



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Fall 2021

FACULTY OF ARTS

Department of Sociology

Department of Sociology Website: <https://soci.ucalgary.ca/>

COURSE TITLE: Introductory Social Research Methods			
Course Number	SOCI 313		
Pre/Co-Requisites	SOCI 201		
Instructor Name	Scott McLean	Email	smclean@ucalgary.ca
Instructor Email Policy	<p>D2L is the primary platform for communication in this course. Questions regarding course content, assignments, and examinations should be asked during Zoom sessions or posted to the appropriate location on D2L. Instructions will be provided as to what types of communication are appropriate for various locations on D2L.</p> <p>You are free to email me if you have questions or concerns that you do not wish to communicate publicly. Note that I will respond to emails as quickly as feasible and according to their urgency.</p>		
Office Location	n/a	Office Hours	n/a
Telephone No.	n/a		
TA Name	Adriana Dewar	TA Email	adriana.dewar@ucalgary.ca
TA Office Location	n/a	TA Office Hours	n/a
Class Dates	Lectures and labs on Tuesdays		
Class Times	Lectures: 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Labs: 3:30p.m. – 5:00 p.m.		
Class Location	Online course (via Zoom and D2L)		

Course Description

Calendar description: “Research processes including problem definition, data collection and analysis; quantitative and qualitative strategies.”

There are three teaching and learning strategies for this course, each of which contributes to the overall learning outcome of building students' knowledge and skills for conducting and assessing social research. First, students **study a textbook** providing a coherent overview of key concepts and processes in the conduct of social research. The textbook, *Research Methods: Exploring the Social World in Canadian Contexts* (Second Edition), written by Diane Symbaluk (2019), may be purchased through the University of Calgary bookstore as an eBook or in hard copy.

Second, students **view online lectures** (both recorded and synchronous) designed to illustrate themes and research processes introduced in the textbook. Some lectures focus on sociological research about patterns of discrimination and racism faced by people of color in North America. Other lectures present examples of research undertaken by the instructor. Most lectures are associated with a published article that students may access online, free of charge, through the University of Calgary Library. Textbook readings and lectures are the foundation for five examinations worth 50% of the final grade.

Third, students **complete six laboratory assignments** that address major components of the process of conducting social research. Substantively, this work focuses on understanding and explaining gender differences in enrolment at the University of Calgary. Instructions for each of the six assignments are provided through D2L. Laboratory assignments account for 50% of the final grade.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

1. To understand key differences between empirical sociological research and other means of describing and explaining social reality.
2. To become aware of ethical issues in social research.
3. To learn the major elements of sociological research design.
4. To understand processes of conceptualization and operationalization, and recognize the roles of indexes, scales, and typologies in social research.
5. To understand the role and importance of sampling in social research and recognize various approaches to sampling.
6. To compare five modes of observation in social research (experiments; survey research, unobtrusive methods, ethnography, and qualitative interviewing), and to distinguish between the purposes, questions, and contexts in which various modes of observation are more and less appropriate.
7. To become aware of basic processes for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data.
8. To practice, through a series of laboratory assignments, each of the following components of the process of social research:
 - a. Identifying social issues.
 - b. Constructing alternative explanations for social issues.
 - c. Designing survey research.
 - d. Designing qualitative interviews.
 - e. Undertaking quantitative data analysis.
 - f. Undertaking qualitative data analysis.

Course Format

This course will be delivered without face-to-face instruction. Students are expected to be available for sessions to be facilitated via Zoom on Tuesdays from 14:00 to 15:15 and 15:30 to 17:20. All other instruction will take place via D2L. Recorded lectures will be posted according to the schedule below.

