

SOC/CRM 500, Research Methods

Fall 2015, Tuesdays 6:15-9:00 pm

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Required Text;

The Practice of Social Research, 13th Edition by Earl Babbie, (paperback, 2014)

Additional handouts, exercises, readings, or schedule changes will be announced in class and/or by UNCW email. You are responsible for keeping apprised of such changes. The class will also have a Blackboard presence for announcements, supplemental materials and assignments.

Course Goals;

This course is designed to help you review and build on basic social science research methods. The course goals are for you to;

- 1) Gain an in-depth understanding of the various research methods used in social science research.
- 2) Gain a critical perspective on the history and practice of social research and
- 3) Gain skills to prepare you to undertake your own research using multiple research methods.

Format;

The class meets for two hours and 45 minutes each week. The format will *generally* include about 30 minutes of lecture on the week's topic, one hour of "application" and 45 minutes of critical discussion and evaluation. Applications may include labs, extended discussion, workshops, films, examples, and speakers.

Requirements;

Attendance and in-class assignments;

Graduate students should not miss class. If you do miss class or turn in marginal in-class work you will lose 3-5 course points. It is difficult but not impossible to get an excused absence. A lot of documentation will be required.

Five Assignments (100 points total)

There will be five assignments due over the course of the semester. The first four will be turned in hard copy, in class, on the due date as well in electronic submission to Blackboard SafeAssign, which uses plagiarism detection.

Assignment 1; (5 pts.)

Complete (and pass) the UNCW IRB on-line certification course. Turn in a hard-copy completion certificate in class and a one page commentary on the IRB course (substance not process).

Assignment 2; (25 pts.)

Choose a general topic area for the semester. Write a brief, formal (ASA format) review of the literature for your chosen topic. 5-7 pages

Assignment 3; (30 pts.)

Drawing from your literature review, form a research question and develop a quantitative data collection and analysis plan. Write up as a methods section of a proposal.

Assignment 4; (30 pts.)

Drawing from your literature review, form a research question and develop a qualitative data collection and analysis plan. Write up as a methods section of a proposal.

Assignment 5: (10 pts.)

Summary presentation of your topic regarding the pros and cons of various methodological approaches and practical limitations.

Decorum (Pass/Fail)

Graduate students are expected to be prepared for and contribute to class. Lively challenging discussion will make this class a fruitful experience for us all. It is important that the speaker, whether it is me, you, a guest, or a fellow student, have everyone's attention and respect. Please familiarize yourselves with the definitions of plagiarism, dishonesty and misconduct in the UNCW Academic Honor Code. I give one warning on the attention thing, zero tolerance on the others. **Quirks;** I'm fine with eating and drinking in class, I don't like PowerPoint, I'm a little hard of hearing; I really don't like side-talking, texting, beeping, tweeting, vibrating, ringing, or surfing during class (unless assigned). I'm fine with being interrupted, especially for questions, clarification, time reminders, or impending doom.

The fine print

Special Needs: Please contact me as soon as possible to arrange necessary accommodations. If you have not already done so, you must register with the Office of Disability Services in Westside Hall (extension 3746) and obtain a copy of your Accommodation Letter. You can then notify me to make arrangements based on the recommendations of the Accommodation Letter. For more information, go to:

<http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/>

Cheating and Plagiarism: Any unacknowledged borrowing of information constitutes plagiarism. This includes summarizing someone's ideas (including your text), downloading internet material, direct quotations, using a classmate's paper, or turning in a paper you have written for another class. Citations MUST contain a reference. In the event of cheating or plagiarism, a grade of zero will be given and I have the right to report the student to the dean. Cheating and plagiarizing are grounds for dismissal from the University.

Academic Honor Code: The University requires I draw your attention to the rules set forth in Section V of the UNCW Student Handbook and Code of Student life, which prohibits cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty including any unauthorized collaboration or assistance on any test, home- work assignment, or project: www.uncw.edu/stuaff/doso/documents/Code.Of.Student.Life.pdf.

Changes in Syllabus: Students are responsible for any changes in the syllabus that are posted on Blackboard.

Additional Services available to you: Check www.uncw.edu for information about these.

Violence and Harassment: UNCW practices a zero tolerance policy for any kind of violent or harassing behavior. If you are experiencing an emergency of this type contact the police at 911 or UNCW CARE at 962-2273. Resources for individuals concerned with a violent or harassing situation can be located at

<http://www.uncw.edu/wsrc/crisis.html>.

DATE

TOPIC

READINGS

Aug 22	Introduction	Topic discussion, Science meets Fiction
Aug 29	Context and history of social science research methods	
	Babbie, Chap 1; Science and Social Research	
	Babbie, Chap 3; Inquiry, Theory, and Paradigms	
Sep 5	Ethics, literature reviews	Assignment 1 Due
	Babbie, Chap 2, Ethics and politics	
	Babbie, Chap 17, Reading and writing research	
	Babbie, Appendix A, Using the library	
Sep 12	Research Design, asking a question	
	Babbie, Chap 4, Purpose and Design of Research	
Sep 19	From concept to measurement	Assignment 2 Due
	Babbie, Chap 6; From Concept to Measurement	
	Babbie, Chap 7; Indexes, Scales and Typologies	
Sep 26	Sampling and secondary data	
	Babbie, Chap 5: Logic of Sampling	
Oct 3	Survey Research	
	Babbie, Chap 8: Survey Research	
Oct 10	Quantitative Analysis	
	Babbie, Chap 14; Quantitative analysis	
	Babbie, Chap 15; Elaboration Model	
	Babbie, Chap 16; Statistical Analysis	
Oct 17	Workshop (Data Analysis)	
Oct 24	Qualitative Field Research	Assignment 3 Due
	Babbie, Chap 11; Qualitative Research	
	Seale, Chap 14; Qualitative interviewing	
	Seale, Chap 16; making and managing audio recordings	
	Seale, Chap 17; Doing ethnography	
Oct 31	Qualitative Data Analysis	
	Babbie, Chap 11: Qualitative Data Analysis	
	Seale, Chap 23 (2nd half); Coding and analyzing data	
Nov 7	Workshop (Data Collection and Analysis)	
Nov 14	Other methods	Assignment 4 Due
	Babbie, Chap 9; Experiments	

Babbie Chap 10; Unobtrusive Methods
Babbie, Chap 12; Evaluation Research
Seale, Chap 15; Using Focus Groups
Seale, Chap 19; Doing Historical and archival research
Seale, Chap 20; Using visual materials
Seale, Chap 21; Using the internet
Seale, Chap 27; Analyzing text and speech

Nov 28

When the rubber hits the road

Seale, Chap 3; Politics, identity, and research
Seale, Chap 6; Research and social policy
Buroway/Hossfeld Readings
Babbie, Appendix G; 20 questions journalists should ask
Seale, Chap 30; Doing a dissertation
Seale, Chap 31; When things go wrong

Dec 5

Summary presentations

Assignment 5 Due