Sociology 3111-002, Research Methods  
Fall Semester 2021  
Tu/Th 09:10AM-10:30AM  
Gardner Commons (GC) 2950

Instructor: Roger Renteria  
Contact: via Canvas message  
Office Hours: TBD, via Zoom  
Office Location: 412 BEHS

Required Book (Available at the Campus Bookstore)  
The Art and Science of Social Research, First Edition  
Deborah Carr, Elizabeth Boyle, Ben Cornwell, Shelley Correll, Robert Crosnoe, Jeremy Freese, and Mary Waters  
W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.  
ISBN: 978-0-393-66371-6

Course Description  
This course introduces students to systematic methods that organize the research process and the multiple forms of research that it includes. The course explains the logic of research design, explores some common forms of data collection (such as interviews, surveys, direct observation, etc.), and links them to issues of data analysis and dissemination. The course provides fundamental research skills for use to students as either original producers or critical consumers of social research.

Course Outcomes  
This course provides an overview of the theory and practice of social science research. Regardless of your methodological persuasion or substantive area of study, my goals are to make you a better consumer and producer of research. We will focus broadly on the research methodologies most commonly used in social science disciplines. Specific learning objectives include:

a.) To familiarize students with different types of methods that are used to conduct research in the social sciences (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, materials-based);

b.) To expose students to the ethics and logic of data collection and analysis;

c.) To make students aware of the various sources of error and bias that are inherent in research methods;

d.) To give students an opportunity to apply research methods through real world applications.
Lectures, discussions, and weekly assessments (in the form of quizzes and activities) will be used to achieve these learning objectives. By the end of the course, each participant should have the skills, knowledge, and experience to contribute to academic research, in the role of research assistant, and to critically read and comprehend existing research.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**
Lectures will serve as the primary form of teaching in this course. I will prepare PowerPoint presentations that will cover the corresponding topic for the week. We will also learn by **doing**. We will read and evaluate scholarly work/research. We will develop a research question and propose a study contextualized by previous work. And, we will practice how to communicate the significance of this study to a broad audience. These are some examples of how we will be **doing and learning** important components of the research process.

*A friendly reminder: be prepared to dedicate 3 hours of time outside of class (for studying, reading, working on assignments, etc.) per week for every credit (1) hour of a course. That means, plan to dedicate up to 9 hours per week for this class. You should also plan to check the class Canvas page regularly (at least 3 times a week) for updates.*

**Course Policies**

**Attendance & Punctuality:** You are expected to attend, and arrive on time to, every class. While a formal attendance grade will not be taken, you will miss valuable opportunities to consolidate the curriculum and ask questions if you miss class. If attendance becomes poor, I reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes that will become part of your final grade. If you are attending a conference, you will need to provide paper documentation of your participation in the conference. That said, if you are feeling ill or have any potential COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, and malaise), please do not come to class, and avoid coming to campus if possible.

**Electronic Devices in Class:** Please bring laptop computers to class (if you have one) for note-taking. No email checking or net surfing during class. Please keep your phones put away and on silent during class time. If you need to take a call, please step outside of the classroom.

**Canvas:** You should check Canvas daily to stay abreast of email, announcements, and assignments. Canvas is always a critical portal for curriculum delivery, feedback, and communication. In general, your academic success depends on regular interaction with Canvas, so please make a practice of it. I promise this habit will serve you well throughout your academic career.

**Class Expectations**

*What you can expect from me (your instructor):*
I will be prepared before every class.
I will strive to make every class interesting.
I will hear your comments carefully and incorporate them into my teaching practices.
I will help create a safe environment in the class. I will try my best to follow the syllabus. However, I reserve the right to make some minor changes that will not increase your working load. I will strive to give you quick feedback. I will be fair when grading assignments. I am happy to talk with you if you are unclear about the grading rubric of certain assignments. I will begin and end class on time.

Here are some things I expect from you:
You are expected to be attentive when the instructor or a peer is talking. Checking emails and surfing online are forbidden during the class. Please note that we will discuss the policies of using laptops to take notes in our first class. You are expected to discuss with other students in a civil manner. You are expected to read all the assigned readings before every class. You are expected to turn in your assignments on time. You are expected to communicate with me if you have difficulties understanding the contents of the class.

