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Office: SILL 209A
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-3:00

TA: Lupe Aguilera
Contact Lupe via Canvas email
Office Hours: by appointment

Librarian: Dale Larsen, MLIS
dale.larsen@utah.edu
Office Hours: Monday 1:00-2:00, Fridays 10:00-noon

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of social science research. The course introduces students to the principles of research ethics, explains the logic of different research designs, explores some common forms of data-gathering (such as interviews, surveys, observation, etc.), discusses ways to analyze and report different types of data, and guides students through the development, evaluation, and presentation of social research. The course prepares students to become both original producers and critical consumers of social research.

Learning Outcomes
At the end of the course, the student will be able to:
1) Name the basic principles of research ethics
2) Compare the advantages and disadvantages of common research methodologies, including experimental, survey and qualitative research;
3) Identify, read, summarize, and critically evaluate various sources of research
4) Write about social science research and research methodology

Teaching and Learning Methods
This course will involve a variety of teaching and learning methods, including traditional lectures, group work, and experiential activities that teach research methods by doing research methods. Students are expected to be active participants in their own learning.

The focus of this course is on becoming both a critical consumer and producer of research, allowing learning to transcend beyond the walls of our classroom and be applied to lives and careers where we will be constantly confronted with the need to evaluate the validity and source of information presented to us. Furthermore, because research methodology can be applied to most any topic,
students are encouraged to integrate their knowledge and learning from other courses to the development and critique of the research methods learned within this class.

**General Education**

The successful completion of SOC 3111 with a grade of C- or better will satisfy the Upper Division Writing Intensive general education requirement (CW) for a bachelors degree at the University of Utah.

As an approved CW course at the University of Utah, SOC 3111 will provide direct instruction in how to write a research report/proposal, how to read and critique existing research, and how to present research findings to different audiences (i.e., poster or oral presentation). These skills are critical for social science researchers, and are also foundational topics related to helping students learn, practice, and develop their own effective communication practices in general. Frequent written assignments, building to a larger written research project at the end of the term, will allow students to develop, get feedback, and then revise/refine their research ideas throughout the semester. Students will also develop an oral presentation, where they have to articulate and discuss their research question and proposed research methodology. Students will use the feedback provided on these assignments to revise/refine their ideas for a final written research report at the end of the semester. Given the nature of these assignments plus the requirement of a final research report, a majority of the final course grade will be based on the students’ ability to write and communicate.

Specific Learning Outcomes & Assessments for **Intellectual and Practical Skills**

1. **Inquiry & Analysis** – Inherent in “research methods” is learning how to ask research questions (inquiry) and how to answer that question with data or evidence (analysis). The course schedule has dedicated learning units focused on both question formulation and data analysis. Assessment will be done with a review of an assignment on developing research topics/questions, an assignment related to data analysis (quantitative or qualitative), and a final research project.

2. **Information Literacy** – A major objective of the course is to teach students to become both a critical consumer and producer of research. To do so, students will learn how to ask questions about how the evidence was collected, whether it is representative of a larger phenomenon or population, how it was analyzed, and whether it is presented in an unbiased way. These are all examples of information literacy. To achieve this outcome, the course schedule includes dedicated learning units on how to evaluate the validity (i.e., accuracy and truthfulness) of material and information that is presented to us, as well as units on how to do both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Assessment will be done with a literature review assignment where students identify and evaluate others’ published research, assignment related to presenting/analyzing data, final research project.

Specific Learning Outcomes & Outcome Assessments for **Personal & Social Responsibility**

1. **Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning** – A course in “research methods” emphasizes the need to match data/evidence with our theories/ideas. While this course provides a solid foundation for those who want to pursue a career in research, it also teaches students to be more critically aware of the sources and validity of information that we see everyday (i.e., in the media) – an important skill for lifelong learning and success for everyone. The course’s focus on developing and refining one’s communication skills (orally and in writing) is another important outcome of this course. Assessment: quality of writing, presentation, and discussion, especially those assignments where students critique their own or other’s research.

