



The University of Western Ontario  
**SOCIOLOGY 2206A-001**  
**RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY**  
**Fall 2024**

**Delivery Method: in-person**

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*This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.*

**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, and materials-based methods.

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 methodological approaches and understand their merits and limitations;
4. Appreciate the challenges and complexity of sociological research;
5. Understand the ethical considerations involved in doing human subjects research; and
6. 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.

**Communication:**

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) 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.

***How to contact me:***

By email: [jasmine.ha@uwo.ca](mailto:jasmine.ha@uwo.ca) and office hours. Note that email is not suitable for questions requiring considerable exposition. These questions are suited for in-person exchange during office hours (drop-in hours on Mondays and by appointment).

***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 are professional

**Method of Evaluation:**

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

In-class exercises	40%
Midterm Exam (October 22 <sup>nd</sup> )	25%
Final Exam (TBD)	35%

**In-class exercises (40%).** The weekly in-class exercises are designed to support students' learning and engagement with the course materials. To do well in these exercises, students are expected to complete the assigned readings before the lecture and participate in class discussions to ensure that they have a good understanding of the course materials discussed each week. There will be 10 exercises total from Week 1 to Week 12, excluding the Reading Week and Mid-term Exam. As universal accommodation for all students, we will only count 8 of your best scores. Therefore, each completed exercise is worth 5% of your final course grade.

- Academic consideration will not be accepted for missing in-class exercises because the assignment is already designed with flexibility (we only count 8 of 10 exercises).
- If you encounter medical or personal circumstances that would entail missing more than 3 weeks of class, contact the instructor to discuss alternative arrangements.

**Midterm Exam (25%) and Final Exam (35%).** The exams will be held in-person in multiple-choice format. Both exams are cumulative, covering all course materials from Week 1 up to the respective exam dates.

- The mid-term exam will be held in class on *October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024*. Duration: 2 hours. Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course the midterm exam has been designated as requiring supporting documentation.
- The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Duration: 2 hours. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar.

Note that 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.

**Professionalism in the Classroom.** To create an active learning environment for all students, it is important to outline some basic expectations of professionalism in the classroom:

- Arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class.
- Be mentally present.
- Work with your classmates (in groups or pairs) when asked.
- Speak up when you have something to contribute.

While this is rare, the instructor can deduct up to 100% of a student's in-class exercise score in a given week due to unprofessional behaviors. If something is impacting your in-class engagement, do come and discuss with me as soon as possible to figure out a solution.

**Extra Credits.** I am eager to learn about your learning journeys with research methods! You can submit a short reflection (300-500 words) to describe a key learning moment for 2% of the final course grade. Each student can submit two reflections, in Week 7 and Week 13, to earn a maximum of 4% in extra credits. Detailed guidelines will be discussed in class.

### **Additional notes about Grading:**

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 average for the class.

### **Student Absences:**

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

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the

instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.”

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

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.

### **Artificial Intelligence:**

All assignments must be completed independently, without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI).

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays, written assignments and/or lab reports should reflect the student’s own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and all them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.

### **Academic Policies:**

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](#)” document [https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic\\_Policies.pdf](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf) for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Course Selection
- Absence from Course Commitments

- Missed Tests and Exams
- Religious Accommodations
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health
- Gender-Based and Sexual Violence statement

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