Assignments
Assignments will fall into six categories: (1) weekly chapter review quizzes; (2) CITI training; (3) mini-survey and mini-interview assignments; (4) group research proposal; (5) concept checks/participation; and, (6) peer/self-evaluation. Below, is a brief description of each type of assignment.

(1) Weekly chapter review quizzes (20%): These are multiple choice quizzes that are available on Canvas. They review the most important concepts from each chapter. They must be completed by the Sunday (8 PM) following the class session that covered the corresponding chapter. They are timed, so you will not have time to track down the answers in the book without preparing beforehand by reading the chapter, having your lecture and reading notes, and practicing with flashcards. In general, if you have mastered the flashcards, you should be in good shape for the quiz.

(2) Concept Check/Participation (10%): We will reserve about 15 minutes before the end of class for a “concept check” session. I will ask a series of questions, in the form of multiple choice and short answer response that you will individually answer on a sheet a paper and turn in on your way out of class. We will discuss the questions and our responses in class.

(3) CITI human subjects research training and certification (5%): All researchers are obligated to uphold basic ethical principles when they collect, analyze, and report research. This assignment will introduce you to the history and guidelines for conducting ethical research that involves human subjects.

(4) Mini-survey and mini-interview assignments (20%): You will conduct a short survey and a short interview assignment for the class. These will provide you with a glimpse into preparing
survey questions and interview guides as well as what it is like to administer them. Part of the assignment will require you to write a short memo reflecting on this experience.

(5) Group Research Proposal (35%): We will work toward completing group research proposals. Proposals will have several components, which you will work on throughout the semester. Each group will have the opportunity to incorporate my feedback on the previous assignments and compile a final proposal. Each proposal must address: (1) the broad topic; (2) the specific research question; (3) what other scholars have studied on the broad topic; (4) what remains unknown about the broad topic and how the group’s research question contributes to the knowledge in the field; (5) the appropriate methodology; and (6) a discussion of the hypotheses or justification for an exploratory study. As a group endeavor, this work will require an equitable division of labor to help achieve the finished product. You will also give a brief presentation at the end of the semester over your group research proposal giving the class an overview on your proposed study.

(6) Peer/Self-Evaluation (10%): At the end of the semester, each student will provide an evaluation/grade for members of their team, including themselves. Groups will: (1) review the contributions of each group member including yourself and (2) you will grade your and your group members’ contributions to the research proposal. Please be fair in your assessment of each other’s work. These assessments will remain confidential.

Grading Policy (Evaluation Methods & Criteria)
Course grades will be calculated as a weighted average of the Canvas chapter review quizzes (20%), Group Research Proposal (35%), Mini-survey and mini-interview (20%), Concept Check (10%), Peer/Self-Evaluation (10%), and CITI Certification (5%).

Note: Any pop quizzes will be counted toward the Canvas quizzes portion of the grade.

A (100-93 points)  
A - (90-92 points)  
B + (89-87 points)  
B (86-83 points)  
B - (80-82 points)  
C + (79-77 points)  
C (76-73 points)  
C - (70-72 points)  
D + (69-67 points)  
D (66-63 points)  
D - (60-62 points)  
E (< 60 points)

• All grades will be posted on Canvas in a timely fashion.  
• It is the student’s responsibility to report and discuss grade discrepancies with the instructor.  
• Canvas quizzes must be completed by the due date in order to receive full credit. Canvas quizzes may be taken up to 1 week after the due date for partial credit. After 1 week, Canvas quizzes will be locked (i.e., no longer available to be taken), and students who have not completed the quizzes will receive a 0 on the assignment.  
• Late assignments may be accepted for partial credit, at the instructor’s discretion.

Note: Portions of this syllabus reflect courses delivered by Drs. Rebecca Utz, Daniel Adkins, and Di Di.
COVID-19: The University is continually monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic as conditions evolve. Official policies may change during the semester. We will be responsive to changes. University leadership has urged all faculty, students, and staff to model the vaccination, testing, and masking behaviors we want to see in our campus community. These include:

- Vaccination
- Masking indoors
- If unvaccinated, getting weekly asymptomatic coronavirus testing

-Vaccination

- Please get a COVID-19 vaccination if you have not already done so. Vaccination is proving highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization, and death from coronavirus. Vaccination is the single best way to stop this COVID resurgence in its tracks.
- Many in the campus community already have gotten vaccinated:
  - More than 80% of U employees
  - Over 70% of U students
- Visit [http://mychart.med.utah.edu/](http://mychart.med.utah.edu/) (Links to an external site.), [http://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine](http://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine) (Links to an external site.), or [http://vaccines.gov/](http://vaccines.gov/) (Links to an external site.) to schedule your vaccination.

