



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 3306A-001

**Investigating the Social World:
Quantitative Research Methods
Fall 2026
In-person**

Instructor: Yoko Yoshida
Department of Sociology
Email: yoko.yoshida@uwo.ca

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

Course Description:

Mandatory for third-year Sociology students in an Honours 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.

Prerequisite(s): [Sociology 2205A/B](#) and [Sociology 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. 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.

Anti-requisite(s): none

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

The goal of this course is to provide the students with a sophisticated understanding of both evaluating and conducting quantitative research in sociology. Starting from the formulation of research questions and working through data collection and analysis, this course introduces the quantitative research process and fundamental methodological concepts, analytic tools and procedures. Throughout the course, an emphasis will be placed on the relationship between theory and methods, the meaning behind the numbers, and drawing a conclusion based on the evidence. Students will learn how to apply them in a real research setting by developing their own research project.

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

- understand the process of quantitative research in social science;
- develop a set of quantitative research questions, which are theoretically informed and grounded in existing research;

- appreciate the relationship among theory, concepts, measures, and analytical design;
- assess and evaluate best practices in research methods of data collection;
- apply uni-variate, bi-variate, and multi-variate analysis to produce empirical evidence; and
- interpret the results of multivariate quantitative data analyses.

Course Material:

Textbook:

- Singleton, R. and B. Straits. 2018. Approaches to Social Research, 6th Ed. Oxford University Press (e-book version: \$77.00 for 180 Day Rental).
Please consult the Western Bookstore for the prices and purchase options at: [SOC 3306A Custom Link](#)

Required supplemental readings:

In addition to the textbook, two chapters (Ch. 12 and 13) from the following book is assigned for the later part of this class. The chapters that are assigned as a part of the required readings are scanned and available on the Brightspace.

- Remler, D. K. and G. G. Van Ryzin. 2021. Research methods in Practice, 3rd Ed. Sage Publications, Inc.

Supplemental readings:

A set of supplemental readings are offered in order to help you better understand the materials. They will be posted on the course website (OWL).

Sample Dataset of Instruction:

The [General Social Survey, Cycle 35: Social Identity](#) (Statistics Canada, 2020) will be used to illustrate examples and concepts taught in the course. Students are encouraged to develop a course project, which uses this dataset. However, a few additional datasets may be introduced in order to reflect a wider range of sociological research areas.

Statistical Computing:

The statistical computing for the course will be done using STATA. STATA is available on computers located in the Social Science computing lab (Room 1032). If you would like to work on STATA for a course project from home, it is also available via MyVLab (<https://myvlab.uwo.ca/>), free of charge for the students registered in this course. You can find access information at: https://myvlab.uwo.ca/using_mfa_on_myvlab.html.

Alternatively, a student version of STATA will be purchased at [Buy Stata | Student single-user purchases \(educational\)](#). A 6 month license starts from \$48USD.

Communication:

Students are responsible for reviewing the course OWL Brightspace site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students enrolled in the course.

Contacts:

Instructor: Email: yoko.yoshida@uwo.ca.

Teaching assistant: TBA

Course Schedule and Readings:

The reading list and weekly schedule are available on the course OWL Brightspace site

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course. There are three main components for this course.

1. **Exams (60%)**

- **Mid-term exam (20%):** Scheduled for October 28th, held in person during class time.
- **Final exam (40%):** TBA. Scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the final exam period. Please do not make travel plans during the exam period. The final exam is cumulative and will cover material from the entire course.

Both exams are closed-book and will assess knowledge of fundamental concepts in quantitative research design, measurement, and statistical interpretation. No electronic devices are permitted. Exams will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and will cover material from the textbook, assigned readings, and lectures. You are responsible for all assigned materials, including content not discussed in class.

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.

2. **Course Project - Quantitative Research Project (40%):** To demonstrate your knowledge of quantitative research methods, Students will complete a two-part research project using the Canadian General Social Survey (GSS). It is encouraged to select a research topic which can be addressed by the GSS, Cycle 35, Social Identity. (It is possible for you to explore themes outside of the scope of this specific dataset. If a research project requires alternative dataset, student must seek a permission by the instructor.)

- **Research Proposal Worksheet (15%)**

Due on Friday, October 9, 2026

This worksheet guides students through formulating a research question, identifying relevant literature, defining variables, and outlining hypotheses.

- **In Lab-Assignment: Data Analysis Portfolio (25%)**

Due on December 2

In this assignment, students apply the analytical techniques learned in previous labs to investigate some of the hypotheses outlined in their proposal worksheet. The questions and tasks follow the analytical process covered in earlier labs, including:

- Variable selection
- Sub-sample specification
- Descriptive statistics
- Elaboration (X–Y analysis with one control variable)

All work must be completed individually under time constraints. The portfolio is a standalone applied assignment, designed to consolidate skills and directly apply them to the research questions developed in the proposal worksheet.

Student Absences:

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

For Research Proposal Worksheet:

Students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 48 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 48 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

For In-lab assignment:

Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course the In-lab assignment (December 2) has been designated as requiring supporting documentation. Students with an approved absence from the in-lab assignment may seek an alternative date to conduct the assignment by the instructor. Students should be aware that the make-up assignment will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original assignment.

For the exams:

Final exams always require supporting documentation and a makeup exam.

For the mid-term, should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students should notify the instructor of their absence within 48 hours past the exam end time (October 28th 4:30pm). With such notice, students may choose either to take a make-up exam scheduled by the Department or to transfer the weight of the midterm to the final exam. Students should indicate their choice in the same email reporting their absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade of zero.

