

Research Methods: Soc 102A

Section 3, T/Th 1:30-2:45

ARC 3009

LAB: T/Th 3-4:15

Amador 220

Professor Todd A. Migliaccio

Office: Amador Hall 451D

Hours: T/R 10:30-11:30, R 12:-1:30, or by appointment

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Course Objectives:

The objective of the course is to develop introductory level skills that are necessary to understand and conduct research for scientific and policy purposes. This entails first understanding what science is, and what is meant by the 'scientific method,' conceptualizing research problems, and how to design research to investigate issues. The initial part of the course will emphasize the practice of social research, assumptions related to it, its connection to social theory and beginning conceptualization of a research project. The second section of the course will focus on the specific research methods that can be utilized in studying the social world. The final section will attempt to wrap up the ideas presented, introducing the analysis of a data, as well as discussions of ethics. Throughout each of these sections, discussions of past social research will be presented in connection with the ideas and concepts related to social research, thus offering both the information and application of findings in the social world.

Required Text:

Neuman, W. Laurence. *Basics of Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. 2004. Allyn and Bacon.

Babbie, Earl, Fred Halley, & Jeanne Zaino. *Adventures in Social Research*. 2003, Pine Forge Press.

Policies:

As well, I will attempt to adhere to the schedule listed in the course calendar; however, I am willing to deviate from it through the duration of the course. I will confer with the class prior to any changes.

The paper will be in Q standard format, meaning 1 inch margins on all sides; font at least 12 point; paper title at center top of first page; name, assignment title, course number, and semester in header, footer or title page; and bibliography on a separate page. It must be typed and stapled and not placed in any covers, folders or any other such contraption.

Throughout the course, each student will be allotted three extensions for the papers/assignments. Each extension is worth one class day (ex. If the paper is due on Tuesday, and you turn it in on Thursday, that is one extension). You do not need permission from the professor. You may use these extensions whenever you want, subject to the rules below:

1) *You get four extensions. Don't ask me for more- you will not get them. Hence, you should use extensions wisely when you really need them, such as sickness or an athletic event.*

2) *You may use a maximum of two extensions on the proposal paper; by using two on the paper, you can turn the paper in two classes late.*

3) You can use one on any assignment (including lab assignments) given in the class, meaning the assignment can be turned in one class period later. Any assignment turned in later, or if you have used all of your extensions, will not be accepted.

4) Any paper that is submitted later than two classes after it is due (regardless of your extension situation), or is turned in late after you have used all of your extensions will be penalized two full grades.

5) Any assignments submitted after one class period (regardless of extension situation), or after you have used all of your extensions, the assignment will not be accepted.

6) Extensions cannot be used on peer review assignments, as they are due in class.

All papers must be typed and stapled and not placed in any covers, folders or any other such contraption. A title page is expected, which will contain the following information: Title of the paper, your name, and the name of the class (Sociology 166 for those of you not paying attention). Thank you.

Use of WebCT: While there are times when the site will be down, this is not an excuse for a missed assignment or late paper. The material will be up with sufficient time to copy it before it comes due. Ultimately it is your responsibility to either obtain it, or let me know of any problems you are having with it. Most problems are related to the computer department, so contact the help desk. If they are unable/unwilling to help you let me know, and I will attempt to correct any problems, but on occasion they are not my fault (I know, that is hard to imagine, but it is true).

If you are a student who has a disability that may necessitate accommodations being made in the classroom, please contact SSD, (916) 278-6955.

Turn off all pagers and cell phones before entering class. I accept the right to answer any that ring (and make up any wild stories about you to the person who has called).

Finally, cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are caught engaging in either of these activities, you will receive an F.

Online Component:

The class is located on the webct campus server. Accessing this site requires a login and password, which are the following: Login: your saclink id (the same one used on your email address); Password: saclink password. You will be able to access the outlines for the course, any overheads used in class, any material that was handed out, a glossary of terms (if there is one not listed that you can not locate elsewhere, please let me know so I can include it), all of the assignments, and syllabus. You will also be able to locate your grade on-line if you desire.

