

Sociological Research Methods

SOCI 318: Fall 2017

Liberal Arts 307

TR 2:00 – 3:20 pm

Teaching team information

Instructor: Dustin Satterfield, M.A. (she/her/hers pronouns)

Office: Social Sciences 319

Email: dustin.satterfield@umontana.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 10:30 – 11:30 am, Wednesday 12:00 – 1:00 pm or by appointment

Preceptor:

Office: Social Sciences ____

Email:

Office hours:

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Changes will be announced in class and posted on the Moodle page.

Course description

Methods of research in the social sciences including naturalistic observation, interviewing, measurement, experiments, surveys, content analysis, and basic data analysis.

Sociology is the study of society, paying close attention to how people organize and structure themselves into groups. In turn, sociologists reconsider assumptions about society and question that which is obvious in order to better understand human behavior and the construction of the social norms. This course looks at how social scientists empirically investigate and study behavior within the social world.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the guiding principles and ethics of sociological research, describe and practice common methods of social science research, including observation, interviewing, survey research, content analysis, and experiments, as well as devise and prepare a research question, collect and analyze data, and report results sociologically.

Required readings

Neuman, W. Lawrence. *The Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 3rd ed. Pearson, 2012. ISBN: 0205762611

You are welcome to use other editions of this textbook with the understanding that the content may vary. Other assigned readings will be available on Moodle.

Quizzes

There will be at least seven unannounced reading quizzes in this course. Only five will count towards your grade, allowing you to drop two quizzes due to low scores or absences from class. They will be worth five points each, contributing 25 total points toward your final grade. Make up quizzes are not available. If you miss a quiz for any reason, it will be one of your two drops.

Assignments

Assignments must be uploaded to Moodle 15 minutes before the beginning of class. There will be a few exceptions noted on the schedule where you will be required to bring a hard copy to class. Feedback and grades will be provided electronically through the Moodle page. Writing assignments should be polished when you turn them in. Take the time to proofread your assignment for typos and clarity before turning them in.

Late assignments will be docked points. If you miss an assignment deadline you must contact me and receive permission via email to turn in a late assignment. Assignments or papers turned in under my office door or via e-mail without prior discussion will not be accepted. The value of assignments varies (see the course schedule) and the total points available for assignments is 240 points.

Exams

The exams in this course will be pyramid exams, in which you take the same exam twice. The first time, you will answer the questions by yourself, without using books or notes. After the solo exam is handed in, you will answer the same questions on the group exam, this time consulting in small groups with your classmates, your books and your notes. The exam is weighted with the solo exam worth 75% and the group exam worth 25%.

Students are not permitted cell phones, tablets, smart watches, and other electronic devices during exams. Any student found in violation of these mandates will receive a zero on the exam and will be required to meet with me to discuss whether or not they are eligible to continue on with the course.

Students who arrive late to an exam will not get extra time to complete the exam. Make-up exams are available only under two conditions: 1) you must have a valid excuse (this almost always means a legitimate medical excuse with adequate documentation); or 2) you must receive my permission to miss the exam at least 72 hours prior to the exam. It is your responsibility to provide legitimate written verification of your excuse to me. If I do not receive verification from you, you will not be allowed to take a make-up exam.

There will be two exams in this class, a midterm and a final exam. Each is worth 100 points. 200 points of your final grade will be from these two exams.

The final exam will be on Tuesday, December 19 3:20 - 5:20 pm. in our normal meeting place.

Course guidelines and policies

Academic honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#), which is available for review online.

Make sure that your work is your own. Students are encouraged to discuss assignments with classmates to facilitate your learning. However, students must turn in their own separate assignments. Don't get confused by what is acceptable and what is not. Discussion of ideas is permitted, and encouraged among classmates in and out of the classroom. Students should be careful not to work directly from a classmate's notes, not to copy another's paper and

appropriately cite all sources in your writing. Turning in a homework assignment that you did not personally complete is plagiarism. If this is unclear, please ask.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class. It will be difficult to do well if you do not attend regularly. I will not provide notes or schedule special meeting times to go over material that is missed due to a non-university sanctioned absence. You will be responsible for any material you missed; I recommend that you meet with a classmate to discuss topics that you have missed and to exchange notes.

