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The University of Western Ontario

SOCIOLOGY 2206A Section 650 **Introduction to Research Methods** **Summer 2022**

Session Dates: May 8 – July 29 (exam period Aug 2- 4)

Instructor: Lauren Barr

Office Hours: TBD and also by appointment

Virtual: Office Link on OWL **When in person:** SSC 5432

Email: lbarr2@uwo.ca

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students the tools which scientists use to conduct research on society and produce knowledge – in other words, how to be sociologists. Many of the fundamental issues of research will be covered in this course, including the scientific method and research process, ethical dilemmas that may arise, and some of the procedures used to collect and analyze data, i.e., quantitative, and qualitative approaches to social research. During the course, students will learn how to carry out a scientific investigation from the formulation of hypotheses to the selection of an appropriate methodology, to the implementation of a study. Enhancing students' ability to critically examine sociological research is a key part of this course.

Mode of Delivery: *asynchronous distance learning*

Technical Requirements:



Stable internet connection



Working microphone



Laptop or computer



Working webcam (suggested)

Antirequisites: Social Work 2206A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, Political Science 3324F/G, or Political Science 2325F/G

Extra Information:

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

Mandatory for students registered in Yr 2 of an Honours Specialization offered through the Dept. of Sociology.

Learning Objectives:

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. Be able to 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 or “the art and science” of social research
5. Understand the ethical considerations involved in doing human subjects’ research
6. Develop skills for reading and critically thinking about empirical research

Required Text(s):

Carr, Deborah, Elizabeth Heger Boyle, Benjamin Cornwell, Shelley Correll, Robert Crosnoe, Jeremy Freese and Mary C. Waters. *The Art and Science of Social Research*. 2nd edition. W.W. Norton. ISBN: 9780393644791

Where to get the textbook: *You have two options, both from the UWO bookstore.*

- Option 1: The first is to order a hard copy from the UWO bookstore. You can order through their website, and they will ship the book directly to you.
- Option 2: The second option is to buy digital access to the book through the UWO bookstore.
- Note: These two options are comparable. The e-book is less expensive than the print copy. Choose the one that works for you.

Student Success in this Course:

Professor Barr’s Basic Needs Statement: We learn as whole people and your safety and wellbeing are more important to me than anything else. I am always available to listen and help you find the proper supports you need to be successful and healthy. If you want or need support, even if it is merely someone to listen without judgement, reach out and let me know. *This includes*

physical, mental, spiritual, social, and intellectual health. There are many resources at Western and in our community. If I cannot provide the support you need, I will help you find the right resources that can.

Brave and Inclusive: We will have challenging, essential conversations about “hard topics” throughout this course. All academic perspectives will be honoured with space to be heard. However, we will maintain an inclusive space that celebrates diversity and protects every person’s need for inclusion and belonging. **If at any point something happens that makes you question this or feel unsafe,** please come speak to Prof Barr immediately.

Professional students: post-secondary education is the early part of your professional career. I encourage you to treat it as such. You are here to be successful. To do this you have to show up, be here fully, focus on growth and present yourself as a professional student (prepared, constructive, communicative, and accountable).

We are a Team & Communication is key!

All students are responsible for keeping up with communication for the course and reaching out to Prof Barr when situations arise that will influence your ability to participate properly. Please do this as early as possible when ‘life happens’. I cannot know or support you if you don’t communicate with me, so please make it a habit to attend office hours and reach out.

Method of Evaluation: (SO HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THIS??)

Assessment Form	Weight	Due Date
Assignment	35	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic Proposal 	15	May 29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Paper 	20	July 24
Examinations		
Midterm	30	June 17 – 18
Final exam	35	Final Exam period (early Aug)

Evaluation Breakdown:

General Statement on All Interactions:

All forms of communication (verbal, written, visual) formal and informal, are evaluated based on level of critical analysis, succinct arguments, use of reputable academic material and overall organization of your thoughts. All course material is a foundation and a motivator for critical reflection. I expect that you will move beyond the course material, expanding and offering new ways of thinking about sociology that relate to our course.

