**Sociology 3200: Research Methods**

**Spring/Summer 2020**

***You are responsible for the information in this syllabus.  
Read it carefully & ask questions if necessary.***

**Instructor Class Schedule**

Megan Edgar St. George, M.A.

[GJ2266@wayne.edu](mailto:GJ2266@wayne.edu) *Online* via Canvas

[Megan.St.George@wayne.edu](mailto:Megan.St.George@wayne.edu)

2264Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)\* *Weekly optional Zoom*

Office hours by appointment – via Zoom *meeting every Wednesday*  
\*Due to the pandemic, I will *not* be on campus. *at 6:30 PM.*

**Course Description & Learning Outcomes**

This course provides students with an overview of both quantitative and qualitative methods for conducting sociological research. Students learn how to conduct research by engaging with the following techniques: (1) surveys, (2) in-depth interviews, (3) observations, and (4) content analysis. Students learn how to design a sociological research project and submit their project at the end of the course. We also discuss ethical considerations in research. Students complete a variety of assignments in this course, each one designed to increase understanding of the diversity and complexity of sociological research. Students should read all assigned readings and view all PowerPoints and imbedded videos prior to attempting the weekly quiz and be prepared to discuss the key ideas found in the readings in their discussion board posts. We go through topics quickly; students must enter this course willing to keep up with readings and assignments. Students are required to participate when I open topics up for discussion. Course requirements are outlined below.

The basic learning outcomes for Sociology 3200 include, but are not limited to:

1. Identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge;
2. Compare and contrast the basic methodological approaches for gathering data;
3. Design a research study and explain why various decisions were made;
4. Understand the importance of ethics in research, the value of empirical data collection, and the impact the world has on any research endeavor.

***Required* Course Materials**

Babbie, Earl R. 2014. *The Practice of Social Research* 14th ed. Boston, MA: Cengage.  
ISBN-10: 1305104943  
ISBN-13: 9781305104945

Purchase the textbook ***PRIOR*** to the start of class. Yes, we will be using it. Additional resources will be made available on Canvas.

**Canvas**

As this is an online course, there will be additional materials, including PowerPoint slides, discussion boards, quizzes, and assignments all posted on Canvas throughout the semester. Please check Canvas regularly to access these materials and receive any updates regarding the course. If you have any concerns about accessing Canvas, please contact me by the end of the first week of class.

*Canvas Assistance*   
For anyone struggling with Canvas, two resources are available to you: C&IT and the Student Success Center. See the Student Services section within Course Policies and Campus Resources below for more information regarding these two resources.

**Course Grading Scale**

This grading scale will be applied to all assignments as well as your final course grade.

A: 94 and above C: 74 – 76

A-: 90 – 93 C-: 70 – 73

B+: 87 – 89 D+: 67 – 69

B: 84 – 86 D: 64 – 66

B-: 80 – 83 D-: 60 – 63

B-: 80 – 83 D-: 60 – 63

C+: 77 – 79 F: below 60

*A NOTE ON ROUNDING*

In alignment with mathematical theory, I will properly round grades. This means an earned grade with a decimal value of .50 or above will be rounded up, and an earned grade with a decimal value of .4 or below will be rounded down. For example, an earned grade of 89.50% will be rounded upwards to 90%, whereas an earned grade of 89.49% will not.

**Course Requirements & Expectations**

Quizzes (12) 20%

Discussion & Response (9) 25%

Survey 10%

Interview 10%

Ethnography 10%

Annotated Bibliography 10%

Content Analysis 15%

**Total 100%**

*Extra Credit*

Aside from the technology quiz and the end of year instructor evaluation, extra credit assignments will ***not*** be provided, offered, or available upon request. The technology quiz extra credit will be provided on an individual basis. The end of the year instructor evaluation extra credit will be assigned to the entire class *only if* 80% of students complete the evaluation. The point values of each of these extra credit assignments are to be determined and are forthcoming. Their values may be up to, but will not exceed, one additional percent to your final grade.

