

SOCIAL RESEARCH

SOC 381

1:50 – 3:20 MW

Sage 2212

Jeremiah Bohr, Ph.D.

bohrj@uwosh.edu

Office: Sage 4617

Office Hours: Tu/Th 1:00-2:00

Phone: 424-3494

Course Description

This course will survey a broad range of methods used in sociological research. Although we will not go into great depth on any one of them, you will learn key aspects of each and will exit the course a better consumer of research in general. This course is intended for upper-division students preparing to start their own research projects.

Learning Goals

- Understand how to conduct research on social behavior and institutions
- Develop proficiency in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Be able to identify key arguments of a published sociological study and to critique its theoretical framework, methodology, and findings.
- Be able to effectively present research in written and oral form. Be able to design and complete a research project that illuminates a sociological topic through a comprehensive literature review, original analysis, and interpretation.

Required Text

W. Lawrence Neuman – *Understanding Research* (Allyn & Bacon, 2009)

Course Expectations

- You will attend class regularly, show up on time, and participate in discussion.
- All assigned readings must be read before class begins (so, for example, I expect you to read Mills before class begins on Sept. 10, not afterwards as an assignment).
- Written assignments are due at the beginning of class and will be considered late if otherwise. This is important as some assignments will be paired with in-class exercises.
- No laptops or cell phones allowed during class. Exceptions for laptops will be made on a case-by-case basis if you discuss your needs with me.
- You should regularly check your email and D2L course site for updates about the class.
- You will share your ideas and experience about developing a research proposal with fellow students, and provide respectful and constructive feedback to your peers.
- You will reference the Sociology Department's Writing & Citation Guide when formatting writing assignments.

Assignments

IRB Protocol and CITI Training

Before you can conduct original research involving human subjects, you must obtain approval from the university by submitting a protocol to its Institutional Review Board (IRB). In addition to a final research proposal, you must also prepare a full IRB protocol and gain approval before you can begin collecting data. This document requires great attention to detail and may require multiple submissions before the IRB grants approval.

Before you can submit your IRB protocol, however, you must also complete a Human Subjects training module through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), which will run through common ethical standards and best practices when conducting research involving human subjects. After completing the *Students Conducting Human Subjects Research* training module, you must print out your completion certificate and hand them in at the beginning of class on September 30. (Note: If you plan to conduct research that gathers personal health information from your subjects, there is additional CITI training you will need to complete.)

You cannot recruit subjects for research or collect data until you have completed CITI training and obtained IRB approval.

Research Proposal

All of your work in this class will culminate in a research proposal ready to execute (with IRB approval) next semester in the Senior Seminar. The research proposal will be broken up into several assignments throughout the semester (see schedule below), including a Topic Proposal, Research Questions, Proto-Proposals, Literature Review, and Final Proposal. Additionally, there will be an opportunity to earn extra credit by keeping a regularly updated research journal throughout the semester. More details regarding these assignments will be provided.

Presentation

Near the end of the semester, you will deliver a brief (about ten to fifteen minutes) presentation outlining your proposed research project. You will have an opportunity to evaluate your peers during this week and provide constructive feedback aimed at helping them improve their research projects. For the presentation, you will prepare slides (PowerPoint, Prezi, or something similar) that introduce your topic, research question(s), research design, data collection instruments, and expected findings. You should also allot some time for questions and answers.

Exams

There will be two in-class exams during the semester. These will seek to test your knowledge of core principles in research methods, and will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Grading

Research Proposal	40%
Topic Proposal (2.5%)	
Research Questions (2.5%)	
Literature Review (15%)	
Final Proposal (20%)	
Exams (2)	30%
CITI Training Certificate	5%
IRB Protocol	5%
Presentation	10%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Students can **earn a maximum of 5% extra credit** by submitting a research journal in addition to the final research proposal. More details about the research journal will be provided in class.

Late work will be accepted up to three days after the due date, with a 10% penalty deducted for each day late.

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. You must do your own work and properly cite ideas that belong to other people. More information on plagiarism can be found here: <http://www.english.uwosh.edu/shaffer/policies/plagiarism.htm>.

