



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2206B-001
RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY
Winter 2023
Thursdays, 9:30AM – 12:30PM, Room SH-3345
(Delivery Method: In person)

Instructor: Dr. Jasmine Ha

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Department of Sociology, Office: SSC #5208

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11AM – 1PM (drop-in, no appointment required)

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce you to the methodological tools deployed by sociologists to conduct empirically grounded and theoretically engaged research. The course will cover the basic elements of research design, the role of theory in empirical research, the construction of sociological arguments, the ethics for social scientific research, and the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data and results. Methodologically, this course will introduce you to the use of surveys, experiments, ethnography, interviews, comparative/historical methods, and social network analysis.

Recommended in Years 2 or 3 of a Major, Specialization or Honours Specialization offered through the Dept of Sociology.

Prerequisite(s): None

Anti-requisite(s): Social Work 2206A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, Political Science 3324F/G, or Political Science 2325F/G.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand what sociological research is and how sociological questions can be answered;
2. Formulate sociologically relevant research questions and evaluate research designs;
3. Know the basic elements of different of methodological approaches and understand their merits and limitations; 4. appreciate the challenges and complexity of sociological research;
4. Understand the ethical considerations involved in doing human subjects research; and
5. Develop skills for reading and critically thinking about empirical research.

Course Material:

Textbook. Carr, D., Boyle, E. H., Cornwell, B., Correll, S. J., Crosnoe, R., Freese, J., & Waters, M. C. (2021). *The art and science of social research* (Second edition). W.W. Norton & Company.

The textbook is available for purchase at the UWO Bookstore. Both hard-copy and electronic formats are available.

The textbook also came with online resources (InQuizitive and Writing for Sociology tutorials) which will provide excellent additional practices. While the use of online resources is not required, I highly recommend them. The online resources are included in new textbook purchases. For used books, students should ensure that the access code to online materials is active and valid. You must have the access code to use the online resources (InQuizitive and writing tutorials).

Supplementary readings. Besides the textbook, students will also be guided to read some original research papers. The papers will be posted on the OWL site.

Communication:

How to contact me:

- By email: jasmine.ha@uwo.ca and office hours: Wednesdays 11 am -1pm (SSC 5208). Email is not suitable for questions requiring considerable exposition. These questions are suited for in-person exchange during office hours. Office hours are drop-in and first come, first serve.
- If you have course-related questions that may be relevant for the whole class, it is best to ask the questions in class or to post them on our OWL course site's Forum.
- Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Communication Guidelines & Expectations:

- Messages and email will be returned within 48 business hours (unless announced otherwise). That means you may not receive a response during the evening or on the weekend.
- Be patient, avoid emailing multiple times.
- Make sure your tone and correspondence in all communication is professional

How to get important information:

The **OWL Course site** will be set up to include all relevant course materials. In particular, pay attention to the following tabs:

- The **Homepage** will have key instructions on where to find information.
- The **Announcements** will be Used for Regular Communication or Urgent Messages
- The **Calendar** will be used regularly to let you know when assessments are due.
- The **Tests and Quizzes** will be used for the weekly quizzes.
- The **Assignments** will have all course assessment outlines and instructions on what to do if you have questions.

Method of Evaluation:

Evaluation breakdown:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course. The final grade will be determined as follows:

Weekly quizzes	15%
Research Topic	10%
Research Proposal	30%
Midterm Exam (Mar 2)	20%
Final Exam (TBD)	30%

Weekly quizzes (15%). The weekly quizzes are designed to help students stay on track with the course and guide in-class discussions.

There will be 9 quizzes from Week 2 to Week 12, excluding the Reading Week and the week for Mid-term Exam. As a universal accommodation for all students, we will only count 6 of your best scores. Therefore, each completed quiz is worth 2.5% of your final course grade.

Each quiz will be made available every Wednesday before the lecture, and students will have one full week to complete it. Due to the extended availability of the quizzes and the universal accommodation already provided, late submission will not be accepted for any reasons.

Research Proposal (Topic 10%, Proposal 30%). The exciting part of doing sociology is to conduct your own research. The assignments are designed to give you the experience of a “researcher” by applying the concepts to practice.

- **Research Topic (10%):** By the end of Week 6 (Friday, February 17, 2023), students should meet with their TAs to discuss a potential research topic that they will pursue in this course. This is an exercise for students to express research ideas (orally) in specific terms and envision the steps required to write a research proposal.
- **Research proposal (30%)** is due on Friday, March 31st, 2023, at 11:55PM EST

Midterm Exam (20%) and Final Exam (30%) The exams will be held in-person in multiple-choice format. The mid-term exam will be held in class on March 2nd, 2023. The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office.

Both exams are cumulative, covering all course materials from Week 1 up to the respective exam dates.

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.

Additional Notes About Grading

There will be no opportunities for extra credit. I encourage you to work consistently throughout the semester, and to reach out to other students in the class or to me as soon as you have trouble with the material. Consistent with departmental guidelines, it is expected that the class average for this course will be around 70-75%. Should the final overall grades yield a value significantly below this range, grades will be adjusted upward to ensure an appropriate mean for the class.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Late assignments with accommodation

Any student receiving academic accommodation for an assignment will receive an extension. Students receiving academic accommodation for an exam will write a Special Exam, typically scheduled by the Department of Sociology. See 'Absences from final examinations' below.

Late assignments without accommodation

Any assignment submitted after the deadline, without academic accommodation, will receive an automatic 5% penalty per 24-hour period (including weekends). Assignments will not be accepted after one full week from the due date.

Absences from Final Examinations:

Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Academic Counselling will determine eligibility to write a Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory).

Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

Important Policies

Academic Consideration for Missed Work: Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. The student medical certificate is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at <https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Accessibility Options: Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/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: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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.

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 (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

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

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic_counselling/).

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

2022-2023