

Sociology 703
Writing Seminar: Quantitative Analysis Seminar (QAS)*
Spring 2012
Wednesday 1:10 p.m. – 3:50 p.m., Davison Hall 128 (Seminar Room)
Preliminary Syllabus

Professor: Julie Phillips
Davison Hall B039
E-mail: jphillips@sociology.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-3:00 and by appointment

Course Description: This is a course on conducting and writing about theoretically informed and methodologically rigorous quantitative social science research. Even the best designed study will have a minimal impact if the ideas and statistics contained within are not presented in a clear, well-organized and logical fashion. Our goal for the semester is to become masters of sociological research. We will achieve this goal by: (1) discussing and working through key challenges facing sociological researchers as they write papers and submit their work for publication; (2) revising one's work in response to reviewer critiques; and (3) developing skills as constructive and fair-minded reviewers of others' written work. The class will be run primarily as a workshop. We will also devote some time to issues facing sociologists as they go through the publication process, and (where necessary) a review of analytic techniques and quantitative research methods used in students' work.

The "workshop" activities may include but are not limited to: writing and editing exercises; constructing tables, graphs and appendices; providing substantive and stylistic feedback on written work; discussing potential journal "homes" for student work; reviewing computer output and data files; and drafting responses to journal reviewers. This is not a statistics course, but we will review statistical techniques and interpretations as needed and desired.

Prerequisites: Sociology 542 (Analysis of Sociological Data II) or its equivalent. You should be familiar with basic descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and both bivariate and multivariate analysis techniques. All students must have in hand the completed first draft of an empirical paper. My expectation is that at the end of the semester, you will have transformed this paper draft into a qualifying paper, master's thesis, dissertation chapter, conference paper, or (ultimately!) journal submission.

Readings: All readings are recommended. The only required reading is student papers, critiques, and lead critic letters. I will provide new readings throughout the semester, as requested by class participants. All recommended articles are posted on our class Sakai site. Two extremely helpful books are listed below.

Miller, Jane E. 2005. *The Chicago Guide to Writing about Multivariate Analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0226527833.

* Thank you to the faculty who contributed to the design of the Quantitative Analysis Seminar: Debby Carr, Zaire Dinzey-Flores, Pat Roos, and Kristen Springer.

Vogt, W. Paul. 2005. *Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology: A Non-technical Guide for the Social Sciences*, 3rd edition. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-0761988557.

This book is a must-own for anyone who reads sociological journals, conducts sociological research, or simply wants to be able understand what quantitative sociologists do.

Overview of Course Requirements and Grading: The grading for this course is Satisfactory (S)/Unsatisfactory (U). I will not give grades of “incomplete.”

Grades are based on successful completion of five requirements:

1. Post the original version of your paper, and facilitate its discussion in the first half of the semester. If there are particular issues you are wrestling with at this stage, you should include a memo that outlines them so that the class can be sure to think about them ahead of time. All manuscript files must be entitled yourname_version#_date (e.g., phillips_v2_040712).
2. Post a revised version of your paper and “reply to reviewers” memo, and facilitate its discussion in the second half of the semester. Examples of “reply to reviewer” memos are posted on the Sakai site.
3. Submit a final course paper that is suitable for a completed QP, journal article submission, or conference presentation.
4. Provide written comments on each student’s first and second drafts. These comments will be submitted each week via the Sakai site. The feedback should be written in the form of a review that would be submitted to a journal. Examples of journal reviewer critiques are posted on the Sakai site. All upload review files MUST be named authorname_yourname_version#_date of submission (e.g., doe_phillips_v1_032411).
5. Serve as “lead critic” twice during the semester; once during round 1 and once during round 2. You may choose to be the lead critic twice for the same person, or for two different people. We will assign papers on the first day of class, so please bring your calendars. In this capacity, you will serve as a journal “deputy editor,” and will write a synthesis of other students’ critiques for the manuscript author. Examples of deputy editor letters are posted on the Sakai site. All ‘lead critic’ memos should be entitled authorname-version_yourname_DE_date (e.g., doe-v1_phillips_DE_021411).