You are expected to come to class on time, prepared to learn, and to attend until the end of class. If you need to leave early, please inform me ahead of time and sit near the exit as to minimally disrupt other students.

Classroom etiquette

Please treat each other and each other's ideas respectfully. Keep in mind that the University of Montana forbids discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. If you violate this policy I will ask you to leave.

Disability modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406-243-2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Email policy

I will check and respond to emails during business hours for one hour daily Monday – Friday, and during my office hours. When I answer questions that students have emailed me during class, I consider the question answered. Do not email me after 10 pm the night before an exam. I will not respond.

I encourage students to ask questions in class, attend office hours, or make an appointment if you need assistance.

Grading policy

There will be two exams, five quizzes, up to 15 workshops, and six homework assignments that will comprise the total points for the semester (See the schedule at the end of the syllabus). Final grades will be determined based on your average score out of the total points possible. At any point, you can calculate your grade by adding the number of points to date, dividing by the total number of points possible to date, and obtaining your percentage grade to date. Your grades will be available on Moodle.

Good engagement and attendance can raise a borderline grade.

A: 90-100%

B: 80-89%

C: 70-79%
D: 60-69%
F: 59% or below

Name and pronouns

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you go by a different name than what is on the class roster, let me know. I will respect your name and your pronouns.

Office hours

Please make generous use of the teaching team's office hours. We are here to talk about your difficulties, your successes, your grades, your project proposals and your thoughts. Making use of office hours will be critical to your success. Attending office hours indicates your engagement with the material and gives me a chance to get to know you.

Personal device policy

The use of cell phones in class is a distraction to yourself, your classmates, and your instructor. Please do not use your phones for the time that you are attending class. It is acceptable to use laptops and tablets to assist with note-taking and to refer to the readings, please limit use of these devices to that alone. It is not acceptable to use any electronic device during any part of the exams.

Writing assistance

The Writing Center is a resource available to all students to assist with all steps of the writing process. Set up an appointment or learn more at [The Writing Center's website](#).

Class schedule

This schedule is tentative. While due dates are unlikely to change, they may change as we see that we need to spend more or less time on a particular topic. It is your responsibility to keep up with the schedule by attending class regularly, checking the Moodle page and your student email frequently, and doing the readings and assignments. The chapters listed below are from our textbook. Any additional readings will be available on Moodle.

The reading listed is what you need to have read PRIOR to the class meeting time.

Week of:	Tuesday	Thursday
8/28	No class	First day of class Syllabus
9/4	Chapter 1 Doing Social Research	Chapter 1 Doing Social Research
9/11	Chapter 2 Theory and Social Research	Chapter 3 Ethics in Social Research
9/18	Chapter 3 Ethics in Social Research Human subject certificate (15)	Chapter 3 Ethics in Social Research Ethics WS
9/25	Chapter 4 Literature Reviews Reading sociology (25)	Chapter 5 Measurement
10/2	Chapter 5 Measurement Conc and Meas WS	Chapter 6 Sampling
10/9	Chapter 6 Sampling – Sampling WS Finalize Research Topic (25)	Chapter 7 Survey Research
10/16	Exam 1 on chapters 1- 6 and corresponding lectures	Chapter 7 Surveys Survey WS
10/23	Chapter 8 Experiments Propose a Quantitative Project (50)	Chapter 8 Experiments
10/30	Chapter 9 Unobtrusive research	Chapter 9 Unobtrusive research Content Analysis WS

11/6	Chapter 10 Quantitative Data Analysis	Chapter 10 Quantitative Data Analysis
11/13	Chapter 11 Field Research and Focus Groups	Chapter 11 Field Research and Focus Groups Field research WS
11/20	Chapter 12 in Babbie Evaluation Research Propose a Qualitative Project (50)	Chapter 13 Qualitative Data Analysis
11/27	Chapter 13 Qual Data Analysis	Chapter 13 Qual Data Analysis Bring 3 copies your research instrument to class
12/4	Chapter 14 Writing a Research Report	Chapter 14 Writing a Research Report Bring 2 copies your paper draft to class
12/11	Catch up day	Finals week begins 12/12
12/12 - 12/20 Finals Week	Final exam on chapters 7 -14 and corresponding lectures Tuesday, December 19 3:20 - 5:20 pm in our usual classroom Final Assignment Due (75)	