**Assignment Details & Expectations**

*Quizzes – 20%*

There are 12 Chapter(s) Quizzes on Canvas underneath the corresponding chapter module. These assignments are *open book* and *you may take them as many times as you’d like before the due date.* The quizzes are designed to familiarize you with course materials *before* we discuss the materials in the discussion boards and/or via Zoom. You must complete each Chapter(s) Quiz by 11:59 PM on the day it is due. All Chapter(s) Quizzes are due at the end of each week: Sunday at 11:59 PM. ***No late assignments will be accepted*.** (In fact, the quizzes mysteriously disappear after the deadline. It’s weird.) Seriously folks, these are basically freebies, make sure you don’t miss them. **I will not reopen them after they close, so please don’t ask.** Your ***two*** lowest quiz scores will be dropped.

*Discussion and Response 25%*

Most weeks you will be expected to answer discussion prompts by 11:59 PM on the day they are due (listed in Course Schedule as “discussion”). Discussion posts are always due on Wednesdays at 11:59 PM. Then, you will respond to ***one*** classmates’ answer (listed in Course Schedule as “discussion response”) by 11:59 PM on the following Sunday. Please try to respond to new people’s discussions to make sure that everyone has discussions to respond to and to keep the flow of learning going. These will be graded on how well you demonstrate an understanding of the material. Your lowest ***two*** scores will be dropped. In other words, *you can miss* ***two*** *weeks of discussions without penalty (1 discussion, 1 response of the same week).* Note that Canvas is set up to simply drop your lowest two scores, thus missing discussions and responses from varying weeks will provide numerous low scores, of which only two will be dropped.

I expect that your original answers will be **a minimum of 300 words** (about two paragraphs)and be well thought out. Responses to others’ answers should be **at least 150 words** (about one paragraph) and I expect that you will address at least 2 points that the author of the answer makes. **Please see the Canvas page “How This Course Works” for more information and the grading rubric.**

*Research Methods Activities and Memos – total of 55%*

There will be five activities and corresponding memos due throughout the semester. The first will be a survey design for a quantitative survey on a topic of interest which will also include a short literature review and reflection memo. Next will be three qualitative activities – interview, ethnography, and content analysis – which will all require data collection, literature review, and an analysis memo. Aside from the content analysis, each activity will require *only* three peer reviewed articles in their short literature review sections. These articles will build to develop the annotated bibliography assignment and the larger literature review for the content analysis. The goal is to slowly develop and create a working set of empirical, peer reviewed articles within your area of interest. More details and grading rubrics will follow.

*A NOTE ON DUE DATES*

You will see a date listed for each quiz and for the discussion/response in the Course Schedule. Your work is expected to be completed on this date by 11:59 PM. However, these assignments will be open every Monday before the due date. You are welcome to complete the quizzes and discussions prior to the due date. Please try to refrain from completing the responses until after the Wednesday of each week so that everyone’s original discussion post is submitted prior to the responses. Since everyone is allowed to miss ***two*** Chapter(s) Quizzes and ***two*** Discussions and their subsequent Responses, ***no late Chapter Quizzes(s) or Discussions/Responses will be accepted***. In fact, they will both be locked and unavailable after 11:59 PM on the date they are due. Shucks.

The Research Methods Activities and Memos will be begrudgingly accepted late, but with penalty unless proper documentation can be provided. These assignments have a due date, but are made available in advance, which means that proper documentation would need to support the inability to complete the assignment not only on the day it was due, but during a substantial amount of the time the assignment was available. Documentation includes death certificates, doctor’s notes with letterhead and proper signatures, or documentation of power or internet outages. Late submissions without documentation will be penalized by one grade level per day it is late. For example, an A will drop to an A- the first day it is late, a B+ the second day, and a B the third, so on and so forth.

