

SOC 352-01: Research Methods

Instructor: Dr. Maggie Bohm-Jordan
Lecture: Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45pm. CCC 231
Office Hours: SCI. B333 T/R/F 9:00-12:00pm or by appointment (email for appointment)
E-mail: mbohmjor@uwsp.edu (please put "SOC 352-01" in the email subject line)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course provides a general introduction to the methodology in the social sciences. In this course students will acquire knowledge and skills as more informed and critical readers of social science research; at the same time, students will also gain hands-on experience and develop the skills necessary to initiate, design, and administer their own social science research projects that address specific and testable questions. The major topics of this course include: the logic of scientific inquiry, problem formulation, variables, operationalization and measurement, reliability and validity, sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and the ethics of social research. Even for those who never do social science professionally, this course teaches universally useful skills: asking good questions, avoiding logical fallacies, finding relevant literature, and careful marshalling of evidence. These are powerful tools for anyone who is curious about any aspect of the social world. This course is work-intensive. Students will be required to complete a series of assignments/research tasks (more information will be discussed during class).

Course Prerequisites: SOC 350 (Sociological Theory), SOC 351 (Social Statistics), or instructor consent. For Sociology majors, this course fulfills the "Capstone Experience" requirements.

GEP Category:	<i>Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:</i>
Capstone Experience in the Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a project that integrates knowledge, skills, and experiences related to those General Education Program Outcomes appropriate to the discipline.• Demonstrate skills, processes, and resources needed to make a successful transition from college to the world beyond.• Apply discipline-specific standards of oral and written communication to compose an articulate, grammatically correct, and organized presentation/piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience.• Critique their own and others' writing/oral presentations to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.
Communication in the Major	

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and practice and theory to inform social science inquiry and research;
2. Describe and compare various research techniques used in the social sciences;
3. Evaluate and critique published research literature on the basis of methodological merits;
4. Initiate, design, and administer research projects of their own;
5. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate social science data;
6. Recognize the ethical issues involved in social research and practice ethical research standards;
7. Inform and evaluate social work practice based on social science research.

For Social Work majors, this course also provides opportunity to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice, which is one of the Social Work core competencies. “All aspects of this course help students work toward the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competency of “**practice-informed research and research-informed practice**” for accredited social work programs”:

➤ **Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.**

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

TEXTBOOK (REQUIRED)

Earl R. Babbie. 2020. *The Practice of Social Research*. 15th Edition. Cengage Learning. Additional Course Materials will be made available for download from Canvas.

GRADING

IRB certificate	10%	A: 93-100, A- :90-92.99
Discussion posts	40% (4@10%)	B+: 87-89.99, B: 83-86.99, B- : 80-82.99
Outline	5%	C+: 77-79.99, C: 73-76.99, C- : 70-72.99
Drafts (Lit review/data-methods)	20% (2@10%)	D+: 67-69.99, D: 63-66.99, D- : 60-62.99
Research project	20%	F: 0.00 – 59.99
Research Presentation	5%	

Late and Make-up Policy

Only proper documentation can be accepted as justification for make-up assignments (without late penalty), such as a doctor/coach/supervisor’s note, a subpoena, etc. A simple self-narration of an emergency or a special occasion whether in oral or written forms, cannot be accepted as proper documentation and thus will not justify a make-up assignment. Late work will start from 50% of the grade.

Human Subjects Protections Training (10%)

Students are required to complete the UWSP human subjects protections training through an online program by Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) and receive a CITI certificate. The CITI certificate will be valid for 3 years). Students will upload the Completion Certificate on Canvas.

To begin the certification with CITI, students shall go to the CITI program website at <https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=154>. Students shall register an account on that website and select University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as the organization affiliation (it would be better to use “University of Wisconsin” as the search keywords to trigger a drop-down menu and then select from there). When completing their registration, for “Role in Research” students shall select “Student Researcher – Undergraduate/Graduate” from the drop-down menu; when selecting curriculum, students shall choose “**Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers**” under “Human Subjects Research” as their learner group.