Learning Resources

The required textbook, *Research Methods: Exploring the Social World in Canadian Contexts* (Second Edition), written by Diane Symbaluk (2019), may be purchased through the University of Calgary bookstore as an eBook or in hard copy. Optional readings are available online through the University of Calgary Library. Resources for laboratory assignments will be distributed via D2L.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

There is a D2L site for this course, which contains all relevant class resources and materials (see d2L.ucalgary.ca). Given that this course is delivered remotely, you must have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system and security / malware updates
- A current and updated web browser
- Webcam (built-in or external)
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled
- Broadband (stable) internet connection.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Week / textbook chapter	Optional reading	Assignments due / exams held
1. Research foundations	Nix (2017)	
2. The importance of theory	McLean (1999)	Issue identification (Lab 1)
3. Research design and measurement	Logan (2012)	Exam 1
4. Sampling and Surveys	Godley (2018)	Alternative explanations (Lab 2)
5. Qualitative interviewing	Ispa-Landa (2013)	Exam 2
6. Unobtrusive methods	Hastings (2020)	Survey design (Lab 3)
7. Ethnography	Hardie (2013)	Exam 3
8. Experiments	Pager (2009)	In-depth interviews (Lab 4)
9. Mixed methods / multiple methods	McLean (2003)	Exam 4
10. Term break		
11. Research ethics	McLean (2021)	Quantitative analysis (Lab 5)
12. Writing proposals and reports	McLean (2017/2021)	
13. Illustrations of social research	McLean (2018/2019)	Qualitative analysis (Lab 6)
14. Final class session		Exam 5

Week 1 (6 – 12 September)

- **First day of classes is 7 September**
- **Textbook reading:** Research Foundations (Chapter 1)
- **Optional reading:** Justin Nix, Bradley Campbell, Edward Byers & Geoffrey Alpert (2017) A bird's eye view of civilians killed by police in 2015: Further evidence of implicit bias. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 16 (1) 309-340.
- **7 September lecture:** introduction, course overview, and introduction to assignment one
- **7 September laboratory:** workshop for assignment one
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of empirical evidence as a way of knowing
- **Graded requirement:** assignment one released on 7 September

Week 2 (13 – 19 September)

- **Textbook readings:** The Importance of Theory (Chapter 2)
- **Optional reading:** Scott McLean (1999) Thinking about research in continuing education: A meta-theoretical primer. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, 25 (2) 23-42.
- **14 September lecture:** textbook Q&A; discussion of assignments one and two and exam 1
- **14 September laboratory:** introduction and guidelines for assignment two
- **Recorded lecture:** sociological ways of seeing the world
- **Graded requirement:** assignment one due on 14 September at noon
- **Graded requirement:** assignment two released on 14 September during lab

Week 3 (20 – 26 September)

- **Textbook reading:** Research Design and Measurement (Chapter 4)
- **Optional reading:** John Logan, Elisabeta Minca & Sinem Adar (2012) The geography of inequality: Why separate means unequal in American public schools. *Sociology of Education*, 85 (3) 287-301.
- **21 September lecture:** Exam 1 to be written during class time
- **21 September laboratory:** workshop for assignment two
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of research design
- **Graded requirement:** Exam 1 during scheduled lecture on 21 September

Week 4 (27 September – 3 October)

- **Textbook readings:** Sampling (Chapter 5) and Surveys (Chapter 7)
- **Optional reading:** Jenny Godley (2018) Everyday discrimination in Canada: Prevalence and patterns. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 43 (2) 111-142.
- **28 September lecture:** textbook Q&A
- **28 September laboratory:** introduction and guidelines for assignment three
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of sampling and survey research
- **Graded requirement:** assignment two due on 28 September at noon
- **Graded requirement:** assignment three released on 28 September during lab

Week 5 (4 – 10 October)

- **Textbook reading:** Qualitative Interviewing (Chapter 9)
- **Optional reading:** Ispa-Landa, Simone (2013) Gender, race, and justifications for group exclusion: Urban black students bussed to affluent suburban schools. *Sociology of Education*, 86 (3) 218-233.
- **5 October lecture:** Exam 2 to be written during class time
- **5 October laboratory:** workshop for assignment three
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of qualitative interviewing
- **Graded requirement:** Exam 2 during scheduled lecture on 5 October

Week 6 (11 October – 17 October)

- **Textbook reading:** Unobtrusive Methods (Chapter 8)
- **Optional reading:** Colin Hastings, Eric Mykhalovskiy, Chris Sanders & Laura Bisailon (2020) Disrupting a Canadian prairie fantasy and constructing racial otherness: An analysis of news media coverage of Travis Smith's criminal HIV non-disclosure case. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 45(1) 1-22.
- **12 October lecture:** textbook Q&A; discussion of interviews and unobtrusive methods
- **12 October laboratory:** introduction and guidelines for assignment four
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of unobtrusive research
- **Graded requirement:** assignment three due on 12 October at noon
- **Graded requirement:** assignment four released on 12 October during lab

