

The Logic and Methods of Social Inquiry

Sociology 103B

Summer 2015

Lecture: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00-4:30pm, Physical Sciences 110

Instructor:

Dr. Rachel Bryant-Anderson

218 College Eight

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-12:30 (drop-in) and 4:30-5:00 (sign-up)

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Teaching Assistants:

Maya Iverson

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Soc Sci 1 135

The first part of the course focuses on basic ethical, political, and logical issues in social scientific inquiry. The second part develops a wide range of skills and methods appropriate to actual research.

Through this course, you'll learn to become an effective producer and savvy consumer of social research. We will examine issues of ethics, subjectivity, and logistics in relation to social research. This will provide a basis for evaluating the unique advantages and challenges of various research methods as a means of learning about the social world. You will build your own methodological repertoire by conducting original research. You'll also learn the disciplinary conventions, standards, and practices common to professional sociologists. Whether or not you plan to become a social researcher, the skills you'll develop in this course will be useful to you as a student, employee, and engaged citizen.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Practical Research: Planning and Design, 11th Edition, by Paul D. Leedy & Jeanne Ellis Ormrod

Various readings posted on eCommons

CLASS TIME

Our class time will take a variety of formats, including lecture, large group discussion, small group discussion, and in-class activities. I encourage you to ask questions during lectures. Because much of our time together will be interactive, your participation will be essential. **Please note that all electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class.** Any student seeking an exception to this policy should speak with me individually.

In order to make our class discussions and activities successful, you should complete all required readings and homework assignments before each class period. Please **bring hard copies of the non-textbook readings to class** with you.

LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of the Summer Session. Contact the DRC at 459-2089, drc@ucsc.edu, for more information on the requirements and/or process.

ASSIGNMENTS

Research Project

This course is largely organized around the completion of an original research project that addresses a sociological question. Your written report of this project will be how you demonstrate your comprehension of the methodological tools and principles you learn through the readings and lectures. It will be completed in several phases and will culminate in a 15 page (approximately) paper that establishes: the context and rationale for your project; the details and justification for your research method; your findings; your proposal for a larger project addressing your research question; and your reflection on the research process.

This is a writing-intensive course, satisfying UCSC's Disciplinary Communications requirement. As such, it will emphasize the development of skills that will prepare you to communicate effectively as a professional social researcher. We will engage in writing workshops in lecture and lab to train you in these skills, and your assignments will be evaluated based on the quality of writing as well as the level of mastery of methodological tools and principles.

The various elements of this assignment are:

- Research Question Due: July 29 (in section)
- Method Proposal Due: August 4
- Annotated Bibliography Due: August 6
- Method Section Due: August 12 for peer review (in section)
Due: August 14 for grading
- Final Paper, consisting of: Due: August 28
 - Introduction
 - Revised Method Section
 - Findings and Discussion
 - Conclusion/Proposal for Larger (Future) Project

Research Presentation (Optional Extra Credit)

In addition to presenting the results of your project in your final research proposal, you have the option to share them with the entire class during our last meeting. Over the session, you will become familiar with one another's projects, and this will be the culmination of our collective and cooperative work together. In addition, the oral presentation of a research project is an important skill for a professional sociologist, and this aspect of the course will provide a model for participation in professional conferences such as those held annually by the American Sociological Association (among many others).

Homework Assignments

I will assign homework daily. These assignments will help you learn some of the skills you'll use in your own research project and will also give you a chance to try out other research methods. It is essential that you complete all of the assigned exercises – both for the sake of your skill development as well as your ability to participate in the accompanying in-class exercises.

Participation / Lab

Because much of this course is designed around the principle of cooperative learning, your regular and thoughtful participation will be essential. Your participation will be evaluated in at least three contexts: discussion sections, large-group discussions, and your research workgroups.

Discussion section attendance is mandatory and will be a very productive use of your time. Sections will provide you an opportunity to work on certain aspects of your assignments with the benefit of one-on-one assistance when needed. You will also participate in useful skill-building exercises in section.

