Western University
SOCIOLOGY 3306B
Investigating the Social World: Quantitative Research
Winter 2018
Wednesdays 9:30, SSC 1032

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Willson
Office Hours: By appointment
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5423
Email: willson@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 takes a hands-on approach to learning—the best way to learn research methods is to do research. One important area in which you will have the opportunity to enhance your skills is the analysis of data using statistical software.

Prerequisite(s):
Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/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 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): None

Learning Outcomes:
* 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 research methodologies.

* Interpret the results of descriptive, basic inferential, and 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):**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Method of Evaluation:**
Learning the skills to conduct your own research and evaluate the research of others requires hands-on experience. As a result, there is a term project that you will complete in stages over the course of the semester, a mid-term test, and a final exam. The weighting of these components of your grade is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Feb 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>April 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that you will not have 50% of your final marks assigned by the last day to drop a second-term half course without academic penalty.

**Grade Guidelines**
The Department of Sociology has grade distribution guidelines that all instructors are required to follow which may require curving or otherwise adjusting your course grade in order to meet this requirement. As much as possible, your earned course grade will be the grade you receive. For Sociology courses at the 3300-level, class averages must be in the range of 70-74%.

**Reading and Participation**
This course is required for the honours programme in sociology. As a result, it is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material. Much of the course is cumulative, so missing one class can cause problems for comprehending the material in the following classes. You are expected to attend all computer lab sessions.

**Class Attendance Requirements**
Class attendance is required for success in this course. To receive a passing grade in the course, you must attend at least 80% of the class meetings.

**Exams**
There are two exams, a mid-term and a final. The final exam covers the material covered after the midterm and is not cumulative. However, the material covered later in the course builds upon material covered earlier in the course, so to be successful you must keep up. Exams consist of a combination of multiple choice and essay
questions and will require knowledge of the textbook, additional assigned readings, and lectures. You are responsible for all the material in the assigned chapters and readings even if this material is not covered in class.

**Final Project**

The final project involves carrying out and writing up a research project using quantitative survey data, including formulating a research question, operationalizing variables, describing the survey sample, analysis methodology, and limitations of both, and presenting and interpreting results. This assignment is due in several stages over the course of the semester. I will provide data for this analysis. Complete details, instructions, and due dates will be handed out in class.

**How to get important information:**

You are welcome to communicate with me through email. You should consider the emails that you send to your professors business correspondence, and, as such, they should be formal and include correct grammar, punctuation, etc. – i.e., they are not a text message you are sending to a friend. I emphasize this because you need to get in the habit of communicating in this manner for your future employment.

Please refer to this course outline and our OWL course website before contacting me for information.

**Important Policies**

**Policies for Assignment Deadlines and Medical Accommodation:**

If you miss the due date for an assignment or exam due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor’s documentation, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam or hand in your assignment at a later date without penalty.

Unexcused late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (including weekend days). Late assignments are to be placed in the Sociology drop box (5th floor SSC) upon completion. Please note that computer problems are not an excused circumstance. You are expected to follow good computer practices, including backing up your work.

There will be one makeup date set by the Department for students needing to write a make-up exam (with approved accommodation from your academic counseling office). This makeup exam may or may not be in the same format as the original exam.

If a student misses a make-up exam due to sickness or another documented reason, then the weight of the midterm will be added to the weight of the final exam. In cases where there is no approved justification for the absence, the student will receive a grade of zero on the exam.

**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](http://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](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html)
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 (http://www.turnitin.com).

Scantron Exams: 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 for taking notes. Students who use laptops in a way that is disruptive to others will be told to close the laptop and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. After multiple disruptions, I will require that he/she refrains from bringing the laptop to future classes. No recording devices are allowed in this class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

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

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

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