

Social Research (2950)

This is a required class for Sociology majors, and includes an overview of the principles of methodology, theory and research; survey of basic research designs and perspectives; and preparation for understanding and conducting sociological research.

Meeting Days	MWF	Instructor:	Zach Rubin
Meeting Times	10:00-10:50 AM	Office:	331 Middlebush Hall
Location	Strickland Hall 105	Office Hours	Tuesdays 1-3 or by appointment
Final	Wednesday, May 10, 7:30-9:30 AM	Email	zcr34b@mail.missouri.edu
TA	Aaron Padgett	TA Office	306 Middlebush Hall
TA Email	japqn5@mail.missouri.edu	TA Office Hours	T 2:30-3:00 W 11:00-12:00

Course Objectives

This is a Sophomore-level class, and not by any means an introduction to the discipline of sociology. As such, your overall expectations for the course are the present the following skills:

- Read and comprehend primary and secondary source writing.
- Competently describe the content of those sources.
- Generate your own data like what one would find in primary sources.
- Evaluate the scientific fitness of data and the reporting of it.
- Critically reflect on the meaning and context of information presented in the course.

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance

This is a minor part of your grade, but a huge part of your success in the class. If you don't show up or don't contribute to the class it will be near impossible to get an A. This will be filled in by attendance sheets I pass around most days. You can miss up to 3 days and still get a perfect attendance grade. After that many absences, your grade goes down by (20/# of class days) points. For example, if I take attendance 40 times and you miss 6 classes, that would be half a point per day, and 3 points total.

Similarly, participation is not mandatory but still an integral part of doing well in the class. The more you engage in discussion, the more likely you are to do well on the related assignments.

Group Project

In the third week, you will be assigned to a group. Throughout the semester, you will be tasked with conducting your own in-depth research project and reporting on the results. This will be done in stages, noted in the Schedule below. Group work can be frustrating due to

conflicting schedules, but I've built in several days off for you to meet, as well as scheduled meetings with me to answer questions and check in on the progress of your project.

Exams

There will be three exams in this class. They will be designed to test your recall of the readings covered, the class discussions and your ability to think critically about the topics presented in the class. Yes, they are comprehensive, in as much as topics learned in each part of the class build upon each other and carry forward. But no, they are not comprehensive in the sense that you will only be tested over material covered since the last exam.

Activities

At various points throughout the semester, I will give small assignments designed to improve your familiarity with the research process. These are to be done independently, and several of them will contribute to a larger, class-wide project.

Late Policy

Project organization, time management, and contingency planning are essential to success in this and all college courses. Thus, it is expected that assignments will be submitted by their respective due date. To encourage personal commitment to learning and to maintain focus on the achievement of the student learning outcomes, late work on "just in time" questions, response papers, and test questions will not be accepted in my course. There is no make up work or extra credit in my course.

*That being said, stuff happens. If there are one or more personal emergencies that happen you find yourself in a crunch, email me **before** something is due and we might be able to work out a plan, depending on the circumstances.*

Classroom Safe Space Policy

There is likely to be a good deal of discussion and participation, despite this being a larger class size in a big room. Take care to treat your classmates with respect. Any words or actions inside or outside the classroom that create a hostile learning environment for someone on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, class, geographic origin, immigrant status, or any other characteristic with the potential for discrimination could be grounds for dismissal from the classroom or even removal from the course. No space can be made entirely safe to all views and vulnerabilities, and the best outcome in an offending situation is a response that engages and changes minds rather than retreats and accuses.

Normally, I would give a trigger warning whenever a lesson comes up with content that could be potentially troubling to people with related past trauma. This class, however, deals almost every single day with controversial and sensitive topics. Should a topic have the potential for triggering effects for you, you are encouraged to exercise independent decision making about whether you want to attend. You will still be held accountable to the material covered in that lecture, but may obtain the notes either by coming to office hours or borrowing them from someone else in the class. If you are presenting that week, email me far in advance so we can work something out.

Also, in this class there will be many opportunities to share personal experiences or histories. You should never feel compelled to share something you are uncomfortable talking, writing, or otherwise presenting about. Feel free to answer questions with fiction, but also note when you do that so I don't come to know an incongruous version of you.

Tips for Success

- Turn your cellphone off during class, and refrain from getting lost shopping or Facebooking on your laptop if that's what you use to take notes. Do not be that person that I have to stop the class for or who distracts the people behind them with a YouTube video.
- I will not be posting the powerpoints on Canvas. Be here and take notes. If you have to miss class, get the notes you missed from someone in the class, or come see me during office hours.
- I reserve the right to change or update this syllabus as I see fit, with forewarning to you of course.
- There will be no late make up exams. If you know you have to miss a class, contact me beforehand so we can work something out.
- I may send out email from time to time over Canvas, so be in the habit of checking your email, it is a good habit to have.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the [Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities](#); the [MU Equity Office](#), or equity@missouri.edu.