2. **Ethical Reasoning** – Researchers are obligated to conduct ethical research, especially when dealing with human subjects. This course has a dedicated learning module related to the basic principles and practice of ethical research. Assessment: Students will complete a standardized and rigorous training course related to “research ethics” where they will receive a certificate allowing them to work on research projects at the University or other research entities (CITI training).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings
All students should have access to two types of textbooks – one is a social research method textbook, and one is focused on the craft of writing and formulating research. These books are available at the University of Utah bookstore, on reserve at the Marriott Library, or students should be able to find online a used copy of these commonly used texts.
- Booth et al, *Craft of Research. 4th edition*
Additional readings and resources will be available via Canvas.

Attendance & Participation
Regular attendance and active participation is expected. Attendance will be assessed with roll-call attendance, participation in in-class activities and/or Canvas discussions, and quizzes.

Assignments
There will be a series of assignments throughout the term. The assignments are intended to 1) provide an opportunity for students to “practice” a part of the research process and/or 2) to serve as a building block or initial draft of the final research project. These frequent and regular assignments provide both peer and instructor feedback, so students can develop and revise their ideas and writing throughout the semester.

Final Research Project/Proposal
The final project will require students to make decisions regarding a research topic they want to study, identify and review existing research literature that is related to the chosen topic, and choose and justify an appropriate research design (i.e., data collection and analysis strategy) that could answer a specific research question within their topic area. The culmination of this project will include both a written paper and oral presentation. Projects may be done in groups.

GRADING
Course grades will be calculated as a weighted average of assignments (40%), final research project (40%), and attendance/participation (20%).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(100-93)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A -</td>
<td>(90-92)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B +</td>
<td>(89-87)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(86-83)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B -</td>
<td>(80-82)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C +</td>
<td>(79-77)</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>(76-73)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C -</td>
<td>(70-72)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D +</td>
<td>(69-67)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(66-63)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D -</td>
<td>(60-62)</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>(&lt; 60)</td>
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The instructor is committed to providing the most fair and transparent grading procedures and outcomes as possible. To this end,
- Instructor will provide detailed grading rubrics and expectations at least 7 days prior to an assignment due date.
- Instructor will grade assignments and provide feedback within 7 days of submission.
• It is the student’s responsibility to report and discuss grade discrepancies with instructor.
• Instructor will entertain grade change requests, but such discussions should occur outside of class time and at least 24 hours after a grade is assigned (i.e., take a day to reflect on the comments provided and review the material prior to requesting grade change)
• No late assignments or make-ups for in-class activities will be accepted, without approved documentation.
• No extra credit is available.

Students with Disabilities (ADA Statement)
The Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801)581-5020. CDS will work with you and the 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.

Academic Code of Conduct
Per University of Utah regulations (Policy # 6-400). “A student who engages in academic misconduct,” as defined in Part I.B. and including, but not limited to, cheating, falsification, or plagiarism, “may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student's degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.” Please refer to the Student Code for full elaboration of student academic and behavioral misconduct policies (http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php).

Addressing 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. 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).

University Safety Statement
The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). 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.
THE FINE PRINT OF THE SYLLABUS

Student Behavior & Expectations

❖ **Attendance and Participation:** We expect regular attendance and participation at all class meetings. In the event of absence, students should consult with peers and online class resources to fill in any material and notes they have missed. Except in the rare cases of sudden illness or emergency (excused with documentation), students are expected to arrange with the instructors to submit assignments in advance of a planned absence.

❖ **Electronic Devices in Class:** Use of laptop computers or other electronic devices can be distracting, and the instructor may ask you to refrain from using them, especially if they are being used for activities not relevant to the course material. Texting, using social media, and internet surfing are inappropriate during class.

❖ **Canvas and U-Mail:** All course resources and announcements will be posted on the course website (Canvas), and sent via university assigned emails. Students have access to these resources through their unid. Students are responsible for regularly checking Canvas and Umail. Technical support is provided via classhelp@utah.edu or 801-581-6112.

❖ **Assignment Submissions:** Students are responsible for submitting assignments on-time, with correct naming convention and file extension, and using the software type and version required. Please read assignment sheets carefully.