Discussions (40% at 10% each)

There are 4 discussion posts, due according to the Course Outline by 11:59pm. Be sure to answer the questions in an in-depth, well-thought-out manner. Each discussion is worth 10 points. The main post(s) is 6 points and provide at least one reference to the course material (use APA or ASA reference style). Engage in on-going, productive conversation with a minimum of two of your classmates (up to 4 points). See Course Outline and Canvas for due dates.

- Discussion 1: Brainstorm ideas/programs/policies and narrow down a topic
 - Research topics
 - Types of programs/policies you want to examine
- Discussion 2:
 - Research question(s) and Hypotheses
 - Assessment & Planning
- Discussion 3:
 - theoretical framework & 2 literature reviews & ethical concerns
 - Implementation & Policies
- Discussion 4:
 - Data and Methods (research design, data collection)
 - Capacity & Evaluation

Drafts (2@10% each)

There are 2 drafts. First draft will include everything up to theory section. The focus of this draft is literature review (focusing on what other scholars have utilized in their data/methods, results and findings). Second draft will focus on the data and methods sections. Depending on which option you select (proposal, full research paper, program/policies), you should have a well-thought-out plan.

Research Project Options (20%)

The culminating experience in this course is a student research project on a topic of their choice. This way you will put your learning from this course into practice. The final product of the student research or program/policy project. All research projects need to include at least 15 scholarly journal articles and pages vary between 12+ to 15+ pages not including references. Student can work on the research project in groups (no more than 4 members in a group). The project will be the collective responsibility of the work team. Although each of you should work all elements of the paper, the group will submit one single copy of the completed work. There will be a peer evaluation to assessment each group member on their contribution. The project grade consists of 50% from overall paper, 50% peer evaluations. See below for project options.

Quick chapter references:

- Introduction (Chapter 1)
- Review of the Literature (Chapters 2, 17, Appdx A)
- Specifying the Problem/Question/Topic (Chapters 5, 6, 12)
- Research Design (Chapter 4)
- Data Collection (Chapters 4, 8-11)
- Selection of Subjects (Chapter 7)
- Ethic Issues (Chapter 3)
- Data Analysis (Chapters 13-16)
- References/Bibliography (Chapter 17)

Option #1 Research Proposal

1. Introduction
2. Significance (Ex, why is this topic important? Why should we care to read it?)
3. Research question(s) and Hypothesis
4. Literature review (background/support of the topic)
5. Theoretical framework
6. Data/Methods (what you PLAN to do but not actually going to collect the data)
 - a. Research design
 - b. Data collection
 - c. Selection of subjects (participants?)
 - d. Ethic issues (refer to IRB training)
 - i. Consent forms
7. Discussions
8. References: (are not included in the 12 pages)
9. Appendix: Charts, tables, interview notes, etc (are not included in the 12 pages)

Option #2 Full Research Paper

1. Introduction
2. Significance (Ex, why is this topic important? Why should we care to read it?)
3. Research question(s) and Hypothesis
4. Literature review (background/support of the topic)
5. Theoretical framework
6. Data/Methods (You are going to collect the data and fill out the IRB form)
 - a. Research design
 - b. Data collection
 - c. Selection of subjects (participants?)
 - d. Ethic issues (refer to IRB training)
 - i. Consent forms
7. Results/findings
 - a. Data analysis
8. Conclusion/ discussions
9. Future implications
10. References: (are not included in the 15 pages)
11. Appendix: Charts, tables, interview notes, etc (are not included in the 15 pages)

Option #3 Program/Policies Proposal

1. Introduction (Significance of your program)
2. Assessment (what are some existing programs, include literature review)
3. Planning (what do you foresee this program to do?)
4. Capacity (target population, location, staffing, credentials, etc)
5. Implementation (what are you offering that other are lacking?)
6. Policies (existing policies and/or new policies)
7. Evaluation (who will evaluate your program?)
8. Future implications
9. References
10. Appendix: Charts, tables, interview notes, etc

Presentation on research proposal/research paper/ program and policies (5%)

Powerpoint, details and format are provided on Canvas. Presentations in the last 2 weeks of semester

Online Classroom Etiquette

The online classroom is a learning environment and community. It is expected that students do their best to minimize disruptions that can distract from their learning and that of their peers.

