



FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Soci313.02 Introductory Social Research Methods Fall 2017

Lecture: TR 9:30 – 10:45, in SA119 (Science A)
Lab: R 15:30 – 17:20, in MS217 (Mathematical Sciences)

Instructor: Dr. Annette Tézli

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Office hours: Mondays 10:00 – 11:30,

Thursdays 11:00 – 13:00; and by appointment

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Course Description

Generally speaking, social research is research conducted by sociologists and other social investigators to explore, describe, explain, critique and offer suggestions for improving aspects of the social world. Producing high quality social research, however, is an art that requires specific skills. This course is designed to provide you with the skills and resources necessary to conduct scientifically sound social research. These skills will not only make you a good researcher, they will also transform you into a critical consumer of social research presented to you in the academic and popular realms. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss the research process in its entirety, focusing on philosophical underpinnings of social science research and their implication for research design, ethical considerations, research planning, quantitative and qualitative methods of data generation, and data analysis. Furthermore, we will discuss the often intricate choices and challenges researchers face throughout the research process. Finally, we will explore how those intricate choices and challenges shape our knowledge of social phenomena and the broader implications of scientific knowledge production.

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- retrieve, read, critically evaluate, and discuss a collection of empirical research.
- compare different theoretical, philosophical, and methodological underpinnings of empirical research.
- explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches.
- critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of central research methods.
- interpret qualitative and quantitative data.
- examine social phenomena in a scientific manner.
- apply theoretical course material to a new problem.
- independently develop research questions and devise a research program to answer those questions.
- communicate effectively in writing.

Course Format

Course content will be delivered through a combination of lectures, individual and group exercises, class discussions, and films. All substantive content pertaining to the principles and methods of empirical social research will be provided during lectures only. I will draw on illustrative examples from the assigned journal articles in our discussion, so it is imperative that you have completed all readings prior to the class in which they will be discussed. Tutorials will focus on the practical application of theoretical material covered during lectures.

Required Texts

(available through the UofC Bookstore or Bound and Copied)

Flick, Uwe. 2015. *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*. London: Sage.

Additional required readings are listed in the back of the syllabus. All assigned journal articles can be downloaded without charge through the UofC library.

Recommended Texts

Bouma, Gary D., Rod Ling, and Lori Wilkinson. 2016. *The Research Process*. 3rd Canadian Ed. Don Mills, ON: Oxford.

Edwards, Mark. 2015. *Writing in Sociology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Harris, Scott R. 2014. *How to Critique Journal Articles in the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Northey, Margot, Lorne Tepperman, and Patrizia Albanese. 2012. *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing - Social Sciences* 5th ed. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Yellin, Linda L. 2009. *A Sociology Writer's Guide*. Boston: Pearson.

*One copy of each book is available on reserve at the Taylor Family Digital Library (TFDL).

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment Schedule and Outline

Please note: All assignments are due at the **beginning** of class (9:30 sharp). Assignments submitted past 9:30 are subject to late penalties.

	Date due	% of final grade
Top Hat exercises	weekly	15
4 Tutorial assignments	see tutorial outline	15
Topic proposal	October 10	5
Annotated bibliography	October 26	10
Research design and sampling	November 9	20
Research Proposal	December 8	35

* Please note that there will be **NO** extra-credit or makeup options for this course.

Weekly Top Hat exercises (15%)

Reading the assigned texts, regular attendance, an open mind, as well as your active and meaningful participation is essential to your learning in this class. To facilitate engagement with the course and course material, we will be using Top Hat, a free classroom response system, throughout the semester. Through Top Hat, I will ask questions pertaining to the assigned readings, facilitate in-class exercises, and demonstrate frequently used research methods, such as surveys. We will be using Top Hat at least once a week; exercises will not be announced in advance.

Each Top Hat question is worth 2 points: 1 point will be awarded for answering a question and 1 point will be awarded for answering a question correctly, where applicable. If you cannot attend class for valid and documented reasons outlined in the Assignments & Deferrals section below, please notify me before class. If you encounter problems with Top Hat during an exercise, please screenshot your response and email it to me immediately after class. If you do not complete a Top Hat question without due cause, you will receive an automatic score of 0 for that question. Your final Top Hat grade will be determined according to the following formula: your Top Hat mark/.95. Please note that your Top Hat mark cannot exceed 100%.

