

Introduction to Social Research

920:311:06/07 (07838/10729)

Instructor: Anna Harewood

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 10-11am at Au Bon Pain on College Ave; no appointment necessary
I am also available to meet with students immediately after class.

TA: Kelly Kato

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10-11am in Room 136, Davison Hall (DC); no appointment necessary

Schedule: Mondays and Thursdays, 8:10-9:30am (MTH1)

Location: Room 212, Murray Hall (CAC)

Dates: Thursday, September 4 – Friday December 19, 2014

Section 06: Mondays, 10:05-11:00am (M2*) in Room 208, Murray Hall (CAC)

Section 07: Thursdays, 10:05-11:00am (TH2*) in Room 203, Scott Hall (CAC)

This course is approved as satisfying the Cognitive Skills and Processes: Quantitative and Formal Reasoning element of the **SAS Core Curriculum**.

Course Description

This course deals with the logic of the research process in social science. We will cover various types of research design, different ways of gathering data, causality, analysis and interpretation, basic quantitative analysis, sampling, measurement, and ethical concerns. We will focus on evaluating different research methods and their scholarly applications.

Books and Readings

There is one required book:

Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage (2005/6), by Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas. ISBN 0-520-24113-4.

It is not available from the University bookstore. You must order it yourself from amazon.com or another online bookseller. Any version or edition (soft back, hardcover, original, revised) is fine. We won't be using this book until November, so you have plenty of time to get it. It's also available from the Rutgers libraries.

All other required readings for this class are available on the course Sakai site.

Sakai Site

You can find all required readings for the course that do not come from *Promises I Can Keep* under the resources tab on the course Sakai site. The assignments are also available on the site. If you miss class, you should print the assignment, do it, and bring it to your next recitation meeting to get credit for it. I will hand out hard copies of all assignments in class, so you don't need to print them unless you miss a class.

Make sure that you **check your Rutgers email frequently** for announcements about the class.

Course Requirements

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Assignments	30%
Participation	10%

Exams

Exams consist of short answer questions and problems. Both exams will cover material from readings and lectures. Exams are not cumulative, although key ideas and concepts will carry over. All students must take the exams when they are scheduled. Make-up exams are only available with a Dean's Note verifying your reason for missing the exam, and my advance approval; make-up exams may be in long essay format. Traffic is *not* an excuse for missing or coming late to an exam. There's always traffic in New Jersey, so plan accordingly.

If you miss an exam because of an emergency (this means that you did not know *in advance* about the reason you were going to miss the exam), you must notify me via email within 12 hours of the start time of the exam. If you do not do this, you may not be able to write a make-up exam, and may not be able to pass course as a result. This policy applies to both the midterm and the final exams.

Assignments

This course requires several assignments, due dates TBA in class. Assignments are not graded. If an assignment is inadequate or incorrect, you must revise and resubmit to get credit. There will be time in recitation to work on most assignments, and most assignments will be due in the same class that they are assigned. You must complete all assignments to receive the 30% assignment grade; otherwise, you will receive 0 for this portion of the course, and will not be able to pass the class.

With the exception of the survey project report, which is due at the end of the class, assignments may be handed in late without penalty, within the following guidelines: all first-term assignments must be completed before the midterm, and all second-term assignments must be completed before the survey project report is due. I offer this policy as an accommodation for those who miss class because of illness or other legitimate problems, and do not recommend that you take advantage of it otherwise, as doing so will likely compromise your exam grades.

If the survey project report is handed in late, I will deduct 5 points *from your total assignments point allocation of 30 points* for each day I do not receive it in hard copy.

“Late” begins after I have taken attendance on the day the survey project is due. Do not wait until the last minute to get your project components together or print out your report. Though I recognize that University computing lab printer problems (along with a host of other problems that may prevent you from handing your project in on time) may not be your fault, you are nevertheless responsible for handing work in on time, and will be penalized if you do not.

