

Sociology 202
Introduction to Research Methods
Iowa State University
Fall 2009
T & R 11-12:20 PM
210 Bessey Hall

Professor: Dr. G. Jones Johnson
Office: 202 East Hall
Office Hours: T W & R 12:30-1:30 & by appt.
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Teaching Assistant

Kristen Wenke
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OBJECTIVE OF COURSE:

The goal of the course is to familiarize students with the most important methods of data collection in social science research, particularly surveys, experiments, participant observation, intensive interviews, historical and comparative research and the benefits and liabilities of each major approach. It will acquaint students with a broad sampling of issues relevant to the understanding and application of research methods such as internet and social relations, domestic violence, crime, poverty and alcoholism. Students will gain the critical skills necessary to evaluate research and learn what questions to ask when critiquing a research study and how to evaluate the answers.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Earl Babbie. *The Practice of Social Research*. 11th or 12th Edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth.

Additional readings are posted on Web-CT.

Books are available at the University Bookstore and a copy will be on **reserve** in **Parks Library**. **You can also use alternative ways that you know to purchase the textbook such as Amazon.com**

Films, videos and guest lectures will be announced. The course syllabus is on course WEBCT.
Please check course web page (<http://www.soc.iastate.edu/class/soc202.html>) for power point presentations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be evaluated in terms of three (3) in-class exams which consists mainly of objective questions (matching, multiple choice, true/false) and short answers, worth 100 points each. Review sheets for each exam are posted on the course web site. There will be three in-class quizzes worth 30-40 points each that will prepare you for the three in-class exams. Students will be allowed to use notes and books during the quiz which will be timed for 30 minutes. The quizzes will be a short version of the exam question and format. **There will be a review session the evening (5-6 pm) before the day of the exam (place to be announced)**. Students are required to individually complete five (5) written assignments (2 analyzing journal articles and 3 doing a research project) worth 40 or 50 points each designed to develop your knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for the research process. The journal articles will be one qualitative and one quantitative article on a topic of your choosing (criminology, family, social inequality, etc).

The projects will include:

- 1) Analysis of trends in crime based on FBI's Uniform Crime Reports at www.fbi.gov. Write a two-page description of crime and the latest trends in crime, or the U.S. Census Bureau's homepage (<http://www.census.gov>). Find the "State and County Quick Facts" option and choose your own state. Now pick the county in which you live and copy down several statistics of interest (e.g., unemployment). Repeat this process for one other county in your state. Use the data you have collected to compare your county with other counties in the state. Write a one page report summarizing your findings.
- 2) Write a cover letter and ten questions for a one-page questionnaire that concerns your proposed research question.
- 3) Conduct a brief observational study in a public location on campus where students congregate (cafeteria, a building lobby, or a lounge would be ideal).

All written assignments and projects must be typed, double-spaced with 12-point font and 1 inch margins, and multiple pages must be stapled (unstapled papers will not be accepted). The assignments will be graded on content and style (e.g., proper spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and citations when appropriate). Slang should be avoided in paper except for direct quote if needed. **Please submit a paper copy of your assignment to Dr. Jones Johnson on or prior to the due date. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. There will be extra credit in-class activities and quizzes given periodically throughout the semester and extra credit points for attending review sessions . These points cannot be made-up because they are extra credit.** Extra credit points will be **summed at the end of the semester** and used to determine borderline grades.

Anyone missing an exam, quiz, or is late submitting the written assignments will be required to bring a written excuse from the University Health Services or other written justification for the absence. For best results, discuss your possible absence with me before you miss the exam. You will have one week in which to make up an excused exam without penalty. In subsequent weeks you may make up the exam at a penalty--the lowering by one grade level of your score for each intervening week.

Regular class attendance is expected and class attendance will be checked regularly. Students who attend class on a regular basis and read weekly reading assignments prior to class meetings in which they are to be discussed will maximize their success in the course. Everyone is expected to be **respectful** of opposing viewpoints, of each other and of the professor. Questions related to research methods are welcomed and encouraged!! There will be **NO INCOMPLETES** (except under extraordinary circumstances). University policies on academic dishonesty apply to all work in this course (please see Student Handbook). I encourage students to make active use of the instructor outside of the classroom and office hours are provided for this purpose. Please call me at my office (294-2947) or stop by my office, 202 East Hall during my office hours before and if you have a problem. Leave a message with your telephone number on my office answering machine if I am not available and I will return your call as soon as I can. I DO NOT accept telephone calls at my HOME unless it is an EMERGENCY, however, I will be happy to make an appointment to discuss your concerns. Students can also reach me by e-mail.

Grading

Your final course grade will be based on the following:

EXAM 1	20%
EXAM 2.....	20%
EXAM 3 or Final Exam (non-cumulative)	20%
Five Written Assignments (each is 7% of grade)	35%
Three Quizzes (each <2 %)	5%
TOTAL	100%

Grade Distribution::94+ A, 90- 93 A-,B+ 87-89,B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72, D+ 67-69, D 63-66, D- 60-62, F<60. Pluses and minuses will also be given.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating on exams and use of notes or soliciting help from fellow students during an exam are not allowed. Plagiarism (the use of other's ideas and writings without proper acknowledgement) is a serious violation of university ethics (see Iowa State Information Handbook for detailed information). To avoid committing this offense, the following guidelines must be carefully followed.