❖ **Be Respectful:** Participation in the University of Utah community obligates each member to follow a code of civilized behavior in and out of the classroom. In order to maintain a positive, civil environment for learning, students are expected to meet the goals described in the University of Utah’s Student Code, which states “the mission of the University of Utah is to educate the individual and to discover, refine and disseminate knowledge. The University supports the intellectual, personal, social and ethical development of members of the University community. These goals can best be achieved in an open and supportive environment that encourages reasoned discourse, honesty, and respect for the rights of all individuals. Students at the University of Utah are encouraged to exercise personal responsibility and self-discipline and engage in the rigors of discovery and scholarship.”

❖ **Keep an Open Mind.** Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking.

❖ **Don’t Cheat:** It is assumed that all work submitted to instructor is your own work. When you have used ideas of others, you must properly indicate that you have done so. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, failure in the course, and/or expulsion from the university. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code, “includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.” For detailed definitions and possible sanctions please see: http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html.
Support and Resources for Student Success

- **Wellness Statement:** Your personal health and wellness are essential to your success as a student. Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive in this course and at the University of Utah. Please speak with the instructors before issues become problems. And, for helpful resources, contact the course-assigned SSA or the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

- **Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the 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.

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- **LGBT Resource Center:** The U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: http://lgbt.utah.edu/. Please also let us know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

- **Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language:** If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language and writing development. These resources include: the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/); the Writing Program (http://writing-program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/). Please let us know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

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As the only institution in the state classified in the highest research category (RI), 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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| 1    | **What is “Social Science” Research?**  
|      | - Connecting ideas with evidence/data  
|      | - Hard science versus social science  
|      | - Scientific method  
|      | - Why is it important to be accurate? What is validity and bias? |
|      | **Reading:** Textbook chapter 1 |
| 2    | **Research Ethics**  
|      | - Principles of ethical research  
|      | - IRB  
|      | - History of human subjects research guidelines and regulations |
|      | **Reading:** Textbook chapter 3  
|      | Online research ethics training (CITI) |
| 3    | **Questions, Theories, Hypotheses**  
|      | - Questions versus hypotheses  
|      | - The role of theory in research  
|      | - Functions and purposes of research proposals  
|      | - Convincing the audience about the significance of your topic |
|      | **Reading:** Textbook chapter 2  
|      | Craft of Research: section 1 and 2  
|      | Topic Approval (writing) Assignment |
| 4    | **Literature Review ~ Consuming Research**  
|      | - Types of research reports  
|      | - Sections/format/style of a research report  
|      | - Peer-review process  
|      | - How to find research (guest speaker from library) |
|      | **Reading:** Craft of Research: Section 3 (skim)  
|      | Textbook, Appendix A, B, C, and D |
|      | Lit Review & Annotated Bibliography (writing) Assignment |
| 5    | **Measurement**  
|      | - Measurement validity  
|      | - Conceptualization and operationalization  
|      | - Independent versus dependent variables  
|      | - Levels of measurement |
|      | **Reading:** Textbook Chapter 4 |
|      | Draft of Intro (writing) Assignment |
| 6    | **Survey Research**  
|      | - Generalizability  
|      | - Best practices |
|      | **Reading:** Textbook Chapter 8  
|      | Survey Research (experiential) Assignment |
| 7    | **Qualitative Data Collection**  
|      | - Participant observation |
|      | **Reading:** |

**Note:** The assignments and readings are placeholders and need to be confirmed with the instructor.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Research Design</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Criteria for causality</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>True and quasi-experiments</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Non-experimental design</td>
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*Reading:* Textbook Chapter 6 (glance at 7)

**Qualitative Data Collection (experiential) Assignment**

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<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th><strong>Sampling</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Generalizability</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Probability and non-probability techniques</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Sample bias and error</td>
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*Reading:* Textbook Chapter 5

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>10</th>
<th><strong>Cleaning and Managing Data</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cleaning data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Managing qualitative data</td>
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*Reading:* Textbook Chapter 14

**Draft of Methods (writing) Assignment**

*Peer-Review exercise in class*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11</th>
<th><strong>Data Analyses</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Features and techniques of qualitative analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Features and techniques of quantitative analysis (intro to stats)</td>
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</table>

*Reading:* Textbook Chapters 9 and 11

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<tr>
<th>12</th>
<th><strong>Making and Supporting Claims</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Making an argument</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Making claims</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Assembling reasons and evidence</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Acknowledgments and responses</td>
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</tbody>
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*Reading:* Craft of Research – Section 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>13</th>
<th><strong>Communicating Research: Papers, Presentations, Posters</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Tailoring the message to your audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Examples of research posters, papers, presentations</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Translation of research into media</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Reading:* Textbook Chapter 16