Participation

Participation means:

1. speaking in class in response to my questions during lectures and contributing to discussions in lectures, and
2. working on assignments during recitations.

If you do not participate in lectures, you will not get points for this part of the participation grade. Note that there is no grade for attendance. If you attend every class but never speak, you will not get points for participation in lecture. You do not need to speak in every class to get a perfect participation grade, however you do need to speak often and offer thoughtful comments.

Policy

If you find any of these policies unacceptable, you should not take this course.

Attendance

Missing more than 4 classes or recitations – any combination – will result in an F in the course. I do not excuse absences, with the exception of those for religious holidays (see below). Save your absences for emergencies. Persistent lateness will also reduce your grade. Please do *not* use the University Absence Reporting System to report your absences. You do not need to let me know if you are going to miss class, but if you wish to do so, please send me an email so that I can respond.

Phone Use in Class

Texting in class will reduce your participation grade (even if you participate actively), and upon multiple offenses, decrease it to zero. If you imagine that I or your TA cannot see you texting, please come to the front of the room to see what we can see.

Grading

Rutgers University uses a lettered grading system. Your final grade will be assigned in accordance with this system, shown below. You must complete all assignments and exams to get a final grade; otherwise you will receive an F.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Point Range</i>
A	90-100%
B+	87-89
B	80-86
C+	77-79
C	70-76
D	60-69
F	< 60

Exam and Final Grades

There will be no extra credit offered in this course. I do not curve, negotiate, or change exam or final grades. Again, there will be no extra credit offered in this course. I do not curve, change, or negotiate exam or final grades. Make sure you understand what this policy means before you decide to stay in this class, especially if you are a senior who intends to graduate at the end of this term.

Further, I am happy to accommodate many different types of circumstances and emergencies, but *only if they are brought to my attention as or immediately after they occur*. I do not accommodate problems or emergencies after exams have been taken or final grades have been submitted. Note also that “problem,” “emergency,” and “circumstances” are at my definition and discretion. Also see the information under “Timeliness,” below. **No end-of-term drama, please.**

The University does not allow instructors to lower final grades. Thus, D grades will not be lowered to F grades upon student request.

Laptops

Laptops and similar devices (including iPads and other tablets) are not permitted in recitation, with the exception of exam reviews. As most recitation time will be devoted to working on assignments in hard copy using pens and pencils, laptops will be unnecessary.

Disabilities and Religious Holidays

Individuals with disabilities will be accommodated. Please present your documentation *at the beginning of the course*. I will only accommodate disability-related needs for those who have documentation through the Office of Disability Services. You can find additional information here: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>. Please note that I am not always able to accommodate requests for additional time or a reduced distraction environment for exams. If this turns out to be the case, students with documentation entitling them to these accommodations must write their exams at the Office of Disability Services.

All absences for religious holidays will be excused. As the University no longer offers a comprehensive list of religious holidays, you must email me with the date and reason for absence to receive accommodation.

Timeliness

All course requirements must be completed by the end of the course. Should exceptional circumstances (by my determination) arise, all course requirements must be completed within one month of the final exam. I do not consider any circumstances to be exceptional, *regardless of their nature*, if they occurred during the course of the term, but you do not bring them to my attention until the end of the term, or after final grades have been submitted.

If you are having a problem that interferes with your ability to complete your work in this class, please let me know right away. This includes problems that you anticipate may interfere with your ability to complete the course requirements. I cannot make exceptions after the fact.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using another person's words and ideas as though they were your own. This includes both published work and other students' work. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense which can result in your expulsion from the University. You are responsible for knowing the standards of academic integrity as set forth by the University. You can find the most current version here: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please read the assigned material before class. Although it's unlikely, the course schedule is subject to change. Announcements of changes in dates and/or reading assignments or additions will be made in class and posted as announcements on Sakai.

Thursday September 4 Introduction and Course Overview

No recitation

Read: This syllabus, in its entirety.