Our **class time** will also be highly participatory, and the frequency and quality of your contributions during lecture will affect your final course grade. Each student will design and carry out an original project, and I'm confident that you'll benefit greatly from hearing your peers' input on these projects, as well as on methodological issues more generally. Behaviors that indicate a lack of engagement and/or respect during class (lecture or section) will significantly and negatively impact your participation grade. These behaviors include (but are not limited to): sleeping, texting, use of computers/other technology without prior approval, engaging in side conversations, arriving late, and leaving early.

I will assign you to **research workgroups**, and these groups will be a major resource for you as you learn to be a social researcher. You will engage in cooperative learning with your workgroup members by doing assigned exercises and offering extensive feedback on one another's work. At the end of the course, you will evaluate the quality of each member's workgroup participation, and they will do the same for you. The basis for this evaluation will be the extent to which you: were prepared for workgroup sessions (by completing all assigned readings, activities, and assignments); were focused during workgroup sessions (staying on-task rather than engaging in side conversations, etc.); were respectful of other workgroup members; and offered valuable input and feedback on other members' work.

General Assignment Guidelines and Policies

Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments must be **typed** and (when appropriate) **stapled**. If your homework assignment is handwritten, you must show it to me (or your TA) **before class** to receive credit. If you are late to class (or section), you will not have the opportunity to get a handwritten assignment approved for credit.

Assignments must be submitted in class/section, by the student her/himself, when they are asked for in order to be considered on-time. **I will not accept late homework assignments** or assignments submitted by e-mail or another student. This is because the purpose of the homework assignments is to serve as the basis for in-class activities. **Deadline extensions for the major assignments must be discussed with me before the due date** and will result in a grade deduction.

Course Workload

According to the UCSC General Catalog, you should expect to spend 3 hours per week for every unit of coursework during a regular academic quarter, meaning that a 5 unit course such as this one would entail approximately 3.5 hours of lecture, 1 hour of section, and 10.5 hours of work outside of class and lab. Due to the compressed nature of this course, you should double these estimates. Please note: **you will be expected to do the same amount of work** (readings, class/section time, and assignments) during this summer session offering of SOCY 103B **in half the amount of time normally allotted**. This will be a challenging course, and passing it will require persistent hard work and excellent time management. Be assured that if you are willing to invest the time and effort required, you will have plenty of support (from me, your TA, and your peers) to facilitate your success.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

This class will be conducted in full accordance with the University's "Policy on Academic Integrity." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, quoting or paraphrasing without attribution; copying from other students' papers or exams; plagiarizing portions of assignments; presenting another's work as your own. I, like all instructors, am required to report students engaged in such activities to their college provost. Students are responsible for knowing what the standards for academic integrity are and adhering to them. Penalties for plagiarism are outlined at: http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/policy_1.html.

GRADING

Your final course evaluation will be based on your performance on the above assignments. These assignments will be weighted as follows:

Method Proposal	2%
Annotated Bibliography	15%
Method Draft	20%
Final Research Paper	32%
Homework Assignments	16%
Participation / Section / Group Workshops	15%
Research Presentation	up to 3% (extra credit)

Final course grades will be assigned based on the following scale; grades below 60% will be considered failing ("F"):

A+ = 98 – 100%	B+ = 88 – 89.9%	C+ = 78 – 79.9%
A = 92 – 97.9%	B = 82 – 87.9%	C = 70 – 77.9%
A- = 90 – 91.9%	B- = 80 – 81.9%	D = 60 – 69.9%

A Grades

Grades in the "A" range will be granted only for exceptional work. Exceptional, or "A," work refers to exemplary work that goes above and beyond requirements, demonstrating an outstanding understanding of course materials/concepts and deep engagement with these materials/concepts. For written assignments, exceptional work also involves advanced writing skills; for oral presentations, exceptional work also involves professional-level presentation skills and an ability to engage, in addition to inform, the audience. This is work that could serve as a model for other students.

B Grades

Grades in the "B" range are earned with work submitted on time that is of very good quality. "B" work meets all the requirements and demonstrates an excellent understanding of the course materials and concepts and engagement with these materials/concepts. For written assignments, "B"-level work also involves clear, coherent, carefully edited writing; for oral presentations, it also involves executing a clear, informative, and engaging presentation.