You can register your free TopHat account here: <https://app.tophat.com/register>. Once you signed up, you can find the course here: <https://app-ca.tophat.com/e/297578> (access code 297578). You can use your laptop, tablet, smartphone or mobile phone to submit answers. Login to TopHat.com or use your mobile apps and enter code 297578 to participate. We will practice at the beginning of the semester and start using Top Hat regularly after the course swap deadline, on September 25. More detailed information will be provided in class.

4 tutorial assignments (15% total)

Tutorials provide you with an opportunity to apply theoretical material covered in lecture in a practical manner and thus deepen your understanding of the subject matter. Attendance should be considered a requirement, not an option. Your grade for this component will be based on your participation in various exercises and assignments, which will be administered and graded by your Teaching Assistant. More information will be provided during your tutorials and on D2L.

Written Assignments – Preparing a Research Proposal (70% total)

The remainder of your grade will be based on sequenced, written assignments which constitute different sections of your research proposal. In general, a research proposal explains why and how a research study will be conducted. It is useful for planning a study, getting critical feedback before undertaking the study, and obtaining funding for the research. The objective of this assignment is for you to practice writing a well-structured research proposal. This is your opportunity to prepare a proposal and receive feedback on each individual assignment. I will return each assignment before the next one is due, so that you can make necessary revisions. Please refer to the assignment schedule above for the due dates of each assignment. Individual assignments are outlined below. More detailed information will be provided in class and on D2L.

1. Topic & research question proposal – 2 pages (5%)

Before you can write a research proposal, you have to decide on a topic. For this assignment, I expect you to discuss your research topic and a set of research questions that flow out of this topic. You can select any topic that interests you, but keep in mind that you have to examine your topic sociologically. Please explain your topic, telling me why this topic interests you and briefly outlining its sociological relevance. Secondly, what is/are your research question(s)? Research questions should logically flow out of your chosen topic and provide an important first step toward planning and carrying out a research project.

2. Annotated Bibliography – length will vary (10%)

The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to summarize and evaluate sources of information. For this assignment, select 10 scientifically sound sources relevant to your research topic and critically evaluate the information provided in each source.

3. Research Design and Sampling – no more than 6 pages (25%)

This section should include an extensive discussion of your proposed methodology, your sample and your sampling technique. You will also discuss ethical considerations pertaining to your proposed research.

4. Research Proposal – no more than 15 pages (35%)

Here is where you put everything together into a final, polished proposal, which is the final product of your work throughout the semester. Your final research proposal will include an introduction, a literature review, and a discussion of your chosen methods of data generation and analysis, including your research instrument. Most of your final research proposal you will have already written in previous assignments, so do not feel intimidated by the length of the assignment. As long as you stay on top of your revisions throughout the semester, putting together the research proposal should be fairly straightforward.

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 – 95.99%	4.0	Excellent-superior performance
A-	85 – 89.99%	3.7	
B+	80 – 84.99%	3.3	
B	75 – 79.99%	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance
B-	70 – 74.99%	2.7	
C+	67 – 69.99%	2.3	
C	63 – 66.99%	2.0	Satisfactory - basic understanding
C-	59 – 62.99%	1.7	
D+	55 – 58.99%	1.3	
D	50 – 54.99%	1.0	Minimal pass - marginal performance
F	<50%	0	Unsatisfactory performance

The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

Emergency evacuations

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Social Science - Food Court.

Course Policies

Technology Use

You are welcome to use your laptop/tablet in class. If you are using a laptop/tablet in class, I would kindly ask you to sit in the back of the class so that other students are not distracted. Please use your laptop/tablet for course-related purposes only (i.e. to access course presentations, take notes). Bear in mind that using your computer/tablet/phone to surf the net, shop, email, check Facebook, update your tweets, etc. is distracting to your classmates. It is also a waste of your tuition fees. Permission to use laptops/tablets may be withdrawn if they are not used appropriately. Please make sure to mute your cell phone and refrain from using it during class.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is important in any class. If you miss a class, you will miss material relevant to your success in this course and it is your responsibility to obtain notes from one of your class mates. I expect you to be on time so that other students in the class are not interrupted by your late arrival. If you come late or need to leave class early, please sit somewhere you can settle down or leave without disrupting others. I expect you to have critically read the assigned texts prior to the session in which they will be discussed, that you are an active participant in class discussions and group exercises, and that your contributions are generally informed by the assigned reading material. During lectures, please make sure not to distract your fellow students in any way.

