

<u>Course:</u>	<u>SOC 4200: Methods of Social Research, Winter 2015</u>
<u>Instructor:</u>	Megan Petersen- Doctoral Candidate, Wayne State University M.A. Sociology- Wayne State University M.A. Educational Psychology- Eastern Michigan University B.S. Education- Wayne State University
<u>Meeting Days &amp; Times:</u>	January 12- May 4, 2015, Mondays, 5:30-9:10, 113 State
<u>Office Hours:</u>	Monday Before or After Class & Thursday 4:30-6:15 in 2244 FAB - or By Appointment
<u>Contact:</u>	ae2925@wayne.edu or megan.petersen@wayne.edu Sociology Phone: 313-577-2930 -Not a personal line, you can leave a message.
<u>Required Text:</u>	<i>The Basics of Social Research</i> , Earle Babbie (Any Edition) Additional readings posted on Blackboard
<u>Catalogue Description:</u>	An elementary research methods course that covers the process of doing social research, including research design, data collection techniques, processing and analysis of data, as well as the interpretation of data. 4 Cr.
<u>Withdrawals &amp; Incompletes:</u>	Incompletes are only given in cases of medical or other verifiable emergencies. The withdrawal system at WSU is <u>student-initiated</u> , so if you are hoping to withdraw from the course you must do so yourself via pipeline. Students who do not formally withdraw from the course, but whom stop attending and/or do not complete the course requirements, will receive a failing grade in the course. Note that <b>January 26</b> is the last day to drop a class <i>with tuition cancellation</i> and <b>March 29</b> is the last day to withdraw from a class.
<u>Academic Dishonesty:</u>	Assignments must be clearly distinguishable from those of other students or sources. Plagiarism is considered cheating; any quoted material must be placed in quotation marks with proper references to the author included. "You may use statistical data or paraphrase other published works, but ONLY if you provide the complete citation, which includes author's last name and year. <i>This means, even if you use your own words, but the ideas are from something you read you must give credit to that author.[emphasis added]</i> " (Brumley, 2008). If you think you might be plagiarizing, then you probably ARE! Copying entire paragraphs from sources is not appropriate even if citations are provided. Evidence of cheating or plagiarizing will result in automatic failure of the test/assignment and possibly the course. Please see the student code of conduct for more information on WSU's policies regarding academic integrity <a href="http://doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct/PDF-Documents/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Brochure.pdf">http://doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct/PDF-Documents/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Brochure.pdf</a>
<u>Disability Services:</u>	If you are a student with a disability or condition (physical, emotional, or other) that might affect your performance in this course, you should inform me of this as early as possible. Students with a range of disabilities can also receive help from Student Disability Services, located in the Undergraduate Library -phone number: (313) 577-1851; email: <a href="mailto:studentdisability@wayne.edu">studentdisability@wayne.edu</a> ; website: <a href="http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/">http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/</a> .
<u>Assignment Format:</u>	All assignments must be typed, using standard (1 inch) margins, 12 pt. font (either Times New Roman or Arial), be double spaced and <b>uploaded directly to Blackboard</b> . Please do not e-mail assignments or bring in hard copies. By uploading to Blackboard I am able to provide detailed feedback on your assignments.
<u>Citation Guidelines:</u>	You must use ASA/ASR/Chicago Style guidelines for Bibliography/Text Citations. See the link provided on Blackboard for the ASA style guide.
<u>Appropriate Sources:</u>	While the internet will be useful in helping you locate journal articles, you are only to use the Internet for limited research, such as downloading articles from peer-reviewed journals available through the WSU library. A <i>partial</i> list of the types of peer-reviewed journals that you may gather research from follows. You may NOT use magazines, newspapers, television programs or descriptions posted on websites on the Internet. See the WSU library sociology guide for additional assistance.

### Examples of Peer-Reviewed Journals Relevant to Sociology:

Social problems	Sociological Forum	American Sociological Review
Sociological Perspectives	Gender and Society	Sociological Quarterly
Social Forces	Theory and Society	American Journal of Sociology
City and Community	Contemporary Sociology	European Journal of Social Theory
Latin American Research Review	Sociological Spectrum	Journal of Marriage and the Family
Demography	Sociological Inquiry	Journal of Health and Social Behavior
European Sociological Review	Annual Review of Sociology	

Learning Outcomes: The sociology major should study, review, and demonstrate understanding of the role of evidence and qualitative and quantitative methods in sociology, such that the student will be able to: (a) identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge; (b) compare and contrast the basic methodological approaches for gathering data; (c) design a research study in an area of choice and explain why various decisions were made; and (d) critically assess a published research report and explain how the study could have been improved.