Presenters will submit their paper one week prior to their slot (i.e., by Wednesday noon on the week prior to your presentation). All reviews are due no later than Monday 5 p.m., two days prior to presentation. This will enable the “deputy editor” or “lead critic” to prepare his or her synthesized comments. All documents should be uploaded to the appropriate Sakai subdirectory.

STUDENT PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

	Author	Tentative Title	Lead Critic	Paper Due	Reviews Due (by 3 p.m.)
January 25				1/18	1/23
February 1				1/25	1/30
February 8				2/1	2/6
February 15				2/8	2/13
February 22				2/15	2/20
February 29				2/22	2/27
March 7				2/29	3/5
March 14	No class session: happy spring break!				
March 21				3/14	3/19
March 28				3/21	3/26
April 4				3/28	4/2
April 11				4/4	4/9
April 18				4/11	4/16
April 25				4/18	4/23

RECOMMENDED READINGS

On Writing and Publishing:

American Sociological Association. "Writing an Informative Abstract."

American Sociological Association. "Quick Style Guide."

American Sociological Association. Journals and Publications (links to all ASA journals).
<http://www.asanet.org/journals/index.cfm>

Clarke, Lee. "Notes on Proposing."

Clarke, Lee. "On Writing and Criticism."

England, Paula. "Teaching Graduate Students How to Write About Multivariate Quantitative Results."

Ferraro, Ken. 2009. "Odds of Getting Published in a Scholarly Journal." (A fun and cute way to 'predict' whether your article will be accepted at a journal!).

Germano, William. 2005. "Passive is Spoken Here." *Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 22, 2005).

Jacobs, Jerry A. 2010. "Journal Rankings in Sociology: Using the H Index with Google Scholar." Unpublished manuscript.

Jasper, James. "Why So Many Academics are Lousy Writers."

Miller, Jane E. "Preparing and Presenting Effective Posters." *Health Research and Educational Trust*.

Munger, Michael C. 2010. "10 Tips on How to Write Less Badly." *Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 6, 2010).

Rosenfield, Sarah. 1998. "Some Things to Think About While Reading Papers."

Seibert, Scott E. 2006. "Anatomy of an R&R (Or Reviewers are an Author's Best Friends)." *Academy of Management Journal* 49: 203-207.

White, Lynn. 2005. "Writes of Passage: Writing an Empirical Journal Article." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 791-798.

On Statistical Methods.

Acock, Alan and Fuzhong Li. "Latent Growth Curve Analysis: A Gentle Introduction."

Babbie, Earl. "Chapter 15: The Elaboration Model."

Babbie, Earl. "Notes on Percentaging Tables."

Baron, Reuben M. and David A. Kenny. 1986. "The Moderator-Mediator Variable Distinction in Social Psychological Research: Conceptual, Strategic, and Statistical Considerations." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 51(6): 1173-1182.

DeMaris, Alfred. 1995. "A Tutorial in Logistic Regression." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57: 956-968.

Duncan, Craig, Kelvyn Jones, and Graham Moon. 1998. "Context, Composition and Heterogeneity: Using Multilevel Models in Health Research." *Social Science Medicine* 46(1): 97-117.

Godwin, Deborah D. 1988. "Causal Modeling in Family Research." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 50: 917-927.

Heaton, Tim B. and Vaughn R. A. Call. 1995. "Modeling Family Dynamics with Event History Techniques." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57: 1078-1090.

MacKinnon, David P., Jennifer L. Krull, and Chondra M. Lockwood. 2000. "Equivalence of the Mediation, Confounding and Suppression Effect." *Prevention Science* 4:173-181.

Miller, Jane E. "Interpreting the substantive significance of multivariable regression coefficients."

Morgan, S. Philip and Jay D. Teachman. 1988. "Logistic Regression: Description, Examples, and Comparisons." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 50: 929-36.