*Craft of Research – Section 4*

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<tr>
<th>14</th>
<th><strong>Revisions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>The first draft is never the final draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Skills/workshop on revision strategies (guest speaker from the Writing Center)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Reflecting on the process of revision</td>
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</table>

*Reading:* Craft of Research – Section 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15</th>
<th><strong>Student Research Forum</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Students will present their final projects (orally), receive feedback from peers, and engage in interactive question/answer about their project</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAM WEEK</td>
<td>Final Project (written)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Submission</th>
<th>Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Research Ethics Certification</td>
<td>9/1</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Topic Approval</td>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Draft of “Intro”</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Hard Copy to Class</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Survey Research</td>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Qualitative Data</td>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Draft of “Methods”</td>
<td>10/29</td>
<td>Hard Copy to Class</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Presentation Slides</td>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Final Paper</td>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Group</td>
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**Grading Rubric for Assignments**

All assignments will be graded on a ten-point scale. Unless specified on the individual assignment sheet, the following guidelines will be used to assign a point value:

- **10** EXCELLENT The student exhibits a critical understanding of the concepts, can articulate concepts in his/her own words, and shows an active mastery over the concepts. The work shows creativity and innovative thinking. Written work is complete, on-time, and is free from errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The assignment adheres to all instructions. The assignment is perfect or near perfect.

- **9** VERY GOOD The student’s work shows a good mastery of the subject. Some innovation, creativity, and critical thought, but may show some very minor lapses in reasoning or understanding. Written work is complete, on-time, and is free from errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The assignment adheres to all instructions.

- **7-8** GOOD The student’s work shows a basic mastery of the subject. The work is solid, but is not necessarily innovative or creative. Otherwise ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ work is marred by sloppy editing or poor presentation.

- **5-6** LESS THAN SATISFACTORY The work shows incomplete mastery of the subject. The work exhibits major spelling and grammar errors or is very sloppy. The assignment is incomplete or fails to follow the instructions. The assignment is turned in outside of class-time.

- **1-4** POOR The student’s work shows fatal gaps in understanding, is very sloppy, or is incomplete.

- **0** NOT ACCEPTABLE The student’s work does not satisfy the learning requirements of this exercise. The student failed to turn in an assignment altogether.
Assignment #1
Research Ethics Certification

**Objective:** To learn about research ethics and the IRB
To become a certified social and behavioral science researcher

**Assignment:** Complete the on-line training program.

**Grading:** 10 points
10 points if completed. 0 if not completed.

1. Go to the following website: [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)

2. Follow the links and directions to establish a “new user” account. This should be pretty self-explanatory process of filling in boxes, but here are a few hints …. Your participating organization is “University of Utah.” On the next page, your research role is “Student Researcher-Undergraduate.” A home or cell number can be used for your “office phone number.”

3. On the “Select Groups” page, choose the following three options:
   - Group 2.: Social / Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel.
   - I have not previously completed an approved Basic Course.
   - I am involved in Social/Behavioral Research and I have not completed a basic course previously.

   It may then ask you if you need to do the training for another institution, say “No”

4. You will now be taken to your personal homepage. Look for the link under “My Courses – Human Research.” Enter the module and begin the lessons. There are 16 modules. You will need to read through each module and then answer the quiz at the end of each module. You can re-take the quizzes as many times as you need to. The software program only records your latest quiz grade. **Note: the average learner spends approximately 4.5 hrs in the Basic Course site and uses approximately 5 logins to complete the course.**

5. After you finished all modules, you will see a “completion certificate” showing your name and the date you completed/passed each of the modules. Save the image and upload to Canvas. If you do not know how to do that, just print the screen saying that you completed all of the modules and bring the print-out to class.
Assignment #2

Topic Approval

**Objective:**
To think about what types of topics are suitable for a final project
To identify the difference between a research topic, question, and hypothesis
To articulate the significance of your chosen research topic.