All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in [section 200.015](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make audio or video recordings of course activity, except students permitted to record as an accommodation under [section 240.040](#) of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of [section 200.020](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Those students who are permitted to record are not permitted to redistribute audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of [section 200.020](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Students with Disabilities:

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible. If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Point Distributions

Category	Items	Total Point Value
Attendance	Attendance	20
Exams	Exam 1, Exam 2, Exam 3	75
Assignments	Breaching, Journal Article Review, Interviewing, Identifying Research, Reflection	75
Group Project Stages	Problem Statement, Annotated Bibliography, Literature Review, Methods, Final Paper, Presentation, and Group Evaluations	130
	<i>Total points possible</i>	300

Points	Min %	Grade	Points	Min %	Grade
279	93	A	219	73	C
270	90	A-	210	70	C-
261	87	B+	201	67	D+
249	83	B	189	63	D
240	80	B-	180	60	D-
231	77	C+			F

Course Schedule

Day	Topic	Reading
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	<i>In-class Activity</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
1/18	Introduction to the Class	
1/20	What is Sociology?	Reading: Berger (ERES)
1/23	Doing Research	Reading: Neuman Ch. 1
1/25	<i>Breaching Activity</i>	
1/27	Reports on Breaching Activity	<i>Breaching Activity Due @ 5PM</i>
1/30	Planning a Study	Reading: Neuman Ch. 2
2/1	The Qualitative and Quantitative Divide	
2/3	Film: Sociological Theory and Methods (VOD)	
2/6	Ethical Concerns <i>Journal Article Dissection Assignment</i>	Reading: Neuman Ch. 3
2/8	Film: Zimbardo Prison Experiment (YouTube)	
2/10	<i>Exam 1</i>	<i>Journal Article Activity Due @ 5 PM</i>
2/13	Sampling	Reading: Neuman Ch. 4
2/15	Campus Resources for Research	
2/17	<i>Groups Assigned</i>	<i>Problem Statement Due @ 5 PM</i>
2/20	Literature Reviews	Reading: Loeske, Ch. 4 Gaultney and Peach Ch. 2 (Both on ERES)
2/22	Presentation from Reference Librarian	
2/24	<i>Movie TBD</i>	
2/27	Measuring Social Life	Reading: Neuman Ch. 5
3/1	Zach's Research	
3/3	<i>No Class – Group Work</i>	<i>Annotated Bibliography Due @ 5 PM</i>
3/6	Qualitative Research 1 (fieldwork) <i>Interviewing Activity</i>	Reading: Neuman Ch. 10
3/8	Guest Lecturer – Robyn Swink	
3/10	<i>Exam 2</i>	
3/13	Qualitative Research 2 (cross cultural)	Reading: Neuman Ch. 11
3/15	<i>Coding Activity</i>	
3/17	<i>No Class – Group Work</i>	<i>Literature Review Due @ 5 PM</i>
3/20	Qualitative Research 3 (Surveys)	Reading: Neuman Ch. 6
3/22	Guest Lecturer: Jeff Stillely	
3/24	Reports on Interviewing Activity	<i>Interviewing Activity Due @ 5 PM</i>
3/27	**Spring Break, No Class**	
3/29	**Spring Break, No Class**	
3/31	**Spring Break, No Class**	
4/3	<i>Group Meetings w/Instructor – Groups 1 to 5</i>	Reading: Neuman Ch. 7 Pager (on ERES)
4/5	<i>Group Meetings w/Instructor – Groups 6 to 10</i>	

4/7	Quantitative Research 1 (Experiments)	<i>Methods Due @ 5 Pm</i>
4/10	Quantitative Research 2 (Statistical Analysis)	Reading: Neuman Ch. 9
4/12	Guest Lecturer: Ashley Isby	
4/14	<i>Identifying Social Science Research</i>	
4/17	Writing it all up	Reading: Neuman Ch. 12
4/19	Public Sociology – Uses Beyond Academia	
4/21	Unusual Research Examples	<i>Identifying Research Activity Due @ 5 PM</i>
4/24	<i>Exam 3</i>	
4/26	<i>Group Meetings w/Instructor – Groups 6 to 10</i>	
4/28	<i>Group Meetings w/Instructor – Groups 1 to 5</i>	<i>Reflection Activity Due @ 5 PM</i>
5/1	<i>Group Presentations</i>	<i>Final Paper (due with class presentation)</i>
5/3	<i>Group Presentations</i>	
5/5	<i>Group Presentations</i>	
5/10	<i>Group Presentations Finals Week – Meet 7:30-9:30 AM</i>	<i>Group Evals Due @ 5 PM</i>