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DATA 334: Applied Research Syllabus (Sociology Department)

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DATA 334: Applied Research (4 credits)

Fall 2021

Prerequisite courses: SOC/DATA 205 and SOC/DATA 212(W). Course is NOT open to students who have taken SOC 334.

DATA 334 is a required course for the SOC major, SOC minor, and DATA minor.

Fully online (asynchronous)¹

ZERO TEXTBOOK COST course; Learning management system: Blackboard

Professor Holly E. Reed, Ph.D.

Email: Holly.Reed@QC.CUNY.EDU

Department of Sociology: (718) 997-2800

Office hours: Mondays 1:00 pm-5:00 pm (by appointment ONLY)

Please email me or use the Calendly link on Blackboard to schedule a Zoom meeting.

Course Objectives: Why study research methods?

Research is the core of sociology. Understanding how to conduct research and analyze results are key skills in the twenty-first century—both for the job market and in everyday life. Research allows us to test our assumptions about the world around us and understand the difference between opinion and empirically observed reality, which is central for a thriving democracy. This class will help you become a critical consumer of information and remind you to ask, “How do we know?”

Course Goals (and valuable job-related skills!):

- How to ask sociological research questions and formulate hypotheses.
- How to read a sociological journal article and identify academic sources.
- Understand the purpose of a literature review and how to create one.
- Learn qualitative and quantitative methods that sociologists use when conducting research.
- Understand the importance of a research proposal and how to create one to conduct your own research.

¹ Please note that this course will be taught as an asynchronous, online course. This means that all materials (lectures, assignments, readings, and discussions) will be posted weekly in Blackboard for students to complete during their own time. This class follows a Monday schedule, however, in terms of the QC calendar and holidays.

Course Structure:

This class will combine mini-lectures, readings, and other resources, such as videos and blogs. Each week, I will lecture on a few aspects of research design and methods, drawing on the assigned readings for the session to highlight central issues and questions. Some readings, taken from the sociology research literature, highlight concepts or issues. Please carefully read the assigned articles and read/review other relevant materials (e.g., texts and videos).

This is a 300-level, 4-credit course, and you should expect to spend at least 6 hours per week completing readings, watching lectures, and completing assignments.

Office Hours:

My office hours are only by appointment. I am usually available Mondays 1:00-5:00 pm. Other times may be arranged in advance if Monday afternoons are not a good time for you.

If you want an appointment with me, please email me or use Calendly (see link on Blackboard) to schedule one. I may not always be able to answer emails that are sent after 5:00 p.m. until the following day, so please plan if you need to contact me. I will normally respond within 12 hours, unless it is after 5:00 p.m. I will not be available to answer emails over the weekend.

Email is not the appropriate method of communication for long questions that require detailed answers. Please make an appointment for a Zoom meeting or telephone call if you would like to have a detailed discussion.

Materials:

This is a zero textbook cost course, so there are no required materials to purchase. Key readings for the course to introduce concepts, vocabulary, and tools will come from this free, online textbook:

Bhattacharjee, Anol, "Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices" (2012). Textbooks Collection. 3. http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3

(On the syllabus/course schedule the textbook is abbreviated as SSR for "Social Science Research.")

All supplementary/additional readings and resources, such as articles from scholarly journals or periodicals, instructional videos, etc., will be available on Blackboard.

Assignments and Grading:

Your performance will be evaluated according to the following assignments:

Assignment	Number	% Total Grade
Assignments	4	40%
Quizzes	4	20%
Peer review evaluations	2	20%
Final research proposal	1	20%

Most weeks you will complete either a short quiz, a short assignment, or a peer review evaluation. Detailed instructions for each will be posted on Blackboard.

Quizzes will be multiple choice, true/false and/or short answer (open book).

Instructions for assignments will be distributed at least 1 week in advance of their due date (on Blackboard). Written work will be graded on content as well as style, grammar, spelling, and organization. Please use spell-check and edit.

Shorter assignments will help you to work towards the final research proposal, so it is important to keep up with the workload for the course.

All assignments must be submitted, on Blackboard, no later than 5:00 pm on the Friday of the week they are due. Assignments that are late will be downgraded one-half letter grade for each business day that they are late (Mon-Fri); this means you have a weekend grace period for each assignment. Please try to get assignments in by Friday, however. I will not be available to answer emails with questions about assignments over the weekend.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with the Special Services Office by emailing QC.SPSV@qc.cuny.edu. For more information about services available to Queens College students, visit the Office of Special Services website: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/studentlife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>.

CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion as provided at <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>.

FOR TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

<https://www.qc.cuny.edu/computing/helpdesk/Pages/Welcome.aspx>

NETIQUETTE

Please maintain a professional demeanor when posting online. You can be respectful even when you have a difference of opinion. Treat others as you would want to be treated yourself. Do not type in all caps, as that is the online equivalent of shouting. If you need to emphasize a word or phrase, use italics.

If you need to email me about the course or an assignment, please include "DATA 334" in the subject line.

Class Session Schedule (Instructor will notify students in writing if the schedule changes.)

Week of August 30

Introduction: What is Research? Why Should I Learn to Do Research?

- SSR Chapters 1 and 2
- Other materials on Blackboard

Week of September 6

NO CLASS (Monday is QC holiday)

Week of September 13

Theory and Methods: What is a Paradigm? Why Do We Link Theory with Our Research Design?

- SSR Chapters 3 and 4
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****QUIZ #1 DUE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17*****

Week of September 20

Ethics in Research: What is a Human Subject? What are our Ethical Obligations as Researchers?

- SSR Chapter 16
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****QUIZ # 2 DUE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24*****

Week of September 27 Getting Started: How Do I Choose a Topic? What is a Research Question?

- Other materials on Blackboard

*****ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1*****

Week of October 4 Literature Review: What is Already Known About My Topic?

- Other materials on Blackboard

*****ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8*****

Week of October 11 **NO CLASS (QC closed for holiday)**

Week of October 18 Research Design I: Basic Research Concepts

- SSR Chapter 5
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****PEER EVALUATION #1 DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22*****

Week of October 25 Research Design II: Measurement, Reliability and Validity, and Sampling

- SSR Chapters 6, 7, and 8
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****QUIZ #3 DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29*****

Week of November 1 Qualitative Research I: Interviews and Participant Observation

- SSR Chapters 11 and 12
- Other materials on Blackboard

***** ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5*****

Week of November 8 Qualitative Research II: Content Analysis and Other Methods

- SSR Chapter 13
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****PEER EVALUATION #2 DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12*****

Week of November 15 Quantitative Research I: Surveys

- SSR Chapters 9, 14 and 15
- Other materials on Blackboard

*****QUIZ #4 DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19*****

Week of November 22 Quantitative Research II: Experiments and “Big” Data, Other Methods

- SSR Chapter 10
- Other materials on Blackboard

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Week of November 29 Writing About Research and Sharing Your Research Findings

- Other materials on Blackboard

***** ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3*****

Week of December 6 Reflections: Understanding Research and Real-World Applications and Skills

- Other materials on Blackboard

***** FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17*****