-Masking

- While masks are no longer required outside of Health Sciences facilities, UTA buses and campus shuttles, CDC guidelines now call for everyone to wear masks indoors.
  - It is wise to wear masks in classroom spaces (and other contexts wherein transmission risks are high), because our success depends on being healthy.
  - I will wear a mask during class meetings indoors. I encourage you to do the same.

-Testing

- If you are not yet vaccinated, please get weekly asymptomatic coronavirus tests. This is a helpful way to protect yourself and those around you because asymptomatic individuals can unknowingly spread the coronavirus to others.
  - Asymptomatic testing centers are open and convenient:
- Online scheduling
- Saliva test (no nasal swabs)
- Free to all students returning to campus (required for students in University housing)
- Results often within 24 hours
- Visit [https://alert.utah.edu/covid/testing/](https://alert.utah.edu/covid/testing/) (Links to an external site.)

- Remember: Students must self-report if they test positive for COVID-19 via this website: [https://coronavirus.utah.edu/](https://coronavirus.utah.edu/) (Links to an external site.).

- If you or people who depend on you become sick due to COVID or any other illness, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can make the appropriate accommodations that allow you to make up coursework for full credit.

- Please do *not* come to class if you or people you are in contact with become sick due to COVID or any other illness.

**Students in Need of Accommodations and Support Services:** In accordance with *The Americans with Disabilities Act*, the University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. Additionally, the University endeavors to provide reasonable accommodations and to ensure equal access to qualified persons with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this course, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDS will work with you and the lead instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

- Prior to the beginning of the semester, several prospective students requested a remote delivery option for the course. Given the nature of this course (discussion-based seminar), in person attendance is required and adjustments cannot be granted to allow for regular non-attendance.

**Scheduling Conflicts:** Please speak with me (the lead instructor) within the first two weeks of class regarding any known conflicts you may have with the course schedule.

**Student and Faculty Responsibilities:** I emphasize maintaining a classroom environment that provides the utmost respect for diversity and all participants’ perspectives. Therefore, I expect students to conduct themselves in a considerate manner. All participants in the class must respect the classroom environment by being on time, turning off cellphones, earphones, and headphones, avoiding extraneous talking, and refraining from reading non-class material during class time.
- The class will follow accepted University of Utah policies and procedures as discussed in the Student Code. Specifically: I expect all students to maintain professional behavior according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights as detailed in the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content ([https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php](https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php)) (Links to an external site.).

-According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty person’s responsibility to enforce responsible behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Utah is committed to nurturing academic excellence, truth, honesty, and personal integrity. The faculty expects all students to maintain high ethical standards. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. As stated in the Student Code: “‘Academic misconduct’ includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, appropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.”

- “‘Cheating’ involves the unauthorized possession or use of information, materials, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise, or the unauthorized communication with another person during such an exercise.”
- “‘Misrepresenting one’s work’ includes, but is not limited to, representing material prepared by another as one’s own work, or submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both faculty members.”
- “‘Plagiarism’ means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person’s work in, or as a basis for, one’s own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one’s own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.”
- “‘Fabrication’ or ‘falsification’ includes reporting experiments or measurements or statistical analyses never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; falsifying or misrepresenting background information, credentials or other academically relevant information; or selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data and/or results.”