**Assignment:**
You do not need to do any additional research for this assignment. You simply need to think through the various steps outlined below, which will help you begin to narrow a broad topic into a manageable research project.

**Grading:**
10 points
2 points for each of the 5 exercises

Use the following five prompts to help you develop (in writing) the topic and specific question you would like to pursue for your final research report. The answers to these five exercises are helping you develop the first draft of your research question/topic, which you will continue to refine, revise, and further develop as you learn more about research methods and as you get feedback throughout the semester.

1. What is a possible **topic** for your final project? A topic can be just about anything. It will likely be a single word or concept.

2. Next, write a specific **research question** related to that topic. Is your research question descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, or evaluative? You may need to write several questions to help you narrow the topic. If you do that, please start the “best” one and complete the remaining exercises related to it.

3. Now state a specific **hypothesis** or hypotheses related to your research question? Remember: a hypothesis identifies a clear independent and dependent variable. It states a direction of association (positive, negative, neutral). It can usually be written into an “if, then” statement. Identify each component.

4. Describe why you think the hypotheses are in the direction that you stated. This explanation or discussion would be the start of your theoretical framework. Write a minimum of 3 sentences describing a possible theoretical framework.

5. Fill in the worksheet suggested in the Booth reading (chpt 4) to determine the significance of your research question/problem:
   - **Topic:** I am studying ______________
   - **Question:** because I want to find out what/why/how ______________
   - **Significance:** in order to help my reader understand ______________.

*If you are still deciding between a few ideas, you might want to try these five “exercises” with each topic. In doing so, you may be able to better select the topic you want to pursue. However, please only turn in the assignment for the topic you will most likely pursue for your final project.*
Assignment #3
Lit Search – Annotated Bibliography

Objective: To practice using the library catalogues and databases
To begin collecting journal articles for your research project
To learn how to read/summarize published journal articles

Assignment: Conduct a literature review to find FIVE journal articles that are relevant to your approved topic and research question. You should use the databases provided by the library. Read the full-text version of each article, summarize the article in your own words, and then think about how each article is relevant to your particular research project.

Grading: 10 points
See below for point allocation. You will automatically receive half-credit if you submit non-journal sources. You will receive no-credit for this assignment if you copy (plagiarize) the abstracts, rather than writing a summary in your own words.

Being a critical consumer of research will help you develop your skills as a producer (writer, presenter) of your own research! During this assignment, pay particular attention to the standard writing styles and formatting of the research articles you read.

1. At the top of your document, restate the topic and research question (revised based on feedback provided on assignment #2)

2. Write a short essay (1 page or less) describing how you conducted your literature review: which databases did you use, how did you access those databases, and what search terms did you use to find the articles most relevant to your chosen topic/question, etc. (3 points)

3. Write a formal citation for each selected article. A formal citation includes the authors’ names, the publication year, the title of the article, the title of the journal in which it was published, as well as the volume and page numbers of the article. You can use any bibliographic style you want (MLA, Chicago, APA); just be consistent. An example of a formal citation is below. (1 points)


4. Write a short abstract summarizing each article – its purpose, method, and results. Each abstract must be written in your own words and be approximately ½ page long. Note: plagiarism of published abstracts will be grounds for a “0” on this assignment. (3 points)

5. For each article, write a few notes about how or why the article is relevant to your particular study. You should have at least two or three “notes” for each article. For now, these notes can be written somewhat informally, in bullet-point style. (3 points)
**Assignment #4**

**Intro Section - Writing a Literature Review**

**Objectives:**
To integrate a research topic/question with a review of existing literature
To produce a draft of an “introduction” section of a research paper

**Assignment:**

Drawing upon the research topic/question that you have been revising and learning about in assignments #2 and 3, write a draft of the “introduction” section of your final research project.

An introduction section presents the research topic/question and hypothesis. It should set up a “theoretical framework” from which the research question can be conceptually thought about. It also reviews previous literature and discusses how your research project is new or different and how it complements or contradicts the existing knowledge on the topic. In general, this section needs to discuss the importance of the topic, as well as the theoretical rationale underlying the hypothesis.

The draft will probably be 2-4 pages of double spaced text or 1.5-2 pages single spaced.

