

SOCIOLOGY 202

Research Principles and Practice

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Office Hours: Tuesdays – Thursday: 9-11am

Course description

This course addresses how various theoretical assumptions shape the aims and practices of research in sociology. It provides students with empirical research design principles and an introduction to methods of collecting and recording data, assessing reliability and validity, and conducting data analysis. Different research strategies are introduced. The ethical implications of research will be discussed.

Course objective

Sociology 202 aims to:

- give the student a theoretical and practical overview of the work of a sociologist
- introduce the student to the basic concepts of sociological methods as preparation for more specialised courses in the field
- help the student acquire basic literacy of sociological methodologies

In order to attain the objectives, the student should be able to do the following:

- reflect critically upon the social, political and economic context of the research process;
- display a critical awareness of the main theoretical and methodological perspectives surrounding the practice of research in the social sciences;
- identify how these perspectives have actively shaped our approaches to researching the social world;
- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a range of methodological techniques across the quantitative and qualitative spectrum;
- display a reflexive understanding of the ethical frameworks and competing ethical claims which surround social sciences research.

Textbooks



Social Research: Issues Methods and Practices, 4th ed. Tim May.

This is available at the Campus Bookstore

Evaluation

In-class tests (2 x 35% of final grade)

These in-class tests will test the material from readings and lectures up to time of the test.

Final test (30%)

This will be scheduled by the registrar's office. You will have to read and critically evaluate a piece of sociological research. More details will be provided closer to the time.

Plagiarism and cheating

Copy of direct quotes or ideas without acknowledging the original author is considered plagiarism. Handing in a paper that you did not write, or a paper that you handed in for another class without permission of the instructor is also considered an infraction. These are serious academic offences. Cheating is producing any work that is not your own, either by copying off a fellow classmate or extra aids. Any such offences will result in a ZERO in this course and referred onto university officials. For more information on plagiarism see the university calendar.

Special Needs

If a student requires special accommodations, please see the instructor as soon as possible.

Electronic guidelines for this course

- Mobile communication devices are not permitted during class time. This includes cell phone and laptops. If you are noticed using one, you will be called out. If you continue to use technology for non-class related reasons, you will be asked to leave the classroom. If you require a laptop for notetaking, please speak with the instructor. In such cases, you will be asked to sit in the first couple of rows of seats.

Class schedule

09/04	Introduction to course <i>Introduction</i>
09/08	Sociological Imagination
09/11	What is social research? <i>Chapter One</i>
09/15	Social Theory and Social Research <i>Chapter Two</i>
09/18	Social Theory (con't)
09/22	Social values <i>Chapter Three</i>
09/25	Ethics
09/29	Ethics
10/02	TEST
10/06	Quantitative Methods
10/09	Official Statistics <i>Chapter Four</i>
10/16	Survey <i>Chapter Five</i>
10/20	Interviewing <i>Chapter Six</i>
10/23	Qualitative methods
10/27	Interviewing <i>Chapter Six</i>
10/30	Observation <i>Chapter Seven</i>
11/03	Documents <i>Chapter Eight</i>
11/06	Case Study <i>Chapter Nine</i>

11/13	TEST
11/17	Summarise an article
11/20	Critically evaluate Quantitative Article
11/24	Critically evaluate Quantitative Article
11/27	Critically evaluate Qualitative Article
12/01	Critically evaluate Qualitative Article