### Upon successful completion of this course you will be able to:

- use the internet to conduct literature searches.
- carefully consider ethical dilemmas faced in research.
- understand how to organize and structure a literature review.
- articulate an answerable research question and develop appropriate hypotheses.
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research designs.
- understand the basics of sampling and be able to differentiate different sampling methods.
- understand the basics of measurement.
- evaluate existing research.
- demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between theory and research.
- successfully write a research proposal.

### General Course Expectations

- Attend all class meetings and actively participate in class.
- Be responsible for what you have missed should you be absent from class.
- Read and complete all required assignments prior to coming to class.
- Ask questions right away if you do not understand an assignment!
- Take comments and feedback into consideration when completing assignments; please try not to continually repeat the same mistakes! I take a lot of time and put forth serious effort in creating and evaluating authentic assessments to help you improve throughout the course of the semester.
- Get additional help from The David Adamany Undergraduate Library Writing Center if necessary.
- Respect everyone in the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, respectful means of communication, not disrupting class by using phones or other technology in ways that are not related to class, and quiet consumption of food & beverages.
- The best way to contact me is via e-mail. Please be sure to communicate in a professional manner.
- Blackboard and Wayne State e-mail will be used by me to communicate with you. Be sure to check both frequently throughout the semester.
- Missing class does not excuse you from an assignment. If proper documentation is not presented you will earn less than full (or zero) credit on the assignment/assessment.
- Don't procrastinate! This goes both for assignments and in contacting me with questions or concerns.
- **Have fun and get something out of class! I promise that this will not be a waste of your time as long as you put forth effort and keep an open mind.**

## Assignments & Grading

- **Participation & Reading Discussion (2.5 points each class x 10 class meetings = 25 Points)\*:** Attendance is critical, especially in a course that meets weekly. This is not a standard lecture course; class will be comprised of many group activities, discussions and exercises to aid you in working towards the final research proposal. Points will be rewarded for each class attended & **actively participated in 100%** (arriving on time and staying for the duration of class). Students who arrive late or leave early (15 minutes) will receive partial attendance credit. **Students who attend class, but who do not participate, will also earn partial attendance credit.** Students may miss a total of 4 classes, no questions asked, without losing credit. Students who miss fewer than 4 classes will earn extra credit. ***Be sure you have read the assigned readings prior to class, as you will be expected to discuss the assigned readings in a formal way. Course discussions will also be valuable when completing the weekly reading journal entries (see below).***
- **10 Reading Journal Entries (10 Points each x 10 = 100 Points):** Nearly every week you will be required to complete a journal entry regarding that week's assigned readings. These reflections should be approximately 2-3 pages and will be typed and uploaded into blackboard. You will not be able to upload your journal past the assigned due date and time, which is noon on Sunday. ***Be sure to type your journal entry as a word (or equivalent) document and save it as such (word document or rich text format are your best options) prior to uploading it into Blackboard. This will ensure that you have a back-up file in case something goes wrong while attempting to complete the assignment. The window for submission closes immediately at noon on Sunday, late journals will not be accepted- don't procrastinate!*** You can make up one missed journal by doing a journal the last week of the semester (no official journal assigned that week). Journals will be graded accordingly:
  - **Part 1- Reading Summary (5 Points):** In the first part of your journal entry summarize the assigned readings for that week (**both from the textbook and any assigned blackboard readings**). This section should be approximately 4-6 paragraphs in length. This is partially an exercise in the ability to summarize the main ideas of scholarly material, so you must select what details to include judiciously. Be sure that your summaries of assigned blackboard readings/articles focus on the METHODS used and the topic of discussion for the week, *not the topic of the reading*. For example, if the journal article is about arranged marriages, do not discuss the pros and cons of arranged marriages, but instead focus on the way the researchers collected data regarding arranged marriages. All assigned blackboard readings are examples of methods and correspond with the assigned chapter for that particular week. You should be able to draw clear comparisons between the content you have read in the textbook and the application of those techniques in the journal article.
  - **Part 2- Connection to Topic (5 Points):** In the second part of your journal entry discuss how the readings are relevant to your research topic. Include examples of how you would employ the techniques described in the textbook in order to successfully conduct research on your topic. If a chapter describes multiple techniques either a) choose which technique would be the most appropriate for your topic and explain why or b) describe how each of the techniques could be used relative to your specific topic. Be sure to provide concrete examples and do NOT skip or gloss over this part of the journal entry as it encompasses ½ of the journal grade. This section should be approximately 3 paragraphs long. While it may be briefer than the 1<sup>st</sup> section, it requires deeper thinking and reasoning skills.
- **Research Proposal Project Parts 1 & 2 (100 Points each section x 2 = 200 Points):** Throughout the semester you will work towards the development of a research proposal, which you will complete in 2 stages. Refer to the course schedule for due dates. Specific instructions and rubrics for each part of the project will be provided at least two weeks prior to the due date. Assignments submitted late will be penalized 1 point each day late and will also suffer from less detailed feedback. Students will be able to re-submit assignments for additional points. Re-Submissions must be turned in by noon Sunday, May 3, 2014 according to directions provided in class.
  - **Research Project Part 1 – Introduction & Annotated Bibliography (100 Points):** In this paper you will be asked to identify a research topic, a specific research question, hypotheses, sub-research questions, a discussion of relevant variables, and to develop a thorough annotated bibliography of literature related to your topic.
  - **Research Project Part 2- Methods (100 Points):** In this paper you will be asked to take the research topic identified in the first paper and develop an appropriate research **plan** utilizing either a quantitative or qualitative methodology, including analysis of validity and reliability issues, and a discussion of how data would be analyzed. ***Please note that you are NOT being asked to actually conduct the proposed research or collect any data!***
- **Final Exam (75 Points):** The final exam will consist of a variety of short essay & analysis items. The items will be provided in class a week prior to the final exam to aid in preparation, but you will be required to write out your responses during the final exam period.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Pts. Each</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Grade %</u>
<b>Participation &amp; Reading Discussions</b>	10*	2.5	25	6%
<b>Reading Journals</b>	10	10	100	25%
<b>Research Project Part 1</b>	1	100	100	25%
<b>Research Project Part 2</b>	1	100	100	25%
<b>Final Exam</b>	1	75	75	19%