Monday September 8 The Research Circle

No recitation

Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 2: The Process and Problems of Social Research

Thursday September 11 Variables and Hypotheses

First recitation for SECTION 07

Read: Stephens, "Chapter 1" (pp. 1-19) from *Hypotheses and Evidence*
Babbie, "A Variable Language" (pp. 14-19)

- Monday September 15 Causality: Understanding the Logic of Cause**
First recitation for SECTION 06
Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 6: Causation and Experimental Design (pp. 103-107 only)
- Thursday September 18 Causality II**
Read: Stephens, “Cause and Effect” (pp. 168-187) from *Hypotheses and Evidence*
- Monday September 22 Experiments: Causality and Research Design**
Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 6: Causation and Experimental Design (pp. 107-127)
 Babbie, “The Classical Experiment” (pp. 222-234)
- Thursday September 25 Experiments II: Case Study**
Read: Pager, “The Mark of a Criminal Record”
- Monday September 29 Reliability and Validity: Assessing Measurement**
Read: Babbie, “Criteria of Measurement Quality” (pp. 143-148)
- Thursday October 2 Reliability and Validity II: Case Study**
Read: Pager and Quillian, “Walking the Talk? What Employers Say Versus What They Do”
- Monday October 6 Sampling: Probability**
Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 5: Sampling
- Thursday October 9 Sampling: Non-Probability**
- Monday October 13 Midterm Exam Review (Not optional.)**
Recitation required for SECTION 06, optional for SECTION 07
- Thursday October 16 MIDTERM EXAM**
No recitation
- Monday October 20 Ethics: Protecting Subjects in Research**
No recitation
Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 3: Ethics in Research
- Thursday October 23 Ethics II: Case Study**
No recitation
Read: Scheper-Hughes, “Parts Unknown: Undercover Ethnography of the Organs-Trafficking Underworld”
- Monday October 27 Conceptualization**
Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 4: Conceptualization and Measurement
- Thursday October 30 Operationalization**
Happy Hallowe’en!
Read: Fowler, Jr., “How Unclear Terms Affect Survey Data”
 Read about The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (AddHealth) at
<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth> (“About Add Health” and “Study Design” sections)

Monday November 3 Survey Research

Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 7: Survey Research

Thursday November 6 Survey Research II: Case Study

Read: Bearman, Moody, and Stovel, "Chains of Affection: The Structure of Adolescent Romantic and Sexual Networks"

Monday November 10 Quantitative Data Analysis

Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 8: Elementary Quantitative Data Analysis

Thursday November 13 Mixed Methods

Film: "King Corn" (2007, 91 minutes)

Monday November 17 Qualitative Methods

Read: Chambliss and Schutt, Chap. 9: Qualitative Methods: Observing, Participating, Listening

Thursday November 20 Description and Causation I

Read: Edin and Kefalas, from *Promises I Can Keep*:
"Introduction"
"One: 'Before We Had a Baby...'"

Monday November 24 Data Analysis for Survey Projects (Don't miss this class.)

Optional recitation, open to both sections

**Tuesday November 25 CLASS CANCELLED (Thursday classes meet today.)
Happy Thanksgiving!**

Monday December 1 Description and Causation II

Optional recitation, open to both sections

Read: Edin and Kefalas, from *Promises I Can Keep*:
"Four: What Marriage Means"
"Five: Labor of Love"
"Six: How Motherhood Changed My Life"

Thursday December 4 Description and Causation III

Optional recitation, open to both sections

Read: Edin and Kefalas, from *Promises I Can Keep*:
"Conclusion: Making Sense of Single Motherhood"

Monday December 8 Final Exam Review (Not optional.)

Optional recitation, open to both sections

SURVEY PROJECT DUE (You can also hand it in earlier.)

Friday December 19 FINAL EXAM, 4-7pm in our regular classroom

Final grades will be submitted via Rutgers's electronic grade submission system within 48 hours of the final exam. Please do not email me for your final grade.