Week 7 (18 – 24 October)

- **Textbook reading:** Ethnography (Chapter 10)
- **Optional reading:** Halliday-Hardie, Jessica & Karolyn Tyson, 2013. Other people's racism: Race, rednecks, and riots in a Southern high school. *Sociology of Education*, 86 (1) 83-102.
- **19 October lecture:** Exam 3 to be written during class time
- **19 October laboratory:** workshop for assignment four
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of ethnographic field research
- **Graded requirement:** Exam 3 during scheduled lecture on 19 October

Week 8 (25 October – 31 October)

- **Textbook reading:** Experiments (Chapter 6)
- **Optional reading:** Devah Pager, Bruce Western & Bart Bonikowski (2009) Discrimination in a low-wage labor market: A field experiment. *American Sociological Review*, 74 (5) 777-799.
- **26 October lecture:** textbook Q&A; discussion of ethnography and experiments
- **26 October laboratory:** introduction and guidelines for assignment five
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of experimental research
- **Graded requirement:** assignment four due on 26 October at noon
- **Graded requirement:** assignment five released on 26 October during lab

Week 9 (1 – 7 November)

- **Textbook reading:** Mixed Methods and Multiple Methods (Chapter 11)
- **Optional reading:** Scott McLean and Gwenna Moss (2003) They're happy, but did they make a difference? Applying Kirkpatrick's framework to the evaluation of a national leadership program. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, 18 (1) 1-23.
- **2 November lecture:** Exam 4 to be written during class time
- **2 November laboratory:** workshop for assignment five
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of evaluation research
- **Graded requirement:** Exam 4 during scheduled lecture on 2 November

Week 10 (8 – 14 November): Term break: no course requirements this week

Week 11 (15 – 21 November)

- **Textbook reading:** Research Ethics (Chapter 3)
- **Optional reading:** Scott McLean (2021) Understanding the evolving context for lifelong education: Key global trends, 1960 – 2020. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, (in press).
- **16 November lecture:** textbook Q&A; discussion of research ethics
- **16 November laboratory:** introduction and guidelines for assignment six
- **Recorded lecture:** illustration of quantitative data analysis
- **Graded requirement:** assignment five due on 16 November at noon
- **Graded requirement:** assignment six released on 16 November during lab

Week 12 (22 – 28 November)

- **Textbook reading:** Writing Research Proposals and Reports (Chapter 12)
- **Optional readings:**
 - Scott McLean (2017) Colonial encounters in the classroom: Adult educators making sense of Inuit resistance to schooling. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 49 (1) 26 44.
 - Scott McLean (2021) “The advent of civilization amongst them will not tend to their betterment”: Understanding representations of colonial contact in the Kitikmeot. *Journal of Canadian Studies* (in press).
- **23 November lecture:** textbook Q&A; discussion of qualitative data analysis
- **23 November laboratory:** workshop for assignment six
- **Recorded lecture:** illustrations of social research

Week 13 (29 November – 5 December)

- **Textbook reading:** Appendix (sample student report)
- **Optional readings:**
 - Scott McLean (2015) Individual autonomy or social engagement: Adult Learners in neo liberal times. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 65 (3) 196 214.
 - Scott McLean and Jaya Dixit (2018) The power of positive thinking: A hidden curriculum for precarious times. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 68 (4) 280 296.
 - Scott McLean and Laurie Vermeylen (2019) From getting ahead to getting back on one’s feet: Performing masculinity as a self-help reader. *Men & Masculinities*, 22 (4) 716 737.
- **30 November lecture:** course wrap-up and feedback session
- **30 November laboratory:** no laboratory session this week
- **Recorded lecture:** illustrations of social research
- **Graded requirement:** assignment six due on 30 November at noon

Week 14 (6 – 8 December)

- **Term ends on 8 December**
- **7 December lecture:** Exam 5 to be written during class time
- **7 December laboratory:** no laboratory session this week
- **Graded requirement:** Exam 5 during scheduled lecture on 7 December

Methods of Assessment and Grading Weights

Grades in this class will be based on the completion of the following requirements (total of 100 points):