C Grades

Grades in the "C" range are earned with work submitted on time that fulfills basic requirements and is of satisfactory to good quality. This work demonstrates a basic understanding of course materials.

Grade Review Procedure

If you think a grade review for one of your assignments is warranted, you will need to consult with me by following these steps:

1. Come to my office hours (or schedule an appointment) to meet with me in person **within one week** of receiving your assignment grade.
2. Bring the original hard copy of the **assignment** you submitted and any **feedback** you received from the grader.
3. Bring a **written explanation** of why you think the grade is incorrect. Be specific about which point categories (from the rubric) you're disputing.

Please be aware that a grade review may result in a grade that is lower, higher, or the same as the original, based on my assessment of the quality of your work.

READING & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Check eCommons for daily assignment descriptions.

WEEK 1

Tuesday, July 28: Introduction and Overview

Reading

Practical Research, Chapter 1: "The Nature and Tools of Research"

Wednesday, July 29: 1st section meetings in Soc Sci 1 135 (computer lab)

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 2: "The Problem: The Heart of the Research Process," pp. 27-35

Practical Research, Chapter 3: "Review of the Related Literature," pp. 52-53 & 62-66

Assignment

Research Question

Thursday, July 30: Problem Formulation and Research Design

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 2: "The Problem: The Heart of the Research Process," pp. 36-38 & 43-45

Practical Research, Chapter 4: "Planning Your Research Project," pp. 74-92 & 96-102

Wall and Arnold: "How Involved is Involved Fathering?: An Exploration of the Contemporary Culture of Fatherhood" (available on eCommons)

Assignment

Wall and Arnold Article Map

WEEK 2

Tuesday, August 4: Ethics

Readings

Humphreys: "Methods: The Sociologist as Voyeur" (available on eCommons)

Practical Research, Chapter 4: "Planning Your Research Project," pp. 102-109

Assignment

Method Proposal

Wednesday, August 5 (Section)

Assignment

Reading Notes

Thursday, August 6: Unobtrusive Methods

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 6: "Descriptive Research," pp. 158-168

Practical Research, Chapter 9: "Qualitative Research Methods" pp. 251-263

Martin and Kazyak: "Hetero-Romantic Love and Heterosexiness in Children's G-Rated Films" (available on eCommons)

Assignments

Annotated Bibliography

Martin and Kazyak Reading Notes

WEEK 3

Tuesday, August 11: Surveys & Interviews

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 5: "Writing the Research Proposal"

Practical Research, Chapter 6: "Descriptive Research," pp. 136-158 & 168-173

Practical Research, Chapter 9: "Qualitative Research Methods" pp. 263-272

Pew Research: "Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change." (available on eCommons)

Assignments

Section Map - Methods

Survey/Interview Questions

Wednesday, August 12 (Section)

Assignment

Method Section (draft)

Thursday, August 13: Field Research

Reading

Goffman: selections from *On the Run* (available on eCommons)

Assignment

Measurement Tool

Friday, August 14

Assignment

Method Section

WEEK 4

Tuesday, August 18: Unconventional Methods

Reading

Venkatesh: "What is the Matter with Sociology?" (available on eCommons)

Wednesday, August 19 (Section)

Assignment

To be determined

Thursday, August 20: Data Analysis

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 8: "Analyzing Quantitative Data," pp. 211-216 & 243-245

Practical Research, Chapter 11: "Analyzing Qualitative Data"

Assignment

Section Maps - Introduction

WEEK 5

Tuesday, August 25: Communicating Findings

Readings

Practical Research, Chapter 13: "Planning and Preparing a Final Research Report," pp. 331-336 & 343-348

Booth, Colob, and Williams: "Communicating Evidence Visually" (available on eCommons)

Assignment

Section Maps - Conclusion

Wednesday, August 26 (Section)

Assignment

New section of final paper (draft)

Thursday, August 27: Wrap-up & Optional Presentations

Assignments

Presentation (optional)

Workgroup Member Evaluations

Friday, August 28

Assignment

Final Paper