-This course has a zero-tolerance policy for academic misconduct. For any coursework in which it is demonstrated that a student engaged in academic misconduct the resulting academic sanction will be a score of zero for the coursework. Additionally, the student will be required to meet with the academic advisor from their respective major department, the instance of
Academic misconduct will be entered into a university database, and the student may be subject to further academic sanctions. See the Student Code for additional information on academic sanctions.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy:** Failure to withdraw from school results in an “E” or “EU” grade being recorded in all classes. Students may officially withdraw (W) from a class or all classes after the drop deadline through the midpoint of a course. A “W” grade is recorded on the transcript and appropriate tuition/fees are assessed. The grade of “W” is not used in calculating the student’s GPA. You may not receive an “E”, “EU”, or “W” and retake a course without paying tuition. If you attend class during a subsequent term, in an effort to complete the coursework, you must register for the course. An incomplete (I) grade can be given for work not completed due to circumstances beyond your control. You must be passing the course and have completed at least 80% of the required coursework. Arrangements must be made between you and the lead instructor concerning the completion of the work. Once the work has been completed, the lead instructor submits the grade to the Registrar’s Office. The “I” grade will change to an “E” if a new grade is not reported within one year. A written agreement between you and the lead instructor may specify the grade to be given if the work is not completed within one year. Copies of the agreement are kept by the lead instructor and the academic department.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. It is the policy of the University of Utah to maintain an academic and work environment free of sexual harassment or violence for students, faculty, staff and participants. A claim under this policy may be brought by any faculty, staff member, student or participant based on the conduct of any University employee or student that is related to or in the course of University business. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

**Help with Writing and English as an Additional/Second Language:** Please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your writing development; these resources are relevant to all students, but may be especially important for learners of English as an additional/second language. These resources include: the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/; Links to an external site.) and the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/; Links to an external site.). If you are a learner of English as an additional/second language, please let the lead instructor know so we can discuss the possibilities for additional support in this course.
Commitment to Undergraduate Students: As the only institution in the state classified in the highest research category (R1), at the University of Utah you will have access to state-of-the-art research facilities and be able to be part of the knowledge creation process. You will have the opportunity to do research of your own with faculty who are leading experts in their field, engaging in programs that match your research interests. Further, you will interact with and often take classes with graduate students that provide an advanced understanding of the knowledge in your field.

Safety & Wellness: Rates of burnout, anxiety, depression, isolation, and loneliness have noticeably increased during the pandemic. If you need help, reach out for campus mental health resources, including the Counseling Center (https://counselingcenter.utah.edu; Links to an external site.), the Wellness Center (https://wellness.utah.edu; Links to an external site.), and the Women’s Resource Center (https://womenscenter.utah.edu; Links to an external site.). Counselors and advocates in these centers can help guide you to other resources to address a range of issues, including substance abuse and addiction.

-The University of Utah values the safety and well-being of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677); this number will get you to a dispatch officer at the University of Utah Department of Public Safety (DPS; dps.utah.edu). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu (Links to an external site.).

-The University of Utah seeks to provide a safe and healthy experience for students, employees, and others who make use of campus facilities. In support of this goal, the University has established confidential resources and support services to assist students who may have been affected by harassment, abusive relationships, or sexual misconduct. A detailed listing of University Resources for campus safety can be found at https://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/campussafety.php (Links to an external site.).

-Your well-being is key to your personal safety. If you are in crisis, call 801-587-3000; help is close.

Undocumented Student Support: Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit dream.utah.edu (Links to an external site.).
**Non-Contract Note:** The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the course schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Note that modifications are most often made to rectify an error that would confuse and/or disadvantage students. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas under Announcements.
CSBS EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

BUILDING EVACUATION

EAP (Emergency Assembly Point) – When you receive a notification to evacuate the building either by campus text alert system or by building fire alarm, please follow your instructor in an orderly fashion to the EAP marked on the map below. Once everyone is at the EAP, you will receive further instructions from Emergency Management personnel. You can also look up the EAP for any building you may be in on campus at http://emergencymanagement.utah.edu/eap.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

U Heads Up App: There’s an app for that. Download the app on your smartphone at alert.utah.edu/headsup to access the following resources:

- **Emergency Response Guide:** Provides instructions on how to handle any type of emergency, such as earthquake, utility failure, fire, active shooter, etc. Flip charts with this information are also available around campus.

- **See Something, Say Something:** Report unsafe or hazardous conditions on campus. If you see a life threatening or emergency situation, please call 911!

**Safety Escorts:** For students who are on campus at night or past business hours and would like an escort to your car, please call 801-585-2677. You can call 24/7 and a security officer will be sent to walk with you or give you a ride to your desired on-campus location.