Students should be aware that transferring the midterm weight will increase the weight of the cumulative final exam from 40% to 60%. Given the substantial weight of the final exam and its cumulative nature, students are strongly encouraged to take the midterm exam as scheduled whenever possible.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence:

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.

Electronic Devices:

Electronic Devices will not be permitted during the exams.



Department of Sociology
Effective September 1, 2026.

Academic Policies

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the [Scholastic Offences](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf) Policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf.

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.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the 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 Western University and Turnitin.com

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

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.

Prior to any examination, students must turn their cellphones off and store them in their bags/coat at the front of the room. The use (or possession) of cellphones or other communications technologies during examinations is strictly prohibited. Those caught using a cell phone or other communication technologies, or even the physical possession of these technologies during an examination, will result in a zero on the examination in question. Similarly, the use (or possession) of these technologies during examination breaks (bathroom breaks during an exam) will also result in a zero. Intent does not matter. Forgetting to put away your cellphone or other communication technologies, whether during the examination or on examination breaks (bathroom breaks), are not justifications. It will result in a zero on the examination in question. In sum, your cellphones should never be seen or heard during an examination and should always be stored in your bags/coats at the front of the room.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Code of Student Conduct: Every student is expected to comply with the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. Sanctions for non-compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University. It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize themselves with its contents. The Code is available at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf.

Student Responsibility: Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded. Students must ensure course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean is obtained. Students who fail to do so will be removed from the course without adjustments to fees. The decision may not be appealed.

Student Responsibility for Course Selection:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf

Registration and Progression:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf

Graduation Requirements:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration](#) – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf.

Students missing regularly scheduled course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html. 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 scheduled 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 in the course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical_certificate.pdf or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Procedure on makeup assessments for Social Science students and for courses offered by the Faculty of Social Science (Effective September 1, 2026):

If academic consideration is granted, students should consult the course outline for information regarding how the missed assessment will be addressed and follow any instructions provided by the instructor. At the instructor's discretion, the weight of a missed test/quiz or mid-term may be transferred to another assessment in the course, including the final exam, rather than requiring a makeup assessment. Reweighting is not available for missed final exams.

Students are entitled to **one makeup assessment opportunity** for a missed test/quiz, mid-term, or final exam supported by approved academic consideration. **No additional makeup opportunities will be provided.**

Makeup assessments represent the final opportunity to complete a missed course assessment. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup test/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

What happens if I miss a makeup assessment as a Social Science student or in a course offered by the Faculty of Social Science?

Students who miss a makeup assessment are not eligible for an additional makeup opportunity. Depending on their circumstances, they may:

1. Remain enrolled in the course and accept a grade of zero on the missed makeup assessment. Students should consult the course outline and calculate whether they can still achieve a passing grade in the course.
2. Withdraw from the course through [Student Center](#) before the [published drop deadline](#). A course dropped before the deadline will result in a withdrawal (WDN) without academic penalty. Part-time students should consult the Registrar's Office [refund schedule](#) to determine whether a tuition refund is available. Students enrolled full-time in 4.0-5.0 courses are generally not eligible for tuition refunds when a course is dropped.
3. If the published drop deadline has passed and the missed makeup assessment is supported by appropriate documentation, students may submit their documentation through the [Student Absence Portal](#) to request a **WDN (withdrawal without academic penalty)**. Approval is not automatic and remains subject to Faculty review. Requests for a second makeup assessment will not be considered.

Students are encouraged to carefully consider their ability to complete a makeup assessment as scheduled, as no further opportunities to complete the missed work will be available.

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 Academic Advising Office.

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 Brightspace 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.

Guidelines for Grades/Marks: The Department of Sociology has grade distribution guidelines that all instructors are expected to follow. Generally, and with few exceptions, this means that the number of A's in a course cannot exceed the number of B's, and class means are expected to fall within a prescribed percentage range. This means that your final grade depends on your ranking relative to your peers. Courses with grades falling outside this range may be adjusted, up or down. These guidelines do not prohibit a student achieving 95% or higher in all their courses, but it does mean that an entire course cannot be made up of students receiving 95%. This policy combats grade inflation, contributing to higher standards, and ensuring uniformity across all courses of the same level. Motivated and hard-working students receive grades well above the course averages. The use of grade guidelines, including any adjustments of grades, either up or down for this purpose, cannot be used as the basis of an appeal.

Sociology 1000-Level

A's not to exceed B's

Means in the range of 68-72%

Sociology 2000-Level

A's not to exceed B's

Means in the range of 70-75%

Sociology 3000-Level

Means in the range of 73-80%

Sociology 4000-Level

Means in the range of 78-82%

Support Services:

- **Office of the Registrar Services** <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
- **Faculty Academic Advising** - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters
https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html .
- **USC services** – information available regarding student health/dental plan, LTC bus pass, food support services, Peer support Centre etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/> .
- **Mental health** – Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](#) <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

- **Health & Wellness Services** – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>.
- **Accessible Education** provides support and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. 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.
- **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence** – Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the Wellness and Wellbeing website <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/index.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.
- **Western Libraries** – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html>. Research support is also available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html>.
- **Writing Support Centre** – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available to undergraduate students <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>.
- **Bookstore:** Search for Textbook/course material availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/course-materials-textbooks/course-materials-and-textbooks>.