DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SOCIOLGY 312-A
"INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY"
University of Calgary (Collaborative Degree Program) Course:
Sociology 313 "Introductory Social Research Methods"

HOURS AND ROOMS:
CLASS
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:30-11:20; ROOM 907C
LAB
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 11:30-12:20; ROOM 907C

NOTE
The “class” and the “lab” are conducted as three 2-hour blocks weekly which will combine instruction and application in varying proportions.

INSTRUCTOR:  Dr. Bill Stuebing
OFFICE:  Room 3109
PHONE: 403.342.3314 (Office); FAX: 403.347.3655
EMAIL: bill.stuebing@rdc.ab.ca AND bill.stuebing@rdpsd.ab.ca

ACADEMIC CALENDAR ENTRY

Research design, data collection, and data processing strategies used by sociologists. Topics include research values and ethics, scaling, reliability and validity, experimentation, survey research techniques, historical methods, field research, and content analysis.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate knowledge of Scientific Method
- Explain role of Theory, Ethics, Literature Review in Social Research
- Demonstrate knowledge of Research Planning Process
- Demonstrate methods of measurement and sampling
- Demonstrate knowledge of Quantitative Methods - Survey, Experiment, Nonreactive Methods
- Demonstrate knowledge of Analysis of Quantitative Data
- Demonstrate knowledge of Qualitative Methods - Field Research, Qualitative Interviewing, Nonreactive Methods
- Demonstrate knowledge of Analysis of Qualitative Data

INTRODUCTION

Sociology is commonly understood as the science of human society and social relationships and organization. To suggest that sociology is a science, is to indicate that the discipline possesses both a systematized body of knowledge and a rigorous method of observation and experimentation for the creation of such knowledge. Sociology is thus to be understood as both a knowingológica and a doingológica.

Until now, the courses which you may have taken in sociology will have tended to focus primarily on the "knowing," that is, the learning of selected parts of the body of sociological knowledge. By contrast, the purpose of this course is to introduce you to the fundamentals of the "doing," the principles and practices through which scientific knowledge in general, and sociological knowledge in particular, is generated.

The emphasis throughout the course will be on the practical. The organization of the course will
incorporate both class lectures/discussions and sessions of problems and exercises intended to provide you with first-hand experience of "doing sociology."

Upon completing this course and the companion course, Sociology 310, you will be able to (1) critically and effectively read, understand, and evaluate social research reports to determine the strengths, weaknesses, validity and utility of the information presented, and (2) initiate, design, execute and present simple social research while demonstrating a competent, valid, and useful methodology.

Should your interests, now or in the future, go beyond the limited goals identified above, this course is also designed as an introduction to, and preparation for, advanced courses in sociological research both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

NOTE: There is a heavy emphasis in this course on quantitative methods and analysis and consequently students should be familiar with basic statistical techniques and procedures. In most instances this will mean having a credit in Sociology 310, “Introduction to Social Statistics,” or the equivalent. If you have questions in this regard, please discuss your concerns with the instructor.

TEXT:

W. Lawrence Neuman & Karen Robson, Basicsof Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (Second Canadian Edition)


Additional resources will be distributed in class

ORDER OF TOPICS

The following is a list of the topics which will be considered and the order in which they will be covered in the course. No dates are provided since the timing of any topic will be largely determined by the pace of the class as a whole. The first and second tests will be held, as indicated below, in the class/lab periods next following the completion of the material indicated. The third test will be held at a time scheduled by the registrar's office during the final exam period, April 14-17, 2014.

Text readings corresponding to each topic are indicated. Additional readings and resources will be distributed as appropriate.

