

SOC 455 SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

Syllabus

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COURSE CREDIT:

Four Semester Hours

PREREQUISITES:

SOC 311 Social Statistics with a minimum grade of C
AND Junior status

COURSE MATERIALS:

To order textbooks or obtain information about book titles you may go to www.exstudies.adams.edu and click on the “ASC Bookstore” icon.

Use **Section Number: 937** to order books from Bookstore site.

Required Textbook:

Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and Anna Leon-Guerrero. Social Statistics for a Diverse Society with SPSS student version 13.0, fourth edition. Pine Forge Press, 2006. ISBN: 141291793X
Babbie, Earl. *The Basics of Social Research*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning, 2002. ISBN: 0-534-51904-0

Recommended Textbook:

Johnson, William A., Richard P. Rettig, Gregory M. Scott, and Stephen M. Garrison.. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004. ISBN: 0-13-111388-7

Computer Access:

Because the lab problems will require the use of the software SPSS that comes packaged with your textbook, it is imperative that you have access to a computer in which you can install the SPSS Student version.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Many sociology students across the U.S. look upon the Methods course with disdain, dread, fear, and/or loathing. You needn't! This is a step-by-step course in which you learn about research methods by actually doing a research proposal. First, students will be instructed in the fundamentals of research design and implementation, including ethical considerations. Students will read and study the research proposals of selected sociologists. Then students will engage in hands-on proposals to practice research methods. Finally, students will design a research proposal. Components of the proposal include: a) the Worksheet: Designing a Research Question, b) Introduction and Bibliography, c) Literature Review, d) Methods, and e) Findings and Conclusion. During the computer lab segment of the course, students will learn and practice analyzing data from the General Social Survey (GSS) and from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2000 data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). By the end of the class, you will have a clearer understanding of the complexities and joys of doing sociological research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student will:

- explain the fundamentals of the sociological research process.
- outline the components of ethical research.
- identify the qualities of a sound research instrument.
- find patterns in quantitative data and build and/or test theories.
- critically assess the theoretical assertions and empirical research of others.
- design and clearly describe in writing a research proposal for sociology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There are four sets of requirements for this class. The first set consists of five computer lab, statistical assignments. These assignments review statistics so that you are ready and able to conduct your own research proposal. The second set of assignments involves reading the textbook *The Basics of Social Research*, and answering chapter review questions. Both of these two sets of requirements prepare you to design a research proposal in which you pose a research question that can be answered by manipulating and analyzing the data found in the CD-Rom that accompanies your statistics book. This research proposal is the third component required for the class. Finally, the last component of the course requirements is a final exam.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

In alignment with ASC academic policies, no D may apply to a major or minor field.

Grade Distribution:

Computer Lab Assignments 1-5 points	10 points each	50
Learning the Basics of Research Assignments 1-10 points	10 points each	100
Research Proposal Assignments 1-5 points	20 points each	100
Worksheet: Designing a Research Question Introduction and Bibliography Literature Review Methods Findings and Conclusion		
Final Exam <u>points</u>		<u>100</u>
Total Points		350

Scale:

315-350	A
280-314	B
245-279	C
210-244	D
209 and below	F