of the material in the course, although the emphasis on the final will be on the chapters covered after the mid-term test. The exam is worth 40 percent of the final grade.

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:

ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DATES NOTED IN BELOW. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PENALIZED AT THE RATE OF 10 PERCENT OF THE ASSIGNMENT VALUE PER DAY LATE. ANY ASSIGNMENT NOT RECEIVED WITHIN 5 DAYS OF THE DUE DATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED EXCEPT WITH APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION.

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:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations

Students are allowed to use calculators (but NOT computers) during the midterm test and Final exam.

“Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.”

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 www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

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

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 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: 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:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Readings

<u>WEEK OF:</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
Jan. 5	Science of Sociology	N, CH 1, 4
Jan. 12	Causal Modeling	N, CH 2
<u>(We suggest that you begin SPSS at this point!)</u>		
Jan. 19	Operationalization & Measurement (Reliability & Validity)	N, CH 5, 6
(Assignment #1 distributed; Due 2 Mar.)		
Jan. 26	Ethical & Political Issues	N, CH 3, ASA website
Feb. 2	Sampling	N, CH 7
Feb. 11- Saturday	9-11AM in HSB-40	<u>MID-TERM TEST</u>
Feb. 9	Qualitative Research	N, CH 10, 13, 15
Feb. 20 - 24	<u>READING WEEK</u>	
Feb. 16	Quantitative techniques	N, CH 11
Mar. 9	Computers and SPSS	W, CH 1-7
(Assignment #2 distributed; Due 23 Mar.)		
<u>March 7, 2017 – Last day to drop course without academic penalty</u>		
Mar. 16	Survey Research	N, CH 8
Mar. 23	Non-reactive research	N, CH 14 N, CH 14
Mar. 30	Interviewing Techniques, etc.	N, CH 12
April 6	Experiments, Evaluation, etc.	N, CH 9, 16
Apr. 7	CLASSES END	
April 9 – 30, 2017	FINAL EXAM PERIOD	

NB. All dates are only approximations, and may have to be adjusted.

In keeping with departmental grade guidelines, it is expected that the class average for this course will be in the range of 67 - 70 %. Should the final overall grades yield a value significantly outside of this range, grades will be adjusted to ensure an appropriate mean for the class.

THERE IS NO ROUTINE PROVISION FOR MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS, TESTS OR ASSIGNMENTS.