Lecture Slides

PowerPoint slides for each lecture will be posted on D2L well in advance of the lecture during which they will be covered. I strongly recommend printing off the slides and bringing them to class to assist your note-taking. PowerPoint slides posted on D2L will provide a lecture outline, but not complete lecture content. It is your responsibility to complete each slide during lecture. Effective note-taking strategies are provided on D2L.

E-mails

Please send emails through D2L or from your ucalgary account. I will not answer any emails sent from personal email accounts. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line. Also, it is courteous to include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. I will not answer emails violating the outlined email conventions. All other emails will be answered within one business day, but I do not answer emails over the weekend. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline and the D2L discussion board first. Please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment. Questions about the course content and readings should be posed on D2L; concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in person during my office hours.

Questions & Discussions

I created a discussion board on D2L for questions and class-related discussions. If you have any course-related substantive or administrative questions, feedback, comments or would like to further discuss a course-related topic, please post it on the discussion board on D2L. You can access the discussion board either through the link in the CONTENT tab OR through the COMMUNICATION tab → DISCUSSIONS. I will check the board frequently and respond in a timely manner. The board allows you to make posts anonymously, but please be reminded that I expect your contributions to be respectful and constructive.

Assignments and Deferrals

It is your responsibility to complete and submit all assignments outlined in this course outline. If at all possible you must provide **advance** notice to the instructor if you are unable to submit an assignment on time. All deferral requests due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while you have 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, misreading of the syllabus, time mismanagement, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment responsibilities** 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. There are absolutely NO EXCEPTIONS.

Assignments submitted late (as of the beginning of class on the dates indicated in the assignment schedule) without due cause are subject to a **5 percentage points deduction** (i.e. 80% instead of 85%) for **each day** past the due date. Assignments not submitted within 7 calendar days of the due date without approval for extension will automatically receive a grade of 0.

Deferred Term Work Form:

Please note that requests to defer the final assignment are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

http://wcm.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork.pdf

Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. Protection of Privacy: The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

Ethics Research

Students are advised that any research involving 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, you must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing your plans with me, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>).

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's main office. I will return written assignments individually during class, or during my office hours. If you are unable to pick up your assignment, you may provide me with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your assignment.

Student Representation

The 2017-18 Students' Union VP Academic is Tina Miller (suypaca@ucalgary.ca). For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student's Union, please visit this link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/>. You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/contact>

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. You can also contact Campus Security from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation

The student accommodation policy can be found at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy>.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals

If you chose to contest a grade you received for an assignment, please refer to the UofC Calendar for more information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>) and follow the procedures outlined therein.

Thrive Priority Support Network

Your academic success and personal well-being is important to me. Please feel free to contact me at any time you need academic or personal support and I will help you identify the appropriate resources. Please note that I am working closely with the Thrive Priority Support Network, which seeks to identify students who are facing academic challenges and provide appropriate support services early. This tool monitors this course's D2L gradebook for sudden changes in a student's academic performance and alerts academic development specialists, who will then reach out to the student to touch base. Engagement with the academic development specialist is entirely voluntary and all information is confidential. More information is provided here:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/advising/thrive>.