**Emailing/Contacting Me**

You can reach me at [GJ2266@wayne.edu](mailto:GJ2266@wayne.edu). Please feel free to reach out at any time. However, I will not respond to emails/messages in the middle of the night or on weekends/holidays. Please wait at least 24 hours for a response from me. If you have not received an email within 48 hours, assume that I did not get your message and resend.

**Weekly *Optional* Zoom Meetings**

There will be an *optional* weekly Zoom meeting every Wednesday at 6:30 PM. It is not required, nor will attending have any direct affect upon your grade. However, research methods are often best understood through discussion, so attendance is encouraged. These meetings will not be lectures, as I find lectures dry and boring. Instead, it will follow a flipped classroom format, where reading the chapter(s) in advance is highly encouraged; we can then focus on what was not understood in the course materials and have an in-depth discussion about the material during the meetings. Although Zoom meetings will not have a direct impact on your grade, I believe attending them will allow you a more thorough grasp of the material, which will inevitably enhance your grade.

**Online Netiquette**

* Check Canvas and your WSU email daily.
* Respect others and keep an appropriate tone, even when their opinions differ from your own.
* Capitalize only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading. An entire word or sentence in caps is often considered shouting and is strongly discouraged.
* Avoid negativity and inappropriate materials. If you wouldn’t say it in person, don’t say it online.
* Avoid slang, abbreviations, and the use of emoticons. Not everyone will understand their meaning.

**Community Ground Rules**

* Consider yourself a member of a community. A community is a group of individuals working together to support a common goal or interest. We are working together to support the successful achievement of our learning outcomes.
* Log-in and participate regularly in group conversations and activities.
* Treat the diverse contributions made by other community members with respect.
* Have patience and a sense of humor with technology.
* Be a learner. Keep an open mind when introduced to new ideas that may challenge your perceptions.
* Ask for help when you need it and assist others when possible.
* Understand that communications shared through text have higher likelihood of being misinterpreted than spoken words. Therefore, when you type a thought or comment, read it carefully before submitting it. If you question the way it is worded, read it aloud. If you still question the way it’s phrased, re-write it.
* Contribute regularly to group dialogue, including discussion board postings, replies, and other group activities. The contributions of each individual play a role in the collective strength and diversity of our community.
* If at any time you feel that any of these ground rules has been violated by a member of our community, you are encouraged to bring your concern directly to me. Clearly identify which group rule has been violated and included specific evidence of the violation in your email, phone call, or Zoom meeting. Your concerns will be addressed promptly and in an individualized manner.
* We will be adding to these rules as necessary.

**Student Responsibilities**

* ***Respect:*** Treat all members of the class and the broader community with *respect*.Listen attentively when others are speaking and use *inclusive language*when it is your turn to speak. We will discuss sensitive topics in this course. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these discussions, but personal opinions must be presented in a way that does not marginalize any person or group.
* ***Syllabus:*** I (the instructor) reserve the right to make adjustments to the syllabus. As such, you (the student) are responsible for keeping up with any changes that are announced in class, on Canvas, or in email communications. Not checking Canvas, and/or not checking your WSU email account are not legitimate excuses for missing assignments and other information relevant to this course.
* ***Canvas:*** It is *your* responsibility to check Canvas regularly to ensure that grades are posted accurately (including discussion/response and quiz grades).
* ***Communication:*** You are *strongly encouraged* to communicate with me by email if you have any comments, questions, or concerns about the course. Please *schedule an appointment* when you wish to meet with me via Zoom. Due to the virtual nature of this course and the ongoing pandemic, meetings can be held via Zoom, Skype, or Microsoft Teams.
* ***Timeliness:*** Complete the assigned readings before contributing to the discussion boards.
* ***Participation:*** Participate in course discussions.
* ***More on Respect:*** Engage in respectful discussion. In this class, we will be discussing sensitive topics, possibly ones that you’ve never discussed before. Some of these discussions may challenge your beliefs and opinions. It is expected that you will respectfully present your arguments and that you will treat the arguments of your classmates respectfully as well. **Disrespectful behavior towards any group or individual will not be tolerated.** Any student who does not abide by this policy may be asked to leave the class, and further violations will be dealt with in accordance with WSU policies.

