



**Western University**  
**SOCIOLOGY 3306A-001**

Investigating the Social World: Quantitative Research

**September - December 2018**  
**Tuesdays 9:30 - 12:30 PM SSC1032**

**Instructor: Dr. Teresa Abada**

Office Hours: by appointment only on Wednesdays 1:30 to 3:30 and Thursdays 10 Am till 12PM

**(make sure to call for appointment first)**

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**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.

Antirequisite(s): The former Sociology 3300A/B and 3302A/B.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Apply theory and sociological research to interpret social events and practices
- Understand and demonstrate the competent use of different quantitative and research methodologies.
- Interpret the results of multivariate quantitative data analyses
- Understand and meet the ethical standards for conducting research with human subjects.
- Write papers that make a sustained, evidence-based, sociological argument, and present ideas and sociological concepts clearly.
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills and the ability to discuss ideas clearly and articulately.

Mandatory for third-year Sociology students in an Honors Specialization. In this course students will learn to evaluate quantitative sociological research and gain hands-on experience carrying out and writing up a research project that investigates current social issues. Topics include: posing a research question, developing concepts and measures, and analyzing quantitative survey data.

**Extra Information:** 3 hours, 0.5 course.

Unless you have the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, 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.

**Required Text(s):**

Singleton, R. and B. Straits. 2018. *Approaches to Social Research, 6th Ed.* Oxford University Press.  
Required supplementary readings: Occasionally additional readings may 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.

Students should be familiar with proper essay writing techniques. The following style manual is useful: Johnson, William A., Richard Retting, Gregory Scott and Stephen Garrison. 2010. *The Sociology Student Writer' Manual.* Prentice-Hall.

**Statistical Computing:**

The statistical computing for the course will be done using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). SPSS 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, project and a final exam. The final exam is not cumulative. The weighting is as follows:

Midterm test	October 23	30%
Assignment	Due last day of class	30%
Final Examination	December Exam Period	40%

**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. I will provide data for this analysis. Complete details, instructions, and due dates will be handed out in class.

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.

**How to Contact Me:** [tabada@uwo.ca](mailto:tabada@uwo.ca) 519 6612111 ext 83690

**Teaching Assistant:** Travis Hackshaw [thacksha@uwo.ca](mailto:thacksha@uwo.ca)

## **Important Policies**

### **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.

### **Missed Exams**

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the Academic Counseling office at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam. If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment 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 write a makeup exam or hand in your assignment at a later date.

Compassionate Grounds: Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member's physician to your home faculty's Academic Counselling office.

In Case of a Death: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty's Academic Counselling office.

### **Class Attendance Requirements (for 3000 and 4000-level courses)**

With the exception of legitimate medical / personal excuses (documentation required to be submitted) students are expected to attend at least 75% of the class meetings for this course. A passing grade in the course cannot be obtained without meeting this attendance requirement.

Note: You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. 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.

### **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](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**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.**

**Note that I will announce in class whether there are questions on the exams that require the use of calculators. I do not allow students to use laptops for midterms and final exams.**

### **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. Note that I do not allow my lectures to be recorded.

### **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)

### **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: [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** should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

## Correspondence

Replies to students' emails or telephone calls are made within 48 hours Monday to Friday 9:00AM to 5:00PM. I do not respond to emails such as "*what did I miss in yesterday's lecture?*"; "*Was I scheduled to be in the lab yesterday?*" Emails must be written formally, and not as if you are writing a text to anyone.

## Course Schedule and Readings:

### Syllabus

Week	Date	Topic Assignment	Assigned Readings
1	Sept 11	Intro and The Nature of Science	S & S Ch.2
2	Sept 18	The Process of Social Science (continued) Writing Research Reports COMPUTER LAB #1: Introduction to SPSS & the Data	S&S Ch. 2 S&S Ch. 17
3	Sept 25	Quantitative Research Designs Computer Lab	S&S Ch. 4
4	October 2	Survey Research Methods Library Orientation	S&S Ch. 9
5	Reading week		
6	Oct 16	Concepts to Measurement COMPUTER LAB #4: Creating variables, continued	S & S Chapter 5
7	<b>October 23</b>	<b>Midterm</b>	
8	<b>October 30</b>	Survey Instrumentation Computer lab	S&S Chapter 10

<b>8</b>	<b>October 31</b>	Survey Instrumentation (continued) Sampling COMPUTER LAB	S&S Chapter 10 S&S Ch. 6
<b>9</b>	<b>Nov 6</b>	Analyzing Survey Data COMPUTER LAB #5: Basic Data Analysis	S & S 15
<b>10</b>	<b>Nov 13</b>	Multivariate Analysis and the Elaboration Model COMPUTER LAB #6: Multivariate Analysis	S&S Ch. 16
<b>11</b>	<b>Nov 20</b>	Multivariate Analysis, continued COMPUTER LAB #7: Data Analysis, cont	S&S Ch. 16
<b>12</b>	<b>November 27</b>	Computing Lab and review	
<b>13</b>	<b>December 4</b>	Assignment Due and Review	

**Final Exam** Date to be set by registrar's office

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