

## The Logic and Methods of Social Inquiry

Sociology 103B

Summer 2014

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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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 effective producers and savvy consumers of social 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 citizen.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

*Social Research Counts*, by Earl Babbie

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; your reflection on the research process.

This is a writing-intensive course, satisfying the university's Disciplinary Communications requirement. As such, it will place considerable emphasis on 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 30 (in lab)
- Method Proposal Due: August 5
- Annotated Bibliography Due: August 7
- Method Section Due: August 13 for peer review  
Due: August 14 for grading
- Final Paper, consisting of: Due: August 29
  - 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 research methods you won't use in this project. 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: lab, large-group discussions, and your research workgroups.

**Lab attendance** is mandatory and will be a very productive use of your time. Labs 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 lab.

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 lab) will significantly and negatively impact your participation grade. These behaviors include (but are not limited to): sleeping, texting, 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.

Assignments must be submitted in class/lab, 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 papers 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 lab, 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/lab 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](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 / Lab	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.

## READING & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1

**Tuesday, July 29: Introduction and Overview**

**Wednesday, July 30: 1<sup>st</sup> lab meetings in Soc Sci 135 (computer lab)**

Assignment

Research Question

**Thursday, July 31: Problem Formulation and Research Design**

Readings

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 3: “Design and Measurement”

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

Optional Reading: *Social Research Counts*, Chapter 12: “Reading and Writing Social Research”

Assignment

Article Map

### WEEK 2

**Tuesday, August 5: Ethics**

Reading

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

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 4: “The Logic of Sampling”

Assignment

Method Proposal

**Wednesday, August 6 (Lab)**

Assignment

Reading Notes

## **Thursday, August 7: Unobtrusive Methods**

### Readings

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 8: “Unobtrusive Research”

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

### Assignments

Annotated Bibliography

Martin & Kazyak Reading Notes

<b>WEEK 3</b>
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## **Tuesday, August 12: Surveys & Interviews**

### Reading

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 6: “Survey Research”

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

### Assignments

Section Map - Methods

Survey/Interview Questions

## **Wednesday, August 13 (Lab)**

### Assignment

Method Section (draft), including measurement tool

## **Thursday, August 14: Field Research**

### Readings

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 7: “Qualitative Field Research”

Duneier: selections from *Sidewalk* (available on eCommons)

### Assignment

Method Section

## WEEK 4

### **Tuesday, August 19: Unconventional Methods**

#### Readings

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

### **Wednesday, August 20 (Lab)**

#### Assignment

To be determined

### **Thursday, August 21: Data Analysis**

#### Readings

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 10: "Qualitative Data Analysis"

*Social Research Counts*, Chapter 11: "Quantitative Data Analysis"

#### Assignment

Section Map

## WEEK 5

### **Tuesday, August 26: Communicating Findings**

#### Reading

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

#### Assignment

Section Map

### **Wednesday, August 27 (Lab)**

#### Assignment

New Section of Final Paper (draft)

### **Thursday, August 28: Wrap-up & Optional Presentations**

#### Assignments

Presentation (optional)

Workgroup Member Evaluations

### **Friday, August 29: Final Paper Due**