**Course Policies and Campus Resources**

Students in this course should be aware of campus policies and services available. See student rights and responsibilities: <https://clas.wayne.edu/students/policies/rights>. See details on several policies and services below:

* ***Academic dishonesty*:** Academic misconduct is any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution or undermine the education process. Examples of academic misconduct include:
  + ***Plagiarism:*** To take and use another's words or ideas as your own without appropriate referencing or citation.
  + ***Cheating:*** Intentionally using or attempting to use or intentionally providing unauthorized materials, information or assistance in any academic exercise. This includes copying from another student's test or paper, allowing another student to copy from your test, using unauthorized material during an exam and submitting a term paper for a current class that has been submitted in a past class without appropriate permission.
  + ***Fabrication:*** Intentional or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation, such as knowingly attributing citations to the wrong source or listing a fake reference in the paper or bibliography.
  + ***Other:*** Selling, buying or stealing all or part of a test or term paper, unauthorized use of resources, enlisting in the assistance of a substitute when taking exams, destroying another's work, threatening or exploiting students or instructors, or any other violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other written information. Such activity may result in failure of a specific assignment, an entire course, or, if flagrant, dismissal from Wayne State University. <https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct>
* ***My Policy on Academic Dishonesty:***Suspected academic dishonesty will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students suspected of academic dishonesty may receive a score of 0 on the assignment or a score of 0 in the course, depending on the magnitude of the offense. Moreover, *I am obligated to report all instances of suspected academic dishonesty to university administrators.*