Online Writing Lab

The Writing Lab consultants are successful UWSP students who can discuss any type of writing at any stage of the drafting process; including brainstorming, outlining, and research or citations. They work with experienced writers as well as struggling writers; we believe that everyone benefits from discussions about their writing.

- Writing Lab are currently being held virtually via Zoom
- By appointment or short notice times available
- You are able to send us your paper for revision via [an online form \(found here\)](#)
- All services in the Writing Lab are free

If you have questions or would like to make an appointment, please contact the TLC via email (tlctutor@uwsp.edu) or phone (715-346-3568).

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is central to the mission of this institution. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated and will receive disciplinary sanctions per the UWSP policies. The UWSP policies regarding student academic standards and disciplinary procedures can be found here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>. If I observe academic misconduct, or if suspicions of academic dishonesty are reported to me, I will request that the identified parties come to my office to discuss the situation, and then the procedures set out in UWS/UWSP Chapter 14 will be followed. Students can visit the UWSP Tutoring-Learning Center <http://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/writingReadingTutorials.aspx> and the Purdue Online Writing Lab for further resources: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

Diversity and Inclusion

UWSP supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated. These differences include race/ethnicity, gender, class, political view, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital or family status, as well as personality, learning styles, and life experiences. We expect that students, faculty, administrators, and staff will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, experiences, and worldviews may be different from their own.

Disability Support Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP policies, go <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyinfo.pdf>. If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here:

<http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability> . Call 715-346-3365 or email datctr@uwsp.edu.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATES	TOPICS	Due Dates Friday at 11:59pm
Week 1 January 25/27	Introduction/Syllabus/IRB Chapter 1: Human Inquiry and Science	
Week 2 Feb 1/3	Chapter 2: Paradigms, Theory, and Research	Discussion 1
Week 3 February 8/10	Chapter 3: The Ethics and Politics of Social Research Discussion 1: "Research Topics by groups"	
Week 4 February 15/17	Chapter 4: Research Design Chapter 5: Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurements	Discussion 2
Week 5 February 22/24	Chapter 6: Index, Scales, and Typologies Discussion 2	Research outline IRB
Week 6 March 1/3	Chapter 7: The Logic of Sampling Discussions on outline	
Week 7 March 8/10	Chapter 8: Experiments	Discussion 3
Week 8 March 15/17	Chapter 9: Survey Research Chapter 10: Qualitative Field Research	Draft 1
Week 9 March 29/31	Chapter 11: Unobtrusive Research Draft 1 questions/concerns	
Week 10 April 5/7	Chapter 12: Evaluation Research	Discussion 4
Week 11 April 12/14	Chapter 13: Qualitative Data Analysis	Abstract (optional)
Week 12 April 19/21	Chapter 14: Quantitative Data Analysis	Draft 2
Week 13 April 26/28	Catch up week Draft 2 questions/concerns	
Week 14 May 3/5	Presentations	
	<i>May 6th COLS Undergraduate Research Symposium</i>	
Week 15 May 10/12	Presentations	
	Proposal/Research project or Program Policies Due May 17 th	

*Unforeseen circumstances may necessitate changes in the course requirements and/or schedules. Any changes will be announced in advance. *Additional reading are posted on Canvas*

Helpful Guidelines for Research Paper

The following are guidelines for the preparation of your presentation in research paper assignment in this course. As guidelines, they may be negotiated or modified to suit your needs or purpose in completing the assignments. You will need to use facts, figures, quotes, etc, but organize them around the research topic/theme or framework to organize your paper. You may pose a particular question (see below) and then explore various viewpoints of expert in researchers. The main point is to focus your work around a theme that interest you. Some suggestions for presentation and research topics.

1. Does the lack of health insurance increase racial inequality?
2. How political ideologies impact face mask and social distancing in public?
3. How does law enforcement impact neighborhood crime or safety?
4. How has COVID-19 impact health issues (mental health)?
5. How has impact education (online learning among children)?
6. How does differ in urban and rural areas?
7. How does impact the (homeless/elderly/infant) population?
8. How has social isolation increase family violence?
9. How does online learning impact children's well-being?
10. Vaccinations
11. Burnouts
12. Global pandemic
13. Media representation of ()
14. Environment
15. Religion