

Bishop's University

SOC 110 Introduction to Social Research Methodology

Fall 2016

Tuesday and Thursday 1-2:30pm BWH

Professor: Dr. Josh Curtis
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9-11
Office: Room 203, Cormier Building
Email: TBA
Website: www.joshcurtisopolisoc.com

1. Calendar Description

Sociological research will be dealt with in its quantitative and qualitative orientations. Students will be introduced to techniques of conceptualization, hypothesis formulation, and operationalization. *This course is required of all Sociology Majors and Honours students. All students taking SOC 110 (after September 1, 2012) must also complete ILT 104: Information Retrieval and Evaluation Skills for the Social Sciences (1 lab credit).*

2. Course Outline

This course introduces the logic of sociological research and surveys the field's main quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This course is designed to introduce students to the range and variety of methods (both qualitative and quantitative) used by social scientists to understand social behaviour. The purpose of this course is to teach students about the language and logic of social science research, while also explaining how to read and evaluate social research. Students will be encouraged to think critically about various research methods, interact with different techniques, and evaluate the benefits and shortcomings of various social science research methods.

3. Goals and Learning Objectives

The goal of this course is that you learn how to:

- Critically read and evaluate sociological research.
- Define and apply concepts such as induction, deduction, conceptualization, operationalization, reliability, validity, probability and non-probability sampling, causality, generalizability, and independent and dependent variables.
- Evaluate the benefits and shortcomings of quantitative versus qualitative research
- Establish when qualitative and quantitative research methods should be used.
- Develop a research question and select an appropriate methodology to address it.

4. Course Evaluation

The course will have **four** requirements that will contribute to your final course grade:

1. Mid-term test #1 (25%)
2. Mid-term test #2 (25%)
3. Assignment #1 (20%)
4. Final Exam (30%)

Evaluation Breakdown

4.1 Mid-term Test #1 (25%)

The midterm examination will be held in class on **October 11th, 2016** and will cover all content covered on the syllabus prior to that date (lecture/textbook). The structure of the midterm examination is to be determined, but will likely consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

4.2 Mid-term Test #2 (25%)

The midterm examination will be held in class on **November 8th, 2016** and will cover all content covered on the syllabus prior to that date following mid-term #1 (lecture/textbook). The structure of the midterm examination is to be determined, but will likely consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

4.3 Assignment #1 (20%)

Assignment #1 is an *Analysis of a Research Article*. This assignment requires you to write a brief essay where you apply the core concepts of the course to the analysis of an academic journal article. A list of suitable articles will be provided by your instructor. I encourage you to start working on Assignment #1 ASAP. I have scheduled a full-class review period on November 10th to discuss in detail each component of your assignment.

4.4 Final Exam (30%)

Your final examination will be cumulative, with a heavier focus on materials presented after the midterm. The final examination will be held in class on November 29th, 2016. The structure of the midterm examination is to be determined, but will likely consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

5. Required Readings and Course Schedule

A textbook for the course can be purchased at the **Bishop's University Bookstore**.

- Alan Bryman and Edward Bell. 2016. *Social Research Methods, 4th Canadian Edition*. Oxford University Press.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Schedule is tentative and dependent upon class progress)

Part I: Introduction to Social Research

September 8th: Course Introduction
 September 13th: Chapter 1: General Research Orientations
 September 15th: Chapter 2: Research Designs
 September 20th: Chapter 3: Research Ethics

Part II: Quantitative Research

September 22nd: Chapter 4: The Nature of Quantitative Research
 September 27th: Chapter 5: Survey Research – Structures Interviewing and Questionnaires
 September 29th: Chapter 6: Asking Questions
 October 4th: Chapter 7: Structured Observation & Chapter 8: Other Sources of Data
October 6th: Mid-term #1 review
October 11th: Mid term test #1 (25% of your grade)

Part III: Qualitative Research

October 13th: Chapter 9: The Nature of Quantitative Research & Chapter 10: Ethnography and participant Observation
 October 18th: Chapter 11: Interviewing in Qualitative Research
 October 20th: Chapter 16: Content Analysis

Part IV: Sampling and Analysis

October 25th: Chapter 12: Sampling
 October 27th: Chapter 13: Quantitative Data Analysis
 November 1st: Chapter 14: Qualitative Data Analysis
November 3rd: Mid-term #2 review
November 8th: Mid term test #2 (25% of your grade)

Part V: Transcending the Quantitative/Qualitative Divide

November 10th: Assignment #1 review
 November 15th: Chapter 15: Breaking Down the Quantitative/Qualitative Divide
 November 17th: Chapter 17: Writing Up Social Research
 November 22nd: Chapter 18: Conducting A Research Project
November 24th: Final exam review /Assignment #1 Due in Class (20% of your grade)
November 29th: Final in-class exam (30%)