The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 3306A-002
Investigating the Social World: Quantitative Research
Fall/Winter Year
W 9:30-12:30; HSB-9

Instructor: Anders Holm, teaching assistant Tina Luu Ly
Office Hours: Monday 9-11 am.
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC SSC 5327

Email: aholm@uwo.ca

Course Description:
The goal of this course is to provide you with a sophisticated understanding of both evaluating and conducting quantitative social science research. This course tries to take a hands-on approach to learning. Basically, the course aims to give the student the ability to understand what statistical control means – looking at the relationship between two variables holding the level of a third variable constant. This is relevant when you e.g. want to compare wage rates between men and women holding qualifications constant; that is compare men and women with the same qualifications, even though the qualifications of the men and women in the population being studied are likely to be highly variable.

Prerequisite(s): Enrollment in Honors Specialization or Honors Double Major in the Department of Sociology with a minimum grade of 60% in both Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B.

Antirequisite(s): The former Sociology 3302A/B.

Learning Outcomes:
- Identify, analyze and evaluate a variety of theoretical perspectives in Sociology, and assess the conceptual differences among them.
- Apply theory and sociological research to interpret social events and practices
- Read, synthesize and evaluate theoretical arguments and published research from a critical perspective.
- Understand and demonstrate the competent use of different quantitative and research methodologies.
- Interpret the results of multivariate quantitative data analyses
- Write theoretically-informed papers that make a sustained, evidence-based, sociological argument, and present ideas and sociological concepts clearly.
Required Text(s):
Aneshensel, C.S. (2013). Theory-based data analysis for the social sciences. Sage. Required supplementary readings: Occasionally additional readings will be assigned throughout in addition to textbook chapters. All of these readings will be posted on the course website. More information will be provided in class.


Statistical Computing: The statistical computing for the course will be done using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and STATA. SPSS and STATA is available on computers located in the Social Science computing lab. There is some lab time set aside during class hours, but you will most likely need to spend a significant amount of your own time in the lab.

Method of Evaluation:
There will be one midterm test, student assignment and a final exam.

Evaluation Breakdown:
Midterm test 30% October 18th 2017
Student assignment 30% November 15th 2017
Final Examination 40% December exam period

How to Contact Me:
aholm@uwo.ca 519 6612111 ext 21111

How to get important information:
All course material except textbooks will be made available through OWL or provided in class.

Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:
Policies for Assignment Deadlines: Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (including weekends) except in the case of extreme and serious documented circumstances, discussed with me in advance and following the same procedures describe above related to missed exams. Please note that computer problems are not an excused circumstance. You are expected to follow good computer practices, including backing up your work.
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
Calculators and Crip sheets are allowed both during the midterm and the final exam.

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 (preliminary):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic Assignment</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13\textsuperscript{th} sept</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Theory based data analysis</td>
<td>Aneshensel, C1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20\textsuperscript{th} sept</td>
<td>Associations and relationships</td>
<td>Aneshensel C3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>27\textsuperscript{th} sept</td>
<td>Causal inference</td>
<td>Aneshensel C4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th} oct</td>
<td>Multiple linear regression</td>
<td>Aneshensel C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11\textsuperscript{th} oct</td>
<td>Fall reading week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18\textsuperscript{th} oct</td>
<td>Mid term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25\textsuperscript{th} oct</td>
<td>Sample weights</td>
<td>Aneshensel C6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} nov</td>
<td>Spuriousness and statistical control</td>
<td>Aneshensel C7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment handed out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8\textsuperscript{th} nov</td>
<td>Alternative explanations</td>
<td>Aneshensel C8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15\textsuperscript{th} nov</td>
<td>Statistical mediation</td>
<td>Aneshensel C9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment due!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>22\textsuperscript{th} nov</td>
<td>Statistical explanation in time, antecedent and consequent variables</td>
<td>Aneshensel C10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>29\textsuperscript{th} nov</td>
<td>Mechanisms and moderating variables</td>
<td>Aneshensel C11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>