1. Overview of the Scientific Method in Sociology, Approaches to Social Research
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch. 1
1a. Review/Overview of SPSS
   Reading:
1b. Review of Descriptive and Parametric Statistics
   Reference: Healey & Prus
1c. Review of SPSS Statistical Procedures
   Reference:
1d. Non-parametric Statistics
   Reading:
1e. Choosing the Appropriate Statistical Test
   Reading:
2. Theory and Research
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch. 2
3. Ethics in Social Research
ORDER OF TOPICS (continued)

4. Literature Review and Research Planning
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch. 4
5. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Designs
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch. 5

FIRST TEST (When topics 1-5 have been completed)

6. Measurement
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 6
7. Sampling
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 7
8. The Survey
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 8
9. The Experiment
   Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 9
10. Nonreactive (Unobtrusive) Quantitative Methods
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 10

SECOND TEST (When topics 6-10 have been completed)

11. Analysis of Quantitative Data
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 11
12. Qualitative Interviewing
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 12
13. Field Research
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 13
14. Nonreactive Qualitative Methods
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 14
15. Analysis of Qualitative Data
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 15
16. Completing the Circle: Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods
    Reading: Neuman & Robson, ch 16

THIRD TEST (During Final Examination period April 14-17, 21)

Unlike many Arts courses, and most other sociology courses particularly, the learning of social research methods is an incremental activity. (The material covered today is based on what was covered yesterday; tomorrow’s class will be based on today’s material, etc.) For this reason, student attendance at all classes and labs is both expected and very strongly recommended. Nevertheless, it is understood that occasionally students may be unable to attend class. In the event that you are absent from a class, it is your responsibility to make the missed material.

MARKING AND GRADING:

The process of student evaluation employed in this course shall directly follow the Red Deer College Grading Policy as described in the RDC Calendar. By this policy, marking and grading are understood as related but separate activities. During the semester, assignment and test results will be returned as raw marks and information on the performance of the class as a whole will be provided to assist you in interpreting your individual mark.
Only after all course requirements including the final examination have been completed and marked will student performance be graded. Grading will further incorporate a relational standard in which the student’s overall performance, as indicated by the aggregated marks, will be considered in relation to the performance of the class as a whole and to a reasonable expectation of the level of competence which students completing this first course in research methods should demonstrate.

Notwithstanding, please note that while in this class there is not a precise table of equivalents which allows the direct translation of marks into grades, the following ranges generally apply:

- 80% and above - >A= Range (A+, A, A-)
- 65% to 79% - >B= Range (B+, B, B-)
- 52% to 64% - >C= Range (C+, C, C-)
- 48% to 51% - >D= Range (D+, D)
- 47% and below - >F= Range

In the determination of grades, individual marks awarded throughout the year will be considered with the following weights:

- Tests 1 & 2 15% each
- Third Test 30%
- Assignments 40%

Late or make-up assignments and tests will not be provided except in unusual circumstances and only where the student has made a prior arrangement with the instructor. Missed assignments and tests will be recorded as a grade of 0.

OFFICE HOURS

My regular office (Room 3109) hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12:30-13:15. Occasionally I cannot be in my office at these times because of other commitments. However, I try to be faithful to these hours and I will generally be around a good deal at other times (when I am not in class). HINT: If the door to my office is closed, please knock (I could be hiding). If you want to be sure that I’m in my office when you get there, try making an appointment. It is not my intention to make this process overly formal, but if I know that you are coming to see me at a particular time, I will be able to make an effort to be there when you show up.

Many routine administrative matters can be handled before or after class. However, my memory for administrative details is not exceptional and you will find, therefore, that if you want me to write a letter of recommendation, or return some material you have loaned me, or look up something you need to know, or change an incorrect mark, your chances of success are greatly improved if you will give me some sort of written notice of your desire (or actually witness me writing myself a note). I also appreciate reminders, especially written ones since I tend to misplace mental notes. I promise I will not be offended, however persistent you may be.

CHANGES TO THE COURSE OUTLINE:

No changes will be made to the course outline without first consulting the class as a whole during one of our regularly scheduled hours. Where appropriate, changes will be reviewed by the Department Chairperson for consistency with College policies.
THE FINE PRINT

IMPORTANT DATES  Winter 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 6</td>
<td>First day of classes for Winter term. Midterm feedback for Full Year courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 13</td>
<td>Last day to register late or add/drop Winter term courses</td>
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<td>Last day to withdraw from Full-Year courses and receive a WD</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>Family Day; College closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 18-21</td>
<td>Midterm break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Midterm feedback date for Winter term courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>Emergency Response Day</td>
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<td>March 11</td>
<td>Perspectives: Canada in the World presents Nora Young (CBC Radio)</td>
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<td>March 14</td>
<td>Final exam schedule posted</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from Winter term courses and receive a WD</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>Last day of classes for Winter term and Full-Year courses</td>
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<td>April 14-17, 21</td>
<td>Final exams written</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>Good Friday; College closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Final grades available</td>
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Course Outline:

It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with the information contained in this course outline and to clarify any areas of concern with the instructor.