You must formally cite existing research, perhaps the 5 articles you identified in the previous assignment if they are still relevant to your topic. A citation within the text should be placed in parentheses, immediately following the text you want to reference. The citation has the authors name and publication year, plus page number if you are using a direct quote. Again, please adopt a formal bibliographic writing style for in-text citations (APA, MLA, Chicago style).

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Please bring printed hard copy to class. In-Class, we will do a peer-review exercise, where each student will read and comment on other students’ writing. The instructor will also provide a grade and additional feedback on your draft. This feedback from peers and instructor should be incorporated and included in the “intro” section of your final research report.

**Grading:**
10 points
Assignment #5

Survey Research

Objective: To practice writing survey questions
To think about the layout and design of a survey
To reflect on whether survey methodology is useful for your final research project.

Assignment: Write a draft survey related to your research topic and question. The survey should have at least 20 questions, which measure both your independent and dependent variables.

Questionnaires should be formatted, according to the principles of good questionnaire design as discussed in class and in the textbook.

Include with your survey a “notes” page that includes a:
- Statement of your specific research topic, question, and hypothesis, as revised based on feedback and learning from Assignments #2, 3, 4.
- Description of any additional notes or logic you were using when you designed the survey – for example, who would fill out this survey? Where might you distribute it? Would it be better administered via the phone or email or in person? Why did you format it the way you did? Why did you write questions in the way you did? These notes about potential methodology will become an early-stage outline or draft of a “methods” section of your final project, should you decided to use survey methodology.
- Reflection on whether survey methodology is the right methodology for your chosen research question. Why or Why not?

Grading: 10 points
3 points for notes page; 5 points for survey questions (.25 point for each), 2 points for formatting of questionnaire
Assignment #6

Qualitative Data

Objective: To try collecting qualitative types of data (in-depth interview or observational data)
To reflect on the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods
To decide whether your chosen research question (for the final project) might be best addressed with quantitative or qualitative data

Assignment: Choose between option A or B.

A. OBSERVATIONAL METHOD: Pick a location to observe. Your location and observations should be chosen because you think they will help answer a particular research question. Observe the setting for 90 minutes (all at once or in three 30-minute blocks). Prior to observing the location, you need to think specifically about what aspect of the setting or interaction you will observe. Consider what type of research question you might be able to answer by observing the setting you chose. As well, you should limit your observations to particular aspects of the setting/interaction that will help you answer a general research question. While observing, take field notes describing exactly what you observed. Refer to the lecture notes and textbooks for the principles of good field notes. Turn in a copy of ALL field notes (no matter how messy they are), plus a response paper summarizing the results of your data collection effort, as well as your experience and reactions to this type of data collection. In your essay, you should reflect on the following types of questions:
   1. Was it easy or hard to collect data in this way?
   2. How accurate (or inaccurate) do you think your field notes are?
   3. What do you think your results may be?
   4. What research question(s) could you have answered using your observations? Could you use this type of methodology to answer the research question you want to address in your final project? Why or Why not?

B. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWING METHOD: Conduct in-depth interview(s) related to a particular research question. Total interview time should be approximately 60 minutes, so you will likely need to conduct two 30-minute interviews. Prior to the interview, develop a list of interview prompts and grand-tour questions. During the interview, take notes to help you remember the respondents’ answers and discussions. Or alternatively, you may choose to record the interview and create transcript notes later. Turn in a copy of ALL interview prompts and notes/transcripts/tapes, plus a response paper summarizing the results of your data collection effort, as well as your reactions to this type of data collection. In your essay, you should reflect on the following types of questions:
   1. Was it easy or hard to collect data in this way?
   2. How accurate (or inaccurate) do you think your interview notes are?
   3. What do you think your results may be? Are there particular quotes or stories or examples that were revealed during the interview that could be used to illustrate your findings?
   4. What research question(s) could you have answered using these interview notes? Could you use this type of methodology to answer the research question you want to address in your final project? Why or Why not?

Grading: 10 points
5 points for reflections; 5 points for field/interview notes
Assignment #7
Draft of a “Method” Section

Objective: To practice technical or scientific writing
To identify and describe data collection strategies that match a particular research question

Assignment: Based on your experiencing trying both survey and qualitative research methods in Assignments #5 and 6, develop a specific set of methods that you propose to use to collect/analyze data to answer your chosen research question. Then, write a draft “method” section of your final project.

