

Sociology 313 (Lec. 01)
Introductory Social Research Methods
Fall 2010

Instructor: J.S. Frideres

Office: EdT 1414

Office hours: T & Thurs 1300-1400 (or by appointment)

Phone: 220-2554

Class time: T TH

Class hour: 1100-1215

Class Room: ST 125

Labs: Lab 03, Thursday, 1530-1720 Room

Lab 04, Thursday, 1530-1720 Room

Teaching Assistants:

Monetta Bailey Office: Office Hrs: Phone/email:

Kristin Atwood Office: Office Hrs: Phone/email

Course Goals and Objectives

“Social Research is all around us. Educators, government officials, business managers, human service providers, and health care professionals regularly use the data and principles of social research findings. People use social research to raise children, reduce crime, improve public health, sell products, or just understand one’s life. Reports of research appear on broadcast news programs, in popular magazines, and in news papers.” (p. 2, L. Neuman Basics of Social Research, Boston, Pearson, 2004)

This is one of the “tools” courses offered by the Department of Sociology and it will be an important course that will contribute to your ability to think critically and analytically. Research constitutes one of the most important ways in which intellectual development of the discipline is enhanced. Thus it is crucial for creating new knowledge and establishing the reliability and validity of such work is equally important. Research involves both innovative thinking as well as meticulous attention to the detail of data gathering.

The focus of this course will be on an empirical (tinged with positivism and realism) approach to research. We will examine the ways in which we gain our knowledge of the social world, the relationships that exist between theory and research and finally the place of values and ethics in research practice.

This course will focus on developing two sets of general skills for students. First, it will try to help you formulate a good research question. Framing a research question is

difficult for both applied and basic research. The second set of skills will be on understanding the logic and applicability of specific sets of technical data collection techniques.

In summary, the goals of this class are threefold: First, it will show students that social research is the key to developing new knowledge. Second, we will show students that social research is not a matter of simply following “cookbook directions.” We will explore many different techniques to collect data and evaluate their appropriateness with regard to the issue that is being addressed. Third, we will show that research requires the researcher to set aside biases and to maintain personal integrity, make moral choices, and a commitment to free and open inquiry about various topics that interest the researcher. By the end of the course you should be able to formulate a good research question, decide on the appropriate data gathering technique to address that question, apply that technique to the real world, assess the validity and reliability of the technique and ensure you have acted in a professional, ethically and moral manner.

Required reading

Alan Bryman, James Teevan and Edward Bell, *Social Research Methods* (2nd Canadian edition), New York, Oxford , 2009.

Margot Northey, Lorne Tepperman and Patrizia Albanese, *Making Sense*, 4th Edition, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 2009

Additional reading materials will be assigned during the semester.

Exam Schedule (Tentative—the dates may change)

First exam: October 5

Second exam: November 9

Final exam (some time between Dec. 11th and 21st).

Evaluation

NOTE: You must pass the final exam to pass the course. All exams (including the final exam) and lab assignments will allow the use of a hand calculator with no other functions other than statistical calculations.

Course evaluation will be based upon: (1) examinations (70%), (2) team research exercise (15%) and (3) individual/team assignments (15%).

Examinations: Total: 70%

Exam #1	20%
#2	25%

Final Exam: 25%

Research/lab exercises: Total 30%

Major Class Project: 15% (due dates: TBA). This will require an oral presentation (with appropriate technological support) to the class.
Individual/team assignments 15% (due dates: TBA)

Letter Grade Assignment

A+	97-100 %	C+	77-79%	F	<55%
A	93-96	C	73-76		
A-	90-92	C-	70-72		
B+	87-89	D+	67-69		
B	83-86	D	60-66		
B-	80-82	D-	55-59		

Exam Policies: You must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take an exam. All requests for deferral of an examination due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferred exams may be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. If you have missed an exam for a legitimate reason, you will be able to write a make up exam as close to the original exam as possible. The date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferred exam. Deferred exams will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

Ethics Research: Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to

students individually, during class, or during the instructor=s office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Safewalk: The University of Calgary provides a safe walk@ service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the AHelp@ phones located around Campus.

Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades

- A- When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.
- B- Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, (i.e., outside an instructor=s office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor=s office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.
- C- Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

Intellectual Honesty: Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge is cumulative and further advances are predicated on the contributions of others. In the normal course of scholarship these contributions are apprehended, critically evaluated and utilized as a foundation for further inquiry. Intellectual honesty demands that the contribution of others be acknowledged.

Academic Accommodation

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student=s responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

Deferrals: If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the University of Calgary Calendar. You can find the forms you need at:

Ethics Research: Students are advised that any research with human subjects must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor to determine if ethics approval is required.

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction: All students will be asked to complete an evaluation form near the completion of the course.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

Emergency evacuations: In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by *[check link to find assembly point for your building: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/75>]*