- Laboratory assignments 1 & 2 (2 x 8 points) = 16 points
- Laboratory assignments 3 & 4 (2 x 7 points) = 14 points
- Laboratory assignments 5 & 6 (2 x 10 points) = 20 points
- Examinations via D2L (5 x 10 points) = 50 points

Examinations will be held during regularly scheduled lecture periods on 21 September, 5 October, 19 October, 2 November, and 7 December. Laboratory assignments are due on 14 September, 28 September, 12 October, 26 October, 16 November, and 30 November. Examinations must be written via D2L on the dates and time scheduled above. Results will be communicated via D2L.

While laboratory assignments will be discussed in Zoom sessions, the writing and submission of assignments is an individual responsibility. Students are not allowed to collaborate on the writing of assignments. All laboratory assignments must be submitted via D2L. Apart from Assignment 1, laboratory assignments may be submitted late, with the following penalties:

- Less than or exactly 24 hours late: one point.
- More than 24 but less than or exactly 48 hours late: two points.
- More than 48 hours late: a grade of zero will be assigned for the assignment.

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 performance
A-	85 – 89.99%	3.7	Approaching excellent performance
B+	80 – 84.99%	3.3	Exceeding good performance
B	75 – 79.99%	3.0	Good performance
B-	70 – 74.99%	2.7	Approaching good performance
C+	67 – 69.99%	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance
C	63 – 66.99%	2.0	Satisfactory performance
C-	59 – 62.99%	1.7	Approaching satisfactory performance
D+	55 – 58.99%	1.3	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
D	50 – 54.99%	1.0	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
F	<50%	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

Absences and Deferrals

Students who miss an in-class examination should inform their instructor as soon as possible. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, the instructor may offer an alternative arrangement. Penalties for the late submission of laboratory assignments are clearly identified above.

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out by the student and submitted, along with any supporting documentation, to the instructor:

<https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/14/deferral-of-term-work-2020.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the instructor will email the form to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (ascarts@ucalgary.ca) for approval by the Associate Dean.

Grade Reappraisal

Within one week of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written request to the instructor explaining the basis for a reassessment. Note that a reappraised grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

Handing in Papers, Assignments

1. Laboratory assignments must be submitted via D2L. Feedback will be returned via D2L.
2. In-class exams (both questions and answers) must be submitted before leaving the classroom. Results will be communicated via D2L.
3. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters.
4. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

Research Ethics

Research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – is not permitted in this course.

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Recording of Lectures

The audio or video recording of lectures and taking screenshots of PowerPoint slides during the lecture are not permitted without explicit authorization. The non-authorized media recording of lectures is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and may result in discipline in accordance with the

Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure. For more information click here: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-non-academic-misconduct-policy>

Sharing of Lecture Notes and Exam Questions

Publicly sharing lectures notes and exam questions on 3rd party sites such as OneClass, StudyBlue, Quizlet, Course Hero, etc. is not permitted. If you wish to use these studying tools, make sure you adjust your privacy settings accordingly. Any violations are subject to investigation under the UofC Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Guidelines for Zoom Sessions

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at the times identified above for “live” video conferences.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed, or published without the instructor’s permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the [Code of Conduct](#)). When entering Zoom sessions, you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behavior in these sessions may affect others. To encourage student participation, synchronous Zoom sessions in this course will not be recorded.

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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.html>

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodation is available at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

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

Libraries & Cultural Resources

To contact your librarian or find out about the resources and services available to sociology students go to the Sociology Library guide: <https://library.ucalgary.ca/guides/sociology>

To access the main Library website go to: <https://library.ucalgary.ca>

Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive support when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through Student Wellness Services (Room 370 MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

Student Success Centre

The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success>

Student Ombuds Office

The Student Ombuds Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/ or email ombuds@ucalgary.ca.

Student Union (SU) Information

The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or suvpaca@ucalgary.ca; Information about the SU, including elected Faculty Representatives, can be found here: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca>.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. Assembly points are designed to establish a location for information updates from the emergency responders to the evacuees; from the evacuated population to the emergency responders. For more information, see the University of Calgary's Emergency Management website:

<https://live-risk.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points>

Safewalk

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.