* ***Religious Holidays:***Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations of the University student body and staff, the Academic Calendar makes no provisions for religious holidays. However, it is University policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students with classes or examinations that conflict with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that mutually agreeable alternatives may be worked out. <https://wayne.edu/registrar/registration/calendar17-18/>
* ***Accommodative Services (Americans with Disabilities Act):***If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with **Student Disability Services** for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library (UGL) in the Student Academic Success Services department. The SDS telephone number is **313-577-1851** or **313-202-4216** for videophone use. Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to digitally meet with you privately to discuss your specific needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to serve “as a resource for the Wayne State University community to ensure academic access and inclusion for students, supporting a view of disability guided by social, cultural and political forces. We work to create an inclusive academic environment by promoting universal design throughout the university. We provide academic accommodations, resources and training in assistive technology to foster self-advocacy and success for students with disabilities. We share information to foster understanding of disability throughout the university community.” You can learn more about the disability office at [www.studentdisability.wayne.edu](http://www.studentdisability.wayne.edu). To register with Student Disability Services, complete the online registration form at:   
  <https://wayne-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/>
  + ***SDS and COVID-19:*** SDS has developed specific services to assist students during the ongoing pandemic. See this link for more information:  
    <https://studentdisability.wayne.edu/coronavirus>
* ***Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):*** “It is quite common for college students to experience mental health challenges, such as stress, anxiety and depression, that interfere with academic performance and negatively impact daily life. Help is available for any currently enrolled WSU student who is struggling with a mental health difficulty, at WSU Counseling and Psychological Services (<https://caps.wayne.edu/>; **313 577-3398**). Other options, for students and nonstudents, include the Counseling and Testing Center, and the Counseling Psychology Training Clinic, in the WSU College of Education (<http://coe.wayne.edu/tbf/counseling/center-index.php>). Services at all three clinics are free and confidential. Remember that getting help, before stress reaches a crisis point, is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself, and for those you care about. Also, know that the WSU Police Department (**313 577-2222**) has personnel trained to respond sensitively to mental health emergencies at all hours.”
* ***Course Drops and Withdrawals:*** In the first two weeks of the (full) term, students can drop this class and receive 100% tuition and course fee cancellation. After the end of the second week there is no tuition or fee cancellation. Students who wish to withdraw from the class can initiate a withdrawal request on Academica. You will receive a transcript notation of WP (passing), WF (failing), or WN (no graded work) at the time of withdrawal. No withdrawals can be initiated after the end of the tenth week. Students enrolled in the 10th week and beyond will receive a grade. Because withdrawing from courses may have negative academic and financial consequences, students considering course withdrawal should make sure they fully understand all the consequences before taking this step. More information on this can be found at: <https://reg.wayne.edu/students/information#dropping>
* ***Additional Student Services:*** 
  + ***Academic Success Center:*** (1600 Undergraduate Library) Assists students with content in select courses and in strengthening study skills. Visit <https://success.wayne.edu/> for schedules and information on study skills workshops, tutoring and supplemental instruction (primarily in 1000 and 2000 level courses).
  + ***Writing Research and Technology Zone:*** Located on the 2nd floor of the Undergraduate Library and provides individual tutoring consultations free of charge. Visit <http://clasweb.clas.wayne.edu/writing> to obtain information on tutors, appointments, and the type of help they can provide.
  + ***Library Research Assistance:*** Working on a research assignment, paper or project? Trying to figure out how to collect, organize and cite your sources? Wayne State librarians provide on campus or online personalized help. Link: <https://library.wayne.edu/forms/consultation_request.php>
  + ***Computing & Information Technology (C&IT):*** For any technology issues, please seek help from C&IT at <https://tech.wayne.edu/>. They can assist in a multitude of issues, such as internet, Canvas, AccessID, general software and computer support, and more. *If you encounter any technical difficulties that require documentation, a work ticket from Wayne State University’s C&IT department and only Wayne State University’s C&IT department is acceptable*.
  + ***The W Food Pantry:*** Provides WSU students with free resources such as non-perishable food, toiletries, and feminine hygiene items to enhance student success. Bring your OneCard and a copy or photo of your class schedule for the current semester to use their services. For more information visit <https://thew.wayne.edu/>.
* ***Class Recordings:*** “Students need prior written permission from the instructor before recording any portion of this class. If permission is granted, the audio and/or video recording is to be used only for the student’s personal instructional use. ***Such recordings are not intended for a wider public audience, such as postings to the internet or sharing with others.*** Students registered with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) who wish to record class materials must present their specific accommodation to the instructor, who will subsequently comply with the request unless there is some specific reason why s/he cannot, such as discussion of confidential or protected information.” ***Visual or audio recordings are NOT permitted unless an SDS form has been obtained and signed.***

**Instructor Responsibilities**

* I will be prepared to discuss the materials and facilitate the educational process.
* I will be available to answer questions you have about course materials.
* I will explain class assignments and outline my expectations for graded work.
* I will grade your work consistently, fairly, and in a timely fashion.
* I will treat all students with respect.
* I will acknowledge and correct my mistakes.

**Course Schedule Explanation**

In order to provide some sense of a routine, I have attempted to create a weekly pattern for the course. Every week begins on Monday. I have an optional Zoom meeting scheduled every Wednesday at around the time our class was originally scheduled to meet. Discussion posts are due on Wednesdays, then the response and weekly quiz are always due by the following Sunday. The same for the activities and corresponding memos; everything for the week opens on Monday and is due either Wednesday or Sunday. **Please see the Canvas page “How This Course Works” for more information.**