No changes will be made to this course outline without the consent of the class and the approval of the Chair of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

STUDENT RECOGNITION OF PLAGIARISM*

Standards of Proof
Plagiarism can be judged to have occurred if the instructor has both the material presented by the student and the original source from which this material was taken.

Also, plagiarism can be judged to have occurred
- if the student is incapable of explaining the terminology or ideas in the submitted material
- if such terminology or ideas cannot be shown to originate in the works contained in the Bibliography, References, or Works Cited page accompanying the submitted material (or, for oral presentations, if the student cannot produce the notes or texts used to prepare his/her material).

Consequences: A student charged with plagiarism may
- be given a reduced mark or no mark (i.e., a grade of 0 or F) for the plagiarized assignment, or
- be assigned a Final Grade of F, or
- be expelled from the course and assigned a Final Grade of F.

In all of the above cases, the instance of academic dishonesty will be recorded on the student’s academic file.

PROCEDURE:
1. If an instructor discovers or suspects academic misconduct, the instructor provides evidence of the misconduct to the student and takes disciplinary action up to and including the assignment of a failing grade for the work involved in the misconduct.

2. If the instructor feels that the misconduct warrants more serious consequences, the Chair of the program is informed. The decision to remove the student from the course or to assign a failing grade in the course as a consequence of the misconduct may be taken by the Chair upon reviewing the evidence of the misconduct and determination that the violation warrants such action.
3. If the instructor and program Chair feel that the violation requires more significant action such as removal from a program or from the College, the evidence is presented to the Dean of the Division for a decision.

4. In each case, the decision and disciplinary action are communicated to the student in writing and a copy is provided to the Registrar who places it in the student's file.

(*adapted from RDC’s policy on Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-academic – see section below on college policies)

**College Policies**

- Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense.
- Students should be familiar with what constitutes misconduct, as well as its consequences. This may include academic misconduct, the most common of which are plagiarism and cheating, or non-academic misconduct, where student behaviour is deemed unsafe or disruptive. Plagiarism may involve the act of submitting work in which some or all of the phrasing, ideas, or line of reasoning are alleged to be the submitter’s own but in fact were created by someone else. Cheating involves attempts to obtain unsanctioned assistance in a formal academic exercise. Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy on Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-academic. Penalties for such misconduct range from academic sanctions on assignments or a course to removal from the College.
- Students should refer to the Student Appeal, Formal and Informal Resolution Process Policy should they have questions or concerns about the course outline that cannot be resolved with the instructor.
- At all times, the Final Examinations Policy and Final Examinations Standard Practice will be followed.
- This course may be eligible for Prior Learning Assessment. Students should refer to the RDC Calendar for a list of excluded courses.
- Classroom learning resources may be available to students in alternate formats.
- A plagiarism detection tool may be used in this course.
- The various RDC Academic Policies described above can be found here.

**Academic Resources on Campus**

Students should be aware that Personal Counselling, Career, Learning, and Disability Services are provided by RDC. Students must inquire about locations at the Information Desk. It is the student's responsibility to discuss their specific learning needs with the appropriate service provider.

Click on the links below for information on the following services.

**Learning Support** (Library: 403-357-3629, help_learn@rdc.ab.ca)
- Learning Strategies (note-taking, studying and exam-writing strategies)
- Peer Tutoring (one-on-one tutoring by students)
- Writing Skills Centre (writingskills@rdc.ab.ca)
- Math Skills Centre (mathlearningcentre@rdc.ab.ca)

**Disability Services** (Library: 403-357-3629)
- Coordination of services (tutoring, alternate format text, note-taking etc.)
- Academic accommodations, including exam accommodations

**Counselling and Career Centre** (Room 1402: 403-343-4064)

Assistant Chair
Humanities and Social Sciences
Approved, January 7, 2014