<b>A</b>	370-400 Points	<b>A-</b>	358-369 Points	<b>B+</b>	346-357 Points	<b>B</b>	330-345 Points
<b>B-</b>	318-329 Points	<b>C+</b>	306-317 Points	<b>C</b>	290-305 Points	<b>C-</b>	278-289 Points
<b>D+</b>	266-277 Points	<b>D</b>	250-265 Points	<b>D-</b>	238-249 Points	<b>E</b>	0 -237 Points

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments Due</u>
Week 1 1/12 - 25	Human Inquiry & Science Paradigms, Theory & Research	Babbie Chapters 1 & 2	Journal Entry 1 due by 5 p.m. 1/25
Week 2 1/26 - 2/1	Ethics & Politics of Social Research	Babbie Chapter 3 & Blackboard Ethics Article	Journal Entry 2 due by 5 p.m. 2/1
Week 3 2/2 - 8	Research Design Conceptualization & Operationalization	Babbie Chapters 4 & 5	Journal Entry 3 due by 5 p.m. 2/8
Week 4 2/9 - 15	Research Day- Class meets in <b>Undergraduate Library Lab B</b>		
Week 5 2/16 - 22	Project Work Day- No Class Meeting		Research Proposal Part 1 due by 5 p.m. 2/22
Week 6 2/21 - 3/1	Sampling	Babbie Chapter 7 & Blackboard Sampling Article	Journal Entry 4 due by 5 p.m. 3/1
Week 7 3/2 - 3/8	Experiments	Babbie Chapter 8 & Blackboard Experiments Article	Journal Entry 5 due by 5 p.m. 3/8
Week 8 3/9 - 15	Surveys	Babbie Chapter 9 & Blackboard Survey Article	Journal Entry 6 due by 5 p.m. 3/15
Week 9 3/23 - 29	Qualitative Field Research	Babbie Chapter 10 & Blackboard Field Research Article	Journal Entry 7 due by 5 p.m. 3/29
Week 10 3/30 - 4/5	Unobtrusive Research	Babbie Chapter 11 & Blackboard Content Analysis Article	Journal Entry 8 due by 5 p.m. 4/5
Week 11 4/6 - 12	Evaluation Research	Babbie Chapter 12 & Blackboard Evaluation Article Choice	Journal Entry 9 due by 5 p.m. 4/12
Week 12 4/13 - 19	Data Analysis	Babbie Chapters 13 & 14	Journal Entry 10 due by 5 p.m. 4/19
Week 13 4/20 - 26	Reading & Writing Social Research	Babbie Chapter 15	Research Proposal Part 2 due by 5 p.m. 4/26
Week 14 4/27 - 5/3	Autoethnography & Mixed Methods	Blackboard Autoethnography article & Mixed Methods article	Re-submits and/or make-up journal due by 5 p.m. 5/3
Finals 5/4	Final Exam		

\* Class meets 14 times during the semester; you can miss four classes without losing any attendance points. Students who miss fewer than 4 class meetings will earn up to a maximum of 10 extra points.