*See course schedule on following two pages.*

**Course Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WEEK** | **TOPICS** | **✓** | **DUE** |
| **Week 1 5/04** | ***Welcome!***  Course Introduction  & Syllabus  Chapter 1:  Human Inquiry |  | READ THE SYLLABUS  Chapter 1 – Book & Slides  Quiz due 5/10: Ch. 1 & Syllabus  Discussion due 5/10: Introductions  Extra Credit due 5/10: Technology Survey  *\*Optional: Zoom – 5/6 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 2 5/11** | Chapter 2:  Paradigms & Theory  Chapter 4:  Research Design |  | Chapter 2 – Book & Slides  Chapter 4 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 5/13: Paradigms  Quiz due 5/17: Ch. 2 & 4  Discussion response due 5/17  *\*Optional: Zoom – 5/13 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 3 5/18** | Chapter 3:  Ethics  Chapter 5:  Concept to Measure |  | Chapter 3 – Book & Slides  Chapter 5 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 5/20: Ethics  Quiz due 5/24: Ch. 3 & 5  Discussion response due 5/24  *\*Optional: Zoom – 5/20 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 4 5/25** | Chapter 6: Indexes & Scales  Chapter 7:  Sampling |  | Chapter 6 – Book & Slides  Chapter 7 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 5/27: Area of Interest  Quiz due 5/31: Ch. 6 & 7  Discussion response due 5/31  *\*Optional: Zoom – 5/27 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 5 6/01** | Chapter 9: Surveys |  | Chapter 9 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 6/03: Surveys  Quiz due 6/07: Ch. 9  Discussion response due 6/07  **Memo 1: Survey Design due 6/07**  *\*Optional: Zoom – 6/03 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 6 6/08** | Chapter 10:  Qualitative Research  Chapter 11: Unobtrusive Research |  | Chapter 10 – Book & Slides  Chapter 11 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 6/10: Research in Crisis  Quiz due 6/14: Ch. 10 & 11  Discussion response due 6/14  *\*Optional: Zoom – 6/10 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 7 6/15** | Chapter 8: Experiments  Chapter 12:  Evaluation |  | Chapter 8 – Book & Slides  Chapter 12 – Book & Slides  Interview guide & topic due 6/17\*\*  Quiz due 6/21: Ch. 8 & 12  *\*Optional: Zoom – 6/17 @ 6:30 PM*  *\*No discussion due this week.*  *\*\*Once approved, perform interview.* |
| **Week 8 6/22** | Chapter 13:  Qualitative Analysis |  | Chapter 13 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 6/24: Interviews  Quiz due 6/28: Ch. 13  Discussion response due 6/28  **Memo 2: Interview due 6/28**  *\*Optional: Zoom – 6/24 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 9 6/29** | Chapter 14: Quantitative Analysis |  | Chapter 14 – Book & Slides  Ethnography “location” due 7/01\*\*  Quiz due 7/05: Ch. 14  *\*Optional: Zoom – 7/01 @ 6:30 PM*  *\*No discussion due this week.*  *\*\*Once approved, perform observation.* |
| **Week 10 7/06** | Chapter 15: Multivariate Analysis |  | Chapter 15 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 7/08: Ethnography  Quiz due 7/12: Ch. 15  Discussion response due 7/12  **Memo 3: Ethnography due 7/12**  *\*Optional: Zoom – 7/08 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 11 7/13** | Chapter 16:  Statistical Analyses |  | Chapter 16 – Book & Slides  Quiz due 7/19: Ch. 16  **Memo 4: Annotated Bib. due 7/19\*\***  *\*Optional: Zoom – 7/15 @ 6:30 PM*  *\*No discussion due this week.*  *\*\*Include Content Analysis topic & source.* |
| **Week 12 7/20** | Chapter 17:  Reading & Writing Social Research |  | Chapter 17 – Book & Slides  Discussion due 7/22: Content Analysis  Quiz due 7/26: Ch. 17  Discussion response due 7/26  *\*Optional: Zoom – 7/22 @ 6:30 PM* |
| **Week 13 7/27** | Finals Week |  | **Memo 5: Content Analysis due 7/29**  *\*Optional: Zoom – 7/27 @ 6:30 PM\*\**  *\*\*Monday Zoom session!* |