

SOC 366W.01: RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY
Fall, 2009
3 Credit Hours

Class Meeting Times: TU/TH 9:30am – 10:50am

Location of Class Meeting: CHSS 206

Instructor: Dr. Jin Young Choi

Office: CHSS, Room 270V

Office Hours: TU/TH 11:00am to 12:30pm or by appointment

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Required Text

Earl Babbie. 2007. The Basics of Social Research, 4th Edition: Thomson Wadsworth. USA

Course Description

This research methods class is designed to provide students with an introduction to social research. Students will be exposed to the logic and character of scientific and alternative means of social inquiry and examination of the functions of observation, concept formation, proposition arrangement and testing of theory as components of the scientific process in Sociology. The main goal of this class is to develop students' insights and abilities to critically read and produce both qualitative and quantitative social research. Prerequisite courses are: soc131/soc261 and soc264 or instructor permission.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Acquire factual knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and techniques of social research.
2. Develop the skills and competencies of social research.
3. Apply their newly learned skills to practical social research.

Throughout the semester, students will experience the full process of social research including the basic components of social research, structuring social inquiry, various research designs, data collection methods, data analysis, and writing a social research paper. In addition to lectures, students will practice what they learned in the lectures through various class activities and the completion of a series of assignments.

Course Requirements

Final grades will be calculated by adding all points earned from three exams and four assignments, plus any extra credit points earned during the semester.

Exams

There will be **THREE** exams. The exams will cover the assigned chapters in the lectures and the readings. **Each exam will be equally weighted (100 points) for a total of 300 points. Make-up exams will *only* be given if arranged with the professor prior to the day of the scheduled exam to be missed and only if the instructor considers the reason for the absence valid.** The make-up exams will likely be more

difficult than the regular scheduled exams. There will be no cell phones or headphones allowed on exam days.

Assignments

There will be **FIVE assignments**, each worth **30 points**. These five assignments will **total 150 points of the final grade**. Each assignment must be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date. Since some assignments are fundamental for the next ones, failing to understand and complete one assignment on time makes it quite difficult to keep up; thus “falling behind” is to be avoided at all means. **If you know you are going to miss a class, inform the instructor and turn in the assignments early to the instructor or the main office of the Sociology Department. Make sure to ask the secretary (or student worker) to stamp the date and time on your assignment. No late assignments will be accepted after the given date.**

Extra credit

Students will have several opportunities to earn extra credit points during the semester. Those opportunities will be announced in class. **Late submissions will not be accepted.** Furthermore, some extra credit opportunities will be provided as a part of class activities during the class. Students who miss those opportunities due to their absence will **not be given another opportunity to earn the points.** I will discuss extra credit more as the semester progresses. Earning extra credit is recommended.

Grading

The final grade for the course will be based on the course requirements presented above. **A total of 450 possible points** will be available. Final grades will be assigned as follows:

450- 405 = A
404- 360 = B
359- 315 = C
314- 270 = D
269- 0 = F

Attendance Policy

SHSU policy is that attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all classes and participate fully in class activities. **Attending class means you are actively alert and you are in class for the duration of the entire class period.** Tardiness will be not accepted. Students who are not present 5 minutes after the start of class will be counted absent. **Students who attend all classes will receive 5 extra points towards their total accumulated points.** Students are expected to show an appropriate cause for both absences and tardiness and are also expected to initiate action to satisfy all missed class work. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused. **Students are responsible for obtaining class materials for the classes that they miss.** Failure to do so will affect students' grades.

Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of

resource materials. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive the grade of zero (0) for that assignment or exam with more severe sanctions as appropriate. Students who cheat more than once will receive an automatic F in the class. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center and then arrange a conference with the instructor in order that accommodations can be made to assure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Religious Holidays

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious Holy Day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. Students should contact the instructor as soon as possible regarding any missed classes due to "Religious Holy Days". *See Student Syllabus Guidelines* <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Classroom Rules of Conduct

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students shall arrive to class on time and be respectful to their other students. If a student needs to arrive to class late or leave class early the student will make the professor aware of these needs prior to class time. **All cell phones, iPods, and beepers must be turned off and stowed away while in the classroom.** Students who disrupt the class will be contacted by the professor to adjust their behaviors. In extreme cases students who cannot comply with these requirements can be removed and resigned from the class. See the following link for details: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>.

Visitors to the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to the class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor is allowed to remain in the classroom.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Tuesday	Thursday
WEEK 1	August 25 Introduction	August 27 CH1
WEEK 2	September 1 CH1	September 3 CH2
WEEK 3	September 8 CH2 Social Research & Research Process	September 10 CH3 Assignment I: PHRP certificate
WEEK 4	September 15 CH15 Class Activity: How to read a research paper	September 17 Class Activity: Library search & Annotated Bibliography Assignment II: Annotated Bibliography
WEEK 5	September 22 Review for Exam I	September 24 EXAM I
WEEK 6	September 29 CH4 *DUE Assignment I	October 1 CH4
WEEK 7	October 6 CH5-CH6	October 8 CH5-CH6 *DUE Assignment II
WEEK 8	October 13 Class Activity: Constructing Questionnaire, Research Hypothesis, operational definitions Assignment III: Questionnaire	October 15 CH7
WEEK 9	October 20 CH7	October 22 Review for Exam II *DUE Assignment III
WEEK 10	October 27 EXAM II	October 29 CH9
WEEK 11	November 3 CH8	November 5 CH8

	Tuesday	Thursday
WEEK 12	November 10 Class Activity: Experimental Design I	November 12 Class Activity: Experimental Design II
WEEK 13	November 17 CH10 Assignment IV: Non-participatory Observation	November 19 CH10 Assignment V: Review of Field Research
WEEK 14	November 24 Class Activity: Application I	November 26 THANKSGIVING
WEEK 15	December 1 Class Activity: Application II <u>*DUE Assignment IV</u>	December 3 CH11
WEEK 16	December 8 Review for Exam III <u>*DUE Assignment V</u>	December 10 **Exam III