A method section of a proposal/report typically contains the following three elements:
1) a description of the sample and sampling strategy,
2) a description of the methods you will use to collect data from the sampled persons,
3) a description of how exactly you will measure the concepts and variables of interest.
It should detail all the information that someone would need to know if they were to replicate your project. Include as many details as possible, while still being concise. Use the correct terminology as learned from class lectures and textbook.

Your writing should be technical and concise. Refer back to the “Method” sections of the articles you read for Assignment #3 as models.

The draft will probably be 2 to 3 pages double-spaced, or 1 to 2 single-spaced.

Please bring printed hard copy to class. In-Class, we will do a peer-review exercise, where each student will read and comment on other students’ writing.

The instructor will also provide a grade and additional feedback on your draft.

This feedback from peers and instructor should be incorporated and included in the “method” section of your final project.

Grading: 10 points
Research Project

The goals of this assignment are to articulate a specific research question, summarize the theories and past research within which the topic is situated, and describe possible data/methods that could be used to answer the chosen research question. Students will engage in a series of smaller assignments during the semester where they will develop, receive feedback, and refine/revise their ideas for this final project.

The final project will include two artifacts – a written paper and an oral presentation – both due at the end of the semester.

Due Date:
The written report is due at the final day of the semester.
Oral presentations will occur during the last two weeks of the semester in a “student research forum.”

Individual or Group Work:
Students may complete the final research project individually, but are encouraged to work in groups throughout the semester to complete this project.
- Ideal group size is 3 and 6 students.
- Groups will choose a single topic and method for the research project.
- Assignments related to the final project will be done individually. Oral presentations will be done in groups. Final written reports may be written individually or as a “team” paper. If the latter option is chosen, all group members will receive the same grade on the written paper.
- Each student will have the opportunity to evaluate the effort of his/her group members.

Oral Presentation:
Students will present the main elements of their final project to the class in a prepared 6-8 minute presentation. The presentation should include a visual element (i.e., powerpoint) and be well-rehearsed.

Written Report:
The final written report will be about 10 pages in length (assuming double-spaced, 12-pt font, one-inch margin). It is unlikely that you will be able to do the project in less than 8 pages or that it would exceed 15 pages. Field notes, appendices, and/or interview transcriptions will not count toward page length. The final report will follow the standard format of a published research articles. It must include an abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and references section. Use these subheadings when writing your final report. Each section is described in more detail on the next page. Note: Assignments done throughout the course will provide initial drafts of many sections of the final report. It is essential that students revise those drafts based on feedback provided before they are included in the final report.

**Please keep in mind that your written and oral presentations, although about the same project/topic, will use different language and strategies to communicate to your audience.**
Abstract
Summarize entire project: from theory to method to results to implications. Be concise (< 200 words).

Intro
In this section, you should explicitly tell the reader what your research questions and hypotheses are. You should also describe any previous research that has been done on the topic. Think about how your project is new or different than previous research. Discuss why your chosen method is an appropriate way to try to answer the question.

Methods
In this section, you will tell the reader how you collected your data, how you drew your sample, how you measured the concepts of interest. You must be detailed enough so that someone could replicate your study, if they needed to. In terms of how much data you should collect, follow the guidelines below:

- **Survey Research**: approx 20 surveys per group member
- **In-Depth Interviewing**: at least 120 minutes of interviewing per group member
- **Focus Groups**: at least one group/session per group member
- **Other Methods**: ask instructor

Results
Summarize all the data you collected. Highlight the trends, patterns, tendencies, and/or themes found within your collected data. As the analysts, you need to think about how to most accurately and succinctly “tell the story” that is found in your data. Although it is not required, you are encouraged to analyze your data using software programs such as SPSS or Excel (both available on campus) or HyperResearch (included with book). If you use statistical analyses, I do not expect you to do more than descriptive analyses (e.g., means, medians, crosstabs, etc). If you do qualitative or archival research, you should use original quotations to support your findings. Be creative and use whatever analytic skills you and your group members have.

Discussion
This is the section where you will discuss the results of your project. Did the data support hypotheses – why or why not? What are the strengths and limitations of your project? How could future research address those limitations? What are the implications/importance/relevance of your research findings?

