Fall 2024
SOC 352-02: Research Methods

Instructor: Dr. Maggie Bohm-Jordan
Lecture: Online
Office Hours: SCI. B333 M/W/F 9:00-12:00pm or by appointment (email for appointment)
E-mail: mbohmjor@uwsp.edu *(please put "SOC 352-02" 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).

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

Capstone Experience in the Major	• 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.

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)
Carr, Deborah, E.H. Boyle, B., Cornwell, S. Correll, R. Crosnoe, J. Freese, and M.C. Waters. 2021. *The Art and Science of Social Research.* 2nd Edition. Norton.
Additional Course Materials will be made available for download from Canvas.

GRADING

IRB certificate	5%	A: 93-100, A- :90-92.99	
Discussion posts	60% (6@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	
Project + Draft	20%	D+: 67-69.99, D: 63-66.99, D- : 60-62.99	
Research Presentation	5%	F: 0.00 – 59.99	
Sociology program assessment	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 (5%)
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 (60% at 10% each)

There are 6 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. A = option 1 and 2 research projects. B = option 3 program policies

- Discussion 1: Brainstorm ideas/programs/policies and narrow down a topic
  - A. Research topics
  - B. Types of programs/policies you want to examine
- Discussion 2:
  - A. theoretical framework (include 2 literature reviews) and ethical concerns (consent forms)
  - B. Assessment ((include at least two existing or similar programs), and ethical concerns (consent forms)
- Discussion 3:
  - A. Research question(s) and Hypotheses
  - B. Planning (what do you foresee your program to do), and Policies (what are some existing policies and/or new ones you plan to address)
- Discussion 4:
  - A. Data and Methods (research design, data collection)
  - B. Capacity (target population, location, staffing, credentials, etc), and Implementation (what are you offering that others are not, etc)
- Discussion 5:
  - o Qualtrics questionnaires (provide link for peers access as pre-test)
- Discussion 6:
  - A. Limitations and Future implications
  - B. Evaluation and Future implications

Project Options (20%. 10% is draft)

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.

Draft (10%) Depending on which option you select (research proposal, full research paper, program/policies), should have a well-thought-out plan and provide as much information as possible. Quick chapter references:

- Introduction (Chapter 1)
- Review of the Literature (Chapters 2, Appdx E, J)
- Specifying the Problem/Question/Topic (Chapters 1,2,4)
- Research Design (Chapter 4, 5)
- Data Collection (Chapters 7-12, Appdx C)
- Selection of Subjects (Chapter 6)
- Ethic Issues (Chapter 3, Appdx A, B)
- Data Analysis (Chapters 13-17, Appdx G,H)

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: (not included in the 12 pages)
9. Appendix: Charts, tables, consent form, interview notes, etc (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: (not included in the 15 pages)
11. Appendix: Charts, tables, consent form, interview notes, etc (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 (not included in the 12 pages)
10. Appendix: Charts, tables, consent form, interview notes, etc (not included in the 12 pages)

Presentation on research proposal/research paper/ program and policies (5%)
Powerpoint, details and format are provided on Canvas. Record your presentations and upload to Canvas in Discussion.

Sociology program assessment (5%)
Students shall participate in the sociology program assessment near the end of the semester. This will provide valuable data on the curriculum design and teaching of the overall sociology program at UWSP and can help the Department of Sociology and Social Work and the faculty to make the pertinent improvements in the future. Detailed instructions on how to participate in the assessment will be provided separately.

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.

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 academicmisconduct, 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. The Tutoring-Learning Center (TLC) helps students in all disciplines become more effective, confident learners. We believe all learners benefit from sharing work with knowledgeable, attentive tutors. The TLC offers four tutoring services:

- **Academic Coaching:** Build skills in studying, time management, test-taking, online learning, and more.
- **Course Content:** Practice problems, deepen understanding, and prepare for exams in natural resources, STEM, World Languages, and more.
- **Reading/Writing:** Brainstorm and refine papers, essays, lab reports, citations, résumés, scholarship applications, personal writing, and more.

- **Tech Essentials:** Develop computer literacy and learn to use UWSP-related applications such as Canvas, Microsoft 365, and Zoom.

To **make an appointment,** students can self-schedule using Navigate, contact us at tlctutor@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3568, or stop into CCC 234.

As for **directing specific students to the TLC** or recommending TLC support for **specific assignments**, something like the following works well:

If you would like some help [organizing ideas for your paper, receiving constructive criticism of a draft, studying for an upcoming test, understanding a specific concept, etc.], make an appointment with a TLC tutor through Navigate or submit writing directly for written feedback to our Online Writing Lab.

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
Introduction and conceptual issues in research		
Week 1 September 5	Introduction/Syllabus/IRB Chapter 1: The Art and Science of Social Research: Introduction Brainstorm research idea/interest (possibility group members)	
Week 2 September 11	Chapter 2: Research foundation: Linking sociological theory to research	Discussion 1 Project Topics
Week 3 September 18	Chapter 3: Ethical Issues in social science research	
Building blocks of empirical research		
Week 4 September 25	Chapter 4: From concepts to models: Hypotheses, operationalization, and measurement	Discussion 2
Week 5 October 2	Chapter 5: Evaluating research: Reliability and Validity	IRB
Week 6 October 9	Chapter 6: Sampling strategies	Discussion 3
Week 7 October 16	Chapter 7: Survey research	Outline
Week 8 October 23	Chapter 8: Experimental Research	
Week 9 October 30	Chapter 9: Evaluation Research	Discussion 4
Week 10 November 6	Chapter 10: Ethnography	
Week 11 November 13	Chapter 11: In-Depth Interviewing	Discussion 5
Week 12 November 20	Chapter 12: Materials-Based Methods	
Analyzing and Presenting Results		
Week 13 November 27	Chapter 13: Univariate and Bivariate analysis of quantitative data	Draft

Week 14 December 4	Chapter 14: Communicating social science research findings	Discussion 6
Week 15 December 11	Presentations	Reflection
	Proposal/Research project or Program Policies Due December 18th Sociology program assessment (in Canvas)	

*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*

Add/drop without grade: September 14th
Last day to drop: November 10th