- 1) All quotations of exact words must be enclosed in quotation marks, with indication of the exact source from which they are copied (e.g. articles, books, newspapers).
- 2) All paraphrases, summaries, or adaptations of passages which a writer sees fit to borrow must have the source of such material clearly indicated.
- 3) All factual material, except that which is of common knowledge, must have the source from which it is taken properly and completely acknowledged.
- 4) All assistance given to you as the writer either by books, by fellow students, or by experienced persons whom one interviews must be properly and completely acknowledged.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Required Readings and Due Dates *</u>
1	8/24-28 8/25 8/27	Topic: An Introduction to Inquiry Epistemology and Methodology Power Point - Philosophy of Science Earl Babbie. <i>The Practice of Social Research</i> . Chapter 1 and Appendix G (Page A28-33)
2	8/31-9/4 9/1 9/3	Topic: Theory, Paradigms and Ethics Issues in Research Babbie, Chapter 2 Web Site Power Point - Hypothesis Construction Babbie, Chapter 3 Web Site Power Point - Ethics and Politics of Social Research
3	9/7-11 9/8 9/10	Topic: Research Design Babbie, Chapter 4 Power Point - Standard Error and Research Methods Babbie. Chapter 4 Power Point - Standard Error and Research Methods Discuss Paper # 1 due Sept. 17th WebCT notes
4	9/14-18 9/15 9/17	Topic: Conceptualization and Measurement Babbie, Chapter 5 Power Point- Measurement of Abstract Concepts Babbie, Chapter 5 Power Point- Measurement of Abstract Concepts
		Paper #1 due
5	9/21-25 9/22 9/24	Topic: Indexes versus Scales Babbie, Chapter 6 Power Point- Indexes, Scales, Typologies. Babbie, Chapter 6 Power Point- Validity and Reliability Discussion of Project #1 - due Oct. 13
6	9/28-10/2 9/29 10/1	Topic: Activities and Review QUIZ 1 and Review for EXAM 1. Review Session 5:00-6:00 pm (place to be announced) EXAM 1 (Thursday). Includes Babbie, Chapters 1- 6, Power Point presentations, class handouts, and WebCT notes over this material
7	10/5-9 10/6 10/8	Topic: Sampling and Sampling Designs Babbie, Chapter 7 Power Point - The Logic of Sampling Babbie, Chapter 7 Power Point - The Logic of Sampling Discussion of Paper #2 - due Oct. 27
8	10/12-16 10/13 10/15	Topic: Experiments Babbie, Chapter 8 Power Point - Experiments Babbie, Chapter 8 Power Point- Experiments
		Project #1 due
9	10/19-23 10/20	Topic: Survey Research Babbie, Chapter 9 Power Point - Survey Research

	10/22	Babbie. Chapter 9 Power Point - Question Wording Discussion of Project #2 - due Nov. 19	
10	10/26-30 10/27	Topic: Qualitative Field Research Babbie, Chapter 10 Power Point - Qualitative Methods	Paper #2 due
	10/29	Babbie. Chapter 10 Power Point - Qualitative Methods	
11	11/2-6 11/3	Topic: Unobtrusive Research Babbie, Chapter 11 WebCT notes	
	11/5	Babbie, Chapter 11	
12	11/9-13 11/10 11/12	Topic: Activities and Review QUIZ 2 and Review for EXAM 2. Review session 5:00-6:00 pm (place to be announced) EXAM 2 (Thursday) includes Babbie chapters 7-11, Power Point presentations, class handouts, and WebCT notes	
13	11/16-20 11/17	Topic: Evaluation Research Babbie. Chapter 12 Discussion of Project #3 - due Dec. 8	
	11/19	Babbie, Chapter 12	Project #2 due
14	11/23-27	Topic: Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASSES)	
15	11/30-12/4 12/1	Topic: Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis Babbie, Chapter 13 Power Point - Qualitative Data Analysis	
	12/3	Babbie, Chapter 14 Power Point - Quantitative Data Analysis	
16	12/7-11 12/8	Topic: Elaboration Model, Statistical Analyses and Reading and Writing Social Research Babbie, Chapter 15 Power Point- The Elaboration Model	Project #3 due
	12/10	Babbie Chapter 16 and Chapter 17 Power Point - Reading and Writing Social Research QUIZ 3 and REVIEW FOR EXAM 3 or FINAL EXAM includes Babbie chapters 12-17, Power Point Presentations, WebCT notes , class handouts Final exam is not cumulative. Review session for final exam will be held if requested	
17	12/14-18	FINAL EXAMINATION WEEK. Check final exam schedule on ISU web page under E for exam and follow instructions to determine Soc 202 day and time. I will also announce it. FINAL EXAM AS SCHEDULED (Includes all materials, handouts, class notes and required readings since EXAM 2	

***Course schedule and due dates are subject to change please stay informed.**

POLICY ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Students do not need laptop computers for this course. Computers, cell phones, iPods, etc. are not to be used during class. Please turn off these devices BEFORE entering the classroom. If you must leave your phone "on" due to a family emergency, put setting on "vibrate." Phone conversations are not permitted in the classroom. PLEASE review your notes regularly and try to keep up with required readings.

PLEASE ADDRESS ANY SPECIAL NEEDS OR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) from the Disability Resources (DR) office (515-294-7220) (<http://www.dso.iastate.edu/dr/>). DR is located in Room 1076 of the Student Services Building. TTY 515-294-6635 or email examaccommodations@iastate.edu.

RESPONSE TO CLASSROOM DISRUPTION: Should any student enrolled for credit or audit in a class disrupt the instructor's ability to ensure a safe environment, control the class agenda, and/or deliver the approved curriculum, the instructor has the right to ask that the disruptive action ceases immediately. The responsible student(s) should cease the disruption and utilize non-disruptive means for expressing disagreement or concern. **Students who are not in compliance will be asked to leave the classroom.**

SOCIOLOGY CODE OF ETHICS FOR HUMAN RELATIONS: The Department of Sociology is committed to providing a professional and educational environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. The department's Code of Ethics for Human Relations and the Procedures for Filing Complaints of Discrimination or Harassment are posted on the bulletin boards on all five floors of East Hall.