References
This final section of the paper lists the sources you consulted while writing this report. You must include at least 5 academic sources, which must also be appropriately cited/referenced in the text. Use a formal bibliographic style to write this section.

NOTE: If you are unfamiliar with writing a formal reference list, please ask the instructor during office hours or consult one of the many available handbooks such as the APA Publications Manual, the MLA handbook, or the Chicago Style Book.

NOTE: Internet sites are NOT considered “academic” sources. While encyclopedias may have been fine for high school research papers, they are NOT acceptable forms of research for this project. As a scientist, you should NEVER conduct your research by “Google-ing” your topic. Do not use popular magazines (e.g., Time or Newsweek). Newspapers should also be avoided. Focus your literature review on academic journals, such as the American Journal of Sociology or the American Sociological Review. Books can be acceptable sources, though journal articles should predominate your reference list.

Please ask the instructor for additional explanation or consult with the reference desk at the Marriott library.
Grading Criteria for Final Project

CONTENT OF WRITTEN REPORT
If submitted as a group, all group members will receive the same grade.

_________ out of 5 pts  Abstract
Concise overview of project

_________ out of 10 pts  Intro
Includes a statement of the objectives, research question, and hypotheses. Uses
the literature review to describe previous research on the topic and to explain
the theory behind the hypotheses. Discusses how this research project is new or
different from previous research.

_________ out of 10 pts  Methods
Describes how the data were collected, how the concepts were measured, and
how the sample was selected. Also discusses why this particular set of methods
is appropriate.

_________ out of 10 pts  Results
What are the trends/patterns/themes that emerged from the data? Were
tables/charts/statistics/quotations used effectively to describe the results? Use
the analytic skills you have to “tell the story” found in your data.

_________ out of 10 pts  Discussion
Was the hypothesis supported? Why or Why not? What are the
strengths/limitations of this project? Discusses future research areas, as well as
the relevance/importance of these research findings.

_________ out of 10 pts  References
Did you use at least 5 academic sources and cite them in a formal style (both in
text & in reference list).

QUALITY OF WRITING
How well-written is the report? If submitted as a group, all members will receive same grade.

_________ out of 15 pts  Quality of your logic and explanations:
how critical is the discussion; how accurate the explanation?

_________ out of 10 pts  Are there typos? Punctuation, grammar, spelling. Evidence of revision.

ORAL PRESENTATION OF PROJECT
Did you present the project effectively and creatively? Did you use visual displays, if appropriate, to help
communicate your findings? How well did you answer questions from the audience? Did you stay within the
allotted time limit? NOTE: All group members will receive the same grade, regardless of who actually does the
presentation. However, if a member is not present for the presentation, they will receive 0.

_________ out of 10 pts

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT
Each student will rank the other students in his/her group on a ten-point scale. Consider each others’ level of
effort and participation throughout the semester. Each student will receive a different score, depending on the
average of the peer evaluations he/she receives.

_________ out of 10 pts
Appendix. More Info about Required Texts

Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research

Schutt, Russell K.

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With more than three-quarters of a million copies sold since its first publication, The Craft of Research has helped generations of researchers at every level—from first-year undergraduates to advanced graduate students to research reporters in business and government—learn how to conduct effective and meaningful research. Conceived by seasoned researchers and educators Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, this fundamental work explains how to find and evaluate sources, anticipate and respond to reader reservations, and integrate these pieces into an argument that stands up to reader critique.

The fourth edition has been thoroughly but respectfully revised by Joseph Bizup and William T. FitzGerald. It retains the original five-part structure, as well as the sound advice of earlier editions, but reflects the way research and writing are taught and practiced today. Its chapters on finding and engaging sources now incorporate recent developments in library and Internet research, emphasizing new techniques made possible by online databases and search engines. Bizup and FitzGerald provide fresh examples and standardized terminology to clarify concepts like argument, warrant, and problem.

Following the same guiding principle as earlier editions—that the skills of doing and reporting research are not just for elite students but for everyone—this new edition retains the accessible voice and direct approach that have made The Craft of Research a leader in the field of research reference. With updated examples and information on evaluation and using contemporary sources, this beloved classic is ready for the next generation of researchers.

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