All activities that are graded are guided by Western's Undergraduate Grading Guidelines:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

For more information about the university grading standards, see [the Registrar's Handbook: Grading Standards](#)

Examinations:

All examinations may include a combination of m/c, short answer, or essay style questions. A breakdown will be provided before each test. The exams will consist of questions drawn from lectures, and all assigned course material. The final exam will be held during the August examination period and the date and time will be set by the Registrar's Office. If you are unsure of material, you will be given many opportunities to ask for clarity. It is up to you to take advantage of them.

Assignment: Research Proposal

The exciting part of doing sociology is learning to conduct your own research. During the term, students will complete a research proposal. This exercise will be designed to give you the experience of a "researcher" by applying the concepts of the course to practice. An outline for this assignment will be provided on OWL in May.

Participation / Engagement:

Learning is better when you are an active participant. Listening to someone 'lecture at you' is not enjoyable for anyone, so be prepared to be an active member of our community. Opportunities for engagement will be offered each week throughout the course online through the forums and course content pages. The goal is to create a community that is comfortable, critical, and connected.

- While this is not being directly evaluated, it is an essential part of ensuring that you are understanding material and allowing you to learn from your peers. You will find you are more successful on all assessments if you engage regularly.

How to Contact Me: Lauren Barr

OWL Messages – Use this as the primary way to reach me regarding our course. You will find a place to message on the left navigation bar on our course website

Email: lbarr2@uwo.ca – for urgent communication only (Add course name / number in title + brief description of issue in subject)

Important Information: Course Communication

Communication Guidelines & Expectations:

- I will try to reply to messages and email 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 messaging multiple times.
- Make sure your tone and correspondence in all communication is professional

Where do you Find Course Information? OWL!!

- Our **OWL Course site** will be set up to allow you to navigate week to week in a consistent way. It will be available early May. A welcome announcement will be sent out when it is live.

Homepage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key instructions on where to find information • Prof Barr’s contact information
Course Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly lessons will be here • All information about assessments are posted here
Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for Regular Communication or Urgent Messages
Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use this to reach Prof Barr instead of email

OWL will be used regularly to let you know what is happening, check it several times each week.

Course Schedule and Readings:

- A weekly schedule and all content will be found in COURSE CONTENT on OWL.

Important Policies

Prof Barr's Class Policies for Deadlines and Missed Assessments

If you know that you have a problem with a due date or an exam (conflict, sick, etc.), let's talk about it as soon as possible. *If you talk to me ahead of time, we can determine together whether a formal accommodation request should be filed.*

If you do not or are not able to let me know ahead of time, then you will be asked to go through the appropriate academic accommodation process. *(see policy below)*

Missed Assignment deadlines:

- **If an assignment is late with no communication**, there will be a **5% late penalty per day for up to 5 days past the due date**. At that point, assignment will no longer be accepted without formal academic accommodation.
- **If an SRA is used**, students are expected to submit the assignment within 48 hours of the original due date.
- **If formal accommodations are required, students will communicate through OWL messages with Prof Barr to establish a plan**

A Note on Academic Misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, theft of intellectual property, privacy):

Students must do their own work following the instructions of each individual assessment. All assessments submitted will be evaluated with the assumption that students have been informed of the expectations and have followed them responsibly.

Plagiarism: Many opportunities to practice and understand the rules and processes around Academic writing will be provided in class. Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, are major scholastic offences and will be addressed directly with the appropriate institutional process (TA, Professor, Department Chair, Dean) (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed below).

Plagiarism Checking:

All required writing may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism (Turnitin). 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/>).

Recording and Sharing Course Information:

- **Recording** (video, audio, images) of lectures, tutorials or virtual Meetings or online course content without the explicit consent of the Professor, TA and students involved is ground for serious academic and or legal discipline.
- All course content created by a faculty member is considered the faculty member's intellectual property; it should not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the faculty member

Institution-Wide Policies:

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:

https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a *Self-Reported Absence (SRA)* form online provided that the absence is **48 hours or less** and the other conditions specified in the [Senate policy](#) are met.

Two important exceptions to this rule: SRAs will NOT be allowed for final examinations or assessments worth more than 30% of a given course. Students whose absences are expected to last **longer than 48 hours**, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used a self-reported absence, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a [Student Medical Certificate](#) (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds) to your Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

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.

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

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/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

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.