

Sociological Research Methods

SOCI 318: Summer 2018

Online course

June 25 – July 27

Teaching team information

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

Office: Social Sciences 319

Email: dustin.satterfield@umontana.edu

Office hours: Online or over the phone by appointment

Preceptor: Lyndayle Revell (she/her/hers)

Office: Mansfield Library by appointment

Email: lyndayle.revell@umontana.edu

Office hours: by appointment

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Changes will be 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.

Assignments

Assignments must be uploaded to Moodle by the deadline. 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).

Exams

You may consult with your classmates in the forum, the textbook, and your notes for exams in this online course. I encourage discussion in the exam forum for assistance during exams. Utilize this forum wisely: make decisions on your own and use your own words to answer exam questions to illustrate your understanding. Students will have 48 hours to complete exams. You may either print off the exam, complete the paper version and scan it to turn it in, or you may electronically 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 75 points. 150 points of your final grade will be from these two exams.

The final exam is due at midnight on July 27th.

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 to 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.

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. Do not email me after 10 pm the night before an exam. I will not respond.

Grading policy

There will be exams, forum workshops, and 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.

- 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. Being in touch with the teaching team will be critical to your success. Asking questions and seeking feedback indicates your engagement with the material and gives me a chance to get to know you.

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.

Week of June 25

Read: syllabus, Neuman chapters 1-5

Forums: Ethics, Conceptualization and Measurement

Assignments: Human subject certificate (15), Reading sociology (25)

Week of July 2

Read: Neuman chapters 6-7

Forums: Sampling

Assignments: Exam 1 on chapters 1- 6 and corresponding lectures (75)

Week of July 9

Read: Neuman chapters 7-10

Forums: Survey, Content Analysis, Quantitative Project Brainstorm

Week of July 16

Read: Neuman chapters 11-13, Babbie chapter 12

Forums: Field Research, Qualitative Project Brainstorm

Week of July 23

Read: Neuman chapter 14

Forums: Peer review research instrument, peer review final assignment

Assignments: Project Proposal (50), Exam 2 on chapters 7-14 and corresponding lectures (75)