Course Schedule

Subject to change. Changes will be announced and discussed in class.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1. How We Know What We Know			
1	Sept 12/14	Course welcome Foundations of Scientific Inquiry	Flick (2015), Ch.1 and 2
2	Sept 19/21	Research ethics	Flick (2015), Ch.3 Head (2009)
2. Planning Social Research			
3	Sept 26/28	From research idea(s) to research question(s) Reviewing the existing literature	Flick (2015), Ch.4 and 5 Greil, Slauson-Blevins, McQuillian (2010)
4	Oct 3/5	Selecting a research design & method(s)	Flick (2015), Ch.6 Flick (2015), Ch.8
5	Oct 10/12	Quantitative and qualitative measurement Topic proposal due	Lee & Waite (2005) Coltrane (1985)
6	Oct 17/19	Quantitative and qualitative sampling	Flick (2015), Ch.7 Pearce et al. (2008)
3. Methods of Data Generation			
7	Oct 24/26	Nonreactive quantitative & qualitative methods Annotated bibliography due	Aubrey & Frisby (2011) Gill (2009)
8	Oct 31/Nov 2	Surveys & survey design	Flick (2015), Ch.9 Wechsler et al. (1994)
9	Nov 7/9	Experiments Research design and sampling due	Pfeifer & Ogloff (2003) Yarmey (2010)
10	Nov 14/16	Qualitative fieldwork	Flick (2015), Ch.11 Min & Kim (2000)
11	Nov 21/23	Qualitative fieldwork, cont.	Marvasti (2002) Sears et al. (2006)
1. Data Analysis & Representation			
12	Nov 28/30	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis	Flick (2015), Ch.10
13	Dec 5/7	Evaluating empirical research Limitations of Social Science Research Research proposal due	Flick (2015), Ch.13

Assigned Journal Articles

- Aubrey, Jennifer Stevens and Cynthia M. Frisby. 2011. "Sexual Objectification in Music Videos: A Content Analysis Comparing Gender and Genre." *Mass Communication and Society* 14(4):475-501.
- Coltrane, Scott. 1989. "Household Labor and the Routine Production of Gender." *Social Problems* 36(5):473-90.
- Gill, Rosalind. 2009. "Mediated Intimacy and Postfeminism: A Discourse Analytic Examination of Sex and Relationships Advice in a Women's Magazine." *Discourse & Communication* 3(4):345-69.
- Lee, Yun-Suk and Linda J. Waite. 2005. "Husbands' and Wives' Time Spent on Housework: A Comparison of Measures." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(2):328-36.
- Marvasti, Amir B. 2002. "Constructing the Service-Worthy Homeless through Narrative Editing." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 31(5):615-51.
- Min, Pyong Gap and Rose Kim. 2000. "Formation of Ethnic and Racial Identities: Narratives by Young Asian-American Professionals." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23(4):735-60.
- Pearce, Margo E., Wayne M. Christian, Katharina Patterson, Kat Norris, Akm Moniruzzaman, Kevin J. P. Craib, Martin T. Schechter and Patricia M. Spittal. 2008. "The Cedar Project: Historical Trauma, Sexual Abuse and HIV Risk among Young Aboriginal People Who Use Injection and Non-Injection Drugs in Two Canadian Cities." *Social Science & Medicine* 66(11):2185-94.
- Pfeifer, Jeffrey E. and James R. P. Ogloff. 2003. "Mock Juror Ratings of Guilt in Canada: Modern Racism and Ethnic Heritage." *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal* 31(3):301-12.
- Sears, Heather A., E. Sandra Byers, John J. Whelan and Marcelle Saint-Pierre. 2006. "'If It Hurts You, Then It Is Not a Joke'." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 21(9):1191-207.
- Wechsler, H., A. Davenport, G. Dowdall, B. Moeykens and S. Castillo. 1994. "Health and Behavioral Consequences of Binge Drinking in College: A National Survey of Students at 140 Campuses." *JAMA* 272(21):1672-77.
- Yarmey, A. Daniel. 2004. "Eyewitness Recall and Photo Identification: A Field Experiment." *Psychology, Crime & Law* 10(1):53-68.

Lab Schedule

Subject to change. Changes will be announced and discussed in class.

Date	Topic
	1. How We Know What We Know
September 14	Welcome & Foundations of scientific inquiry
September 21	Research ethics (CORE tutorial)
September 28	Research ethics (CORE tutorial)
	2. Planning Social Research
October 5	Reading with a critical eye
October 12	Reviewing the existing literature
October 19	Quantitative and qualitative measurement
October 26	Quantitative and qualitative sampling
	3. Methods of Data Generation
November 2	Nonreactive quantitative & qualitative methods
November 9	Surveys & survey design
November 16	Experiments
November 23	Qualitative fieldwork
	4. Data Analysis & Representation
November 30	Research proposal consultation

Lab Assignment Schedule

All assignments are to be completed during your scheduled lab time and submitted at the end of lab.

Assignment 1 – CORE tutorial	September 28
Assignment 2 – Literature summary	October 12
Assignment 3 – Survey design	November 9
Assignment 4 – Research proposal outline	November 30