Exams:

Four exams will be given over the course of the semester, but only three will count (yes, that means you get to drop one exam). Each will be worth 10% of your total grade (that is a total of 30% for the math gems in the class). Each test will only examine your knowledge from the previous test until the class period just prior to the exam. The final will not be a comprehensive final. You will need to bring scantrons for each of the exams, as they will be multiple-choice exams.

Papers and Other Assignments:

Research Proposal: You will write a research proposal, which includes a statement of the problem, literature review that discusses the literature about the topic you are attempting to study, setting up your hypothesis, and a methods section. This project includes turning in assignments related to the project throughout the semester (for example if you do not turn in peer review papers at the time they are due, and no peer reviews are turned in with the final draft, your grade will be reduced 3% for each chapter with missing peer reviews). This will be the basis for your bigger project in 102B. This paper is worth 35% of the total grade.

Peer Reviews: You will be reviewing the proposals of your classmates. You will review two papers, which will be reviewed before they are turned in to me. Your reviews will be turned in by the student and then graded. So you need to make sure that you offer a quality review of the papers. It will be worth 5% of your total grade.

Class Assignments and Quizzes: You will administer your survey to friends and/or family, then discuss the survey with friends and their interpretation of its meaning. You will then discuss the issues that arose concerning the administration of the survey, difficulties involved in the process, and changes you would make in both the procedure and the survey, as well as discuss your findings. A discussion of the expectations of the assignment will occur in class. As well, quizzes on the readings and lab assignments will be given throughout the semester, most likely in class, but the option for quizzes during lab does exist. This is worth 15% of the total grade.

Lab Assignments: Throughout the semester short written assignments will be given that incorporates the concepts of the class into your own lives, as well as to practice some of the concepts learned in lecture and the book. Most, if not all will be done in class. Many will be short computer assignments that will require short write-ups about what you found. No make-ups for these are possible. Late assignments will not be accepted. These assignments as well as attendance will be worth a total of 15% of your total grade.

Calendar:

January 27 & 29: The Scientific Method and Research Design	READ: Chapter 1 NO LAB
February 3 & 5: Research Design & Writing a Literature Review	READ: Chapters 4 & 14 (Neuman) LAB: Chapter 1 and 2 (Babbie)
February 10, 12, & 17: Theory and Research February 12: Hypothesis due electronically February 17: Annotated Bibliography due for five articles	READ: Chapter 2 (Neuman) LAB: Literature Review and Chapter 3
February 19: Exam 1	
February 24 & 26: Measurement <u>February 26: First Chapter due for peer review</u>	READ: Chapters 5 LAB: Lit Rev & Chapter 4 (due 2/26)
March 3 & 5: Sampling March 5: Concepts and variables due	READ: Chapter 6 LAB: Lit Rev & Chapter 5 (due 3/5)
March 10, 12 & 17: Survey Research <u>March 17: Chapter 2 due for peer review</u>	READ: Chapter 7 LAB: Lit Rev & Chapter 6 (due 3/12)
March 19: Exam 2	
March 24 & 26: Experimental Research	READ: Chapters 8 LAB: Chapter 7 (due 3/26)
March 30-April 5: Spring Break	
April 7 & 14: Content Analysis & Secondary Analysis <u>April 7: Chapter 3 Peer Review Due</u> April 9: NO CLASS	READ: Chapter 9 LAB: Chapter 8 (due 4/9)
April 16, & 21: Field Research April 21: Research Proposal Due	READ: Chapter 11 LAB: Chapter 9 (due 4/16)
April 23: Exam 3	
April 28: Historical Comparative	READ: Chapter 12 LAB: Chapter 10 & 11 (due 4/30)
April 30, May 5 & 7: Data Analysis	READ: Chapters 10 & 13 LAB: Chapter 13 (due 5/7)
May 12 & 14: Ethics	READ: Chapter 3 LAB: Chapter 14 (due 5/14)
May 19, Tuesday, 3-5: Exam 4 (Amador 220)	