GRADING SCALE

Your final grade will be computed on the following percentage scale:

A	92.5-100%
A-	90.0-92.49
B+	87.5-89.99
B	82.5-87.49
B-	80.0-82.49
C+	77.5-79.99
C	72.5-77.49
C-	70.0-72.49
D+	67.5-69.99
D	62.5-67.49
D-	60.00-62.49
F	0-59.99

Grade Interpretation

- A – Indicates truly superior work and active participation in the learning environment. Students at this level demonstrate an ability to think critically in oral and written form, integrate concepts and theories, level of knowledge relevant to the course that is beyond

expectations and far above average, and the ability to use this knowledge in unfamiliar situations.

- B – Demonstrates a level of knowledge relevant to the course that is beyond expectations and above average. Will be able to use and extend this knowledge in some situations.
- C – Demonstrates an acceptable and average level of knowledge relevant to the course in terms of familiarity with readings, integration of concepts and theories, level of critical thinking, and active participation. Students at this level should be able to continue learning in this field of study.
- D – Demonstrates less than satisfactory performance in the course requirements and barely adequate level of knowledge relevant to the course. Unlikely to be able to apply knowledge, nor successfully continue studies in this direction.
- F – Demonstrates insufficient knowledge to be given credit for this course, and/or dismal performance and no class participation.

Campus Resources

All UWO students are eligible for one-to-one conferencing at the Writing Center. Their free, confidential tutoring is designed to help students work through assignments and gain additional writing skills. The Writing Center is located in the academic support suite of the Student Success Center and here: <https://writingcenter.uwosh.edu>.

The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Content Tutoring page on CAR's website (<https://car.uwosh.edu/>) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on a link to request one, or call 424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.

UWO is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Please contact the Accessibility Center [Dean of Students Office, 125 Dempsey Hall, 424-3100 (Voice), 424-1319 (TTY)] for the University's accommodation request form and documentation requirements or visit their website at: <http://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/Accessibility-Center>.

Please visit this page to read about all the campus services available to support your success: <http://www.uwosh.edu/resources/>.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introduction to the Course

W Sept 5 Review the syllabus

Week 2 Approaching Sociological Research

M Sept 10 Mills, “On Intellectual Craftsmanship”

W Sept 12 Booth, “From Topics to Questions” and “From Questions to Problems”

Week 3 Research Ethics

M Sept 17 (optional) Haney, Banks, and Zimbardo, “Interpersonal Dynamics in a Simulated Prison” and “The Play is the Thing”

DUE: Research Topic Proposal

W Sept 19 Humphreys, “Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places”

Week4 Literature Reviews & Research Design

M Sept 24 Neuman, ch. 2
(optional) Van Hook et al – “Public Assistance Receipt Among Immigrants and Natives”

W Sept 26 ***DUE:*** *CITI Training Certificate

Week 5 Sampling

M Oct 1 Neuman, ch. 4

DUE: Research Questions

*Bring a peer-reviewed journal article relevant to your topic to class

W Oct 3

Week 6 Concepts & Measurements

M Oct 8 Neuman, ch. 5

W Oct 10 (optional) Gibbs – “Conceptualization of Terrorism”

Week 7 Experiments

M Oct 15 **Exam I**

W Oct 17 Neuman, ch. 7
Skim Mujcic and Frijters – “Still Not Allowed on the Bus”

Week 8 Surveys

M Oct 22 Neuman, ch. 6
(optional) Winkelman et al, “Sexting on the College Campus”

W Oct 24 *In-class activity*

Week 9 Nonreactive Measures

M Oct 29 Neuman, ch. 8

W Oct 31 (optional) McIlwain and Caliendo – “Differential Use of Racial Appeals by Black and White Candidates”

Week 10 Quantitative Analysis

M Nov 5 ***DUE:*** IRB Protocol
Neuman, ch. 9
(optional) Freeman – “Elementary Applied Statistics for Students in Behavioral Science”

W Nov 7 ***DUE:*** Literature Review

Week 11 Qualitative Field Work

M Nov 12 Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater – excerpts from *Field Working* (pgs. 25-53; 91-103)

W Nov 14 (optional) Dunier, “Appendix to Sidewalk”
(optional) Hasan, “Afterword to Sidewalk”
(optional) Neuman, ch. 10

Week 12

M Nov 19 TBD
DUE: Final Research Proposal

W Nov 21 No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 13 Finalizing Research

M Nov 26 Neuman, Ch. 12

W Nov 28 **Exam II**

Week 14

M Dec 3 Student Presentations

- All presentations must be uploaded to D2L prior to class beginning
- Attendance mandatory for both class meetings this week

W Dec 5 Student Presentations

Week 15

M Dec 10 Individual Meetings

W Dec 12 Individual Meetings