

Kennesaw State University
Social Science Research Methods
SOCI 2301 01
Spring 2014

Classroom: SSB 3025

Class Hours: TR 3:30 – 4:45

Office Hours: TR 9:00 – 10:45 and
R 12:30 – 1:45

Instructor: Gail Markle, Ph.D.

Office: SSB 4071

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Course Description: This course provides an introduction to research design and data collection methods used in empirical research in sociology. It addresses the relationship between theoretical perspectives and research methods as well as the responsibility for conducting empirical research in an ethical manner.

Course Prerequisite: SOCI 2201 Principles of Sociology

Course Goals:

- Develop an understanding of the scientific foundations of social inquiry
- Become familiar with levels of measurement and sampling techniques
- Be able to translate abstract concepts into measurable variables
- Become familiar with basic quantitative and qualitative research methods
- Learn the basic use of (SPSS) software for analyzing numerical data
- Learn how to produce a literature review of existing research
- Learn how to design a research study applicable to specific research questions
- Develop a proposal for a sociological research study

Textbooks:

All Students are expected to purchase the textbook for this class.

Bryman, Alan. 2012. *Social Research Methods, 4th Edition*. NY: Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 978-0-19-958805-3.

Class Format: Class meetings will consist of lectures interspersed with class exercises, discussions, and other forms of class instruction.

Expectations: Please turn off your cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices. **PLEASE DO NOT USE LAB COMPUTERS FOR WORKING ON OTHER ASSIGNMENTS, CHECKING YOUR EMAIL OR FACEBOOK, SHOPPING, OR ANYTHING OTHER THAN IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS.** Students are expected to read assignments prior to the class period, to listen to class presentations, and to participate in class exercises and discussions. Please ask questions, chances are if you have a question, others do too. Critical thinking is essential to any course in research methods. Critical thinking consists of engaging with reality on four dimensions: describing phenomena; comparing, contrasting and linking ideas; assessing scientific presentations; and innovating.

Attendance: Regular and punctual attendance in class is required. If you must be absent please be aware that you are responsible for all announcements, assignments, and material covered during class time. **Your attendance record will affect your grade.** For perfect attendance 2 points will be added to your final grade. For 1-2 absences 1 point will be added to your grade. Beginning with the 4th absence 1 point will be deducted from your final grade. For each successive absence an additional point will be deducted from your final grade. For example, five absences would result in a 2 point deduction from your final grade; six absences would result in a 3 point deduction, and so on. **Only absences for KSU business, religious holidays and mandatory court appearances may be excused if proper documentation is provided.**

Class Requirements and Grading:

HSR Certification	5%
Exams (2 @ 20%)	40%
SPSS Project	25%
Research Proposal	30%

Human Subjects Research Certification: This assignment includes learning modules and quizzes on issues related to research with human subjects. The KSU Institutional Review Board is responsible for ensuring that research participants are treated ethically. The assignment requires one to two hours to complete. **Due January 28.**

1. Read the CITI Registration instructions posted on the course website.
2. Go to <https://citiprogram.org>
3. Create a personal profile with your username and password. Do not forget to add your affiliation to KSU. Your role is Student Researcher – Undergraduate.
4. Complete the Students in Research module, and the associated quiz.
5. Save a copy of the Course Completion Report with your name, and print one copy and bring it to class. The quiz score will be the grade for this assignment.

Exams: There will be two exams, each worth 20%. They will contain multiple choice and short answer questions from the readings, lectures, exercises and assignments preceding each exam. Exams will be given **February 20 and April 29**. Make-up exams will only be given for exceptional cases with appropriate documentation. To be considered eligible for a make-up exam, students must contact the instructor prior to the originally scheduled exam time.

SPSS Project: This project consists of a series of group and individual assignments in which students design and administer a survey, code the responses and input the data into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), perform various analytical procedures, and write a brief research report. Detailed instructions will be provided. **Due March 20.**

Research Proposal: Students will prepare a 10-12 page research proposal on a topic of their choice. You must turn in a printed copy of your proposal topic plus a bibliography of ten potential scholarly resources on **February 6. You must work on this project throughout the semester.** Detailed instructions will be posted on Georgia View Vista. You are welcome to submit early drafts of your proposal as well as to meet with me to discuss any questions you may have. **April 29.**

Your paper must include:

- An introduction
- A problem statement and why it is worthy of study
- A theoretical perspective
- Literature review (at least **ten** academic journals or scholarly books)
- Original hypotheses
- Methodology (variables and how they will be measured, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, plan for analyzing the results)
- A conclusion
- Reference list

Grading Scale: 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F

Earning Grades: Grades are “earned” and are not arbitrarily “granted” in this class. Thus, unless I make an error in calculation, I will not change your grade at the end of the semester for HOPE eligibility, graduation requirements, or any other reason.

Academic Honesty: You are required to adhere to the tenets of the Kennesaw State University Policy on Academic Honesty. This policy can be found at:
http://www.kennesaw.edu/academicaffairs/acadpubs/acadpub/ucat2006-07/x.General_Policies.pdf

If any portion of your research proposal is plagiarized you will receive a 0 for the assignment, an F for the course, and disciplinary action will be taken.

Accommodations: This course will be conducted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and make the appropriate arrangements with Disabled Student Support Services located in Suite 267 of the Carmichael Student Center Addition, 770-423-6443.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Topic	Assignment
January 9	Introduction	Syllabus
January 14	Research in Sociology	Ch 1
January 16	The Importance of Theory	Ch 2
January 21	Research Design	Ch 3 and 4
January 23	Ethics	Ch 6
January 28	Literature Review	Ch 5; HSR Certification due
January 30	Literature Review	
February 4	Variables and Measurement	Ch 7
February 6	Sampling	Ch 8; Proposal topic/refs due

February 11	Hypotheses/ RQs	
February 13	Survey Research	Ch 10 and 11
February 18	Survey Pre-test	Bring three copies of your survey.
February 20	Exam 1	Turn in one copy of your revised survey with research question, hypotheses, independent and dependent variables. This will be part of your exam grade.
February 25	Survey Revision	Bring flash drive with survey on it
February 27	In class survey distribution	Bring 26 copies of your final survey
March 3	Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty	
March 4	Codebook, Data Entry	Bring completed surveys to class
March 6	Analyzing Quantitative Data	Ch 15
March 11	Univariate Analysis	Ch 16
March 13	Ms of Association, Significance, Type I and Type II Errors, Bivariate Analysis	
March 18	Comparing Group Means	
March 20	Describing Quantitative Results	SPSS Project Due
March 25	Experiments	
March 27	Content Analysis	Ch 13
April 1	No class Spring Break	
April 3	No class Spring Break	
April 8	Secondary Analysis	Ch 14
April 10	Qualitative Research	Ch 17 and 18
April 15	Ethnography, Interviewing	Ch 19 and 20
April 17	Documents	Ch 23
April 22	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Ch 24
April 24	Out of class finalize proposal	
April 29	Exam 2	Research Proposal Due

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.