

IMPORTANT NOTE: There are no section meetings until after class 3, to allow us to clear the waitlist and to allow students whose schedules have changed to switch sections.

Sociology 5 – Evaluation of Evidence – Spring 2015
Professor Heather A. Haveman

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:00pm, 10 Evans
Office Hours Mondays 3:30-5:30pm, 494 Barrows Hall (signup sheet on office door)
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Course Objectives

People today are barraged by information – a torrent of facts, opinions, and analyses that appear in books, in newspapers and magazines, on radio stations, through television broadcasts, on computer screens, and on cell phones. The pressure to make sense of that information has never been greater.

This course will improve your ability to evaluate much of that information by showing you how to think about social research, which is commonly used to introduce and support, or challenge and discard, public policies in all societies. Your life as a citizen is shaped by people who argue that “the evidence shows” that we should abolish affirmative action, reinstitute the draft, eliminate welfare, establish markets for air pollution, keep abortion legal, and so on. Our task in this course is to learn how to treat those claims with the skepticism they deserve, without falling into the despairing conviction that since data can be used to prove anything, any kind of data is as good as any other.

This course will not give you deep proficiency in any single research method; instead, it will give you an overview of the tools used by social scientists and a sense of what distinguishes good research from bad. By the end of the semester, you will be able to assess the soundness of research by evaluating research designs and data-collection strategies in light of research questions and theory. With these skills, you will be able to determine whether or not you agree with researchers’ conclusions. And when you disagree, you will be able to articulate why.

To learn how to evaluate research, we will read many examples, including a number by members of Berkeley’s Sociology Department. You will also be asked to do 2 individual and 4 group research projects to get hands-on exposure to research. The course will demand much time and effort, but it is an investment that will pay off in future courses: the logic of evaluation of evidence can be transferred to most scientific and research endeavors. You will also find this course useful after college, as you will be better able to evaluate journalistic reports of current research, design your own reports in a variety of professional settings, and think logically through situations where you are asked to evaluate evidence (*e.g.*, on a jury, in the voting booth, at work, in response to news reports).

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Enrolling in the Class

Each student must be registered for the lecture course and for one of the sections listed below.

Section	When and where?	GSI	Email
101	TuTh 8-9am, 35 Evans	Seth Liebson	sleibson@berkeley.edu
102	TuTh 9-10am, 35 Evans	Seth Liebson	sleibson@berkeley.edu
103	TuTh 10-11am, 78 Barrows	Liana Prescott	lkprescott@berkeley.edu
104	TuTh 11-12noon, 155 Barrows	Liana Prescott	lkprescott@berkeley.edu
105	TuTh 2-3pm, 55 Evans	Gillian Gualtieri	gualtierig@berkeley.edu
106	TuTh 3-4pm, 55 Evans	Gillian Gualtieri	gualtierig@berkeley.edu
107	MW 8-9am, 115 Kroeber	Katherine Hood	khoo@berkeley.edu
108	MW 9-10am, 115 Kroeber	Katherine Hood	khoo@berkeley.edu
109	MW 10-11am, 233 Dwinelle	Fabiana Silva	fabiana.silva@gmail.com
110	MW 11-12noon, 211 Dwinelle	Fabiana Silva	fabiana.silva@gmail.com

Note: There will be no section meetings until Wed. 28 Jan. (for M/W sections) or Thurs. 29 Jan. (for Tu/Th sections).

The waitlist. We will clear the waitlist after lecture 3 (Tues. 27 Jan.). Enrolled students who have not attended lectures 1-3 will be dropped from the class list; waitlisted students who have not attended lectures 1-3 will be dropped from the waitlist.

Class Culture and Standards of Behavior

Readings offer you the chance to learn how working social scientists actually DO research, how they gather and analyze data. You are expected to do assigned reading before class. You will be tested on the readings in quizzes at some point during every lecture. To help focus your reading, the schedule of classes includes questions to consider for each set of readings. Think through these questions carefully, as they will inform the quizzes, midterm, and final exam.

The reader is available from Copy Central on Bancroft in paper form or as a digital e-reader that you can view and annotate on a PC or smartphone. There is one required textbook: Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research, 13th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 978-1-133-04979-1. The book is available at the ASUC bookstore. It is very expensive – almost \$200 for the print version. It's by far the best book by far on this topic, which is why I chose it, despite its cost. You can find used versions of it at the ASUC store, at Moe's on Telegraph, or through www.abebooks.com, a network of independent bookstores. Or you can use the ebook or rent the book through the ASUC bookstore or the publisher at this web site: <http://www.cengagebrain.com/shop/isbn/9781133049791>. You can also purchase a second-hand copy of any editions between 9 and 12 (even the foreign edition) because the material is substantially the same in all these editions. But if you choose a different edition than the 13th, you should make sure that you're reading the right chapters – the chapter order varies from edition to edition. I have put copies of the book on 2-hour reserve in Moffitt.

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Lectures will explore the philosophical underpinnings of research design and describe the many different ways of gathering and evaluating evidence. You are responsible for all material discussed in lectures, as well as any announcements made there.

No laptops are allowed in class unless you have a legitimate, DSP-documented reason and have received explicit permission from me. (I know I couldn't resist surfing the web, emailing my friends, etc., during class, so I'm removing the temptation!) All lecture slides will be available before class, so there is no reason for you to spend time reproducing the figures in the slides. And recent research shows that taking notes on laptops is detrimental to learning because it results in shallower information processing (Mueller and Oppenheimer, *Psychological Science* 2014 – see article abstract at <http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/04/22/0956797614524581.abstract>).

Cell phones must be switched off (not just set to vibrate) unless you have a legitimate need (e.g., your spouse is about to have a baby or a liver transplant) that you have told me about.

In-class quizzes will be drawn from the readings, section discussions, and/or lectures. They will be held at a random point during every lecture, beginning with lecture 4. They will usually consist of 3 or 4 multiple-choice questions. Your scores on these quizzes constitute 15% of your grade.

You will take these quizzes using **clickers**, which are simple, devices that remote controls. They allow students to take quizzes, respond to polls, and provide feedback to instructors in real time. You can purchase clickers at the ASUC bookstore. After purchasing them, you must register them in order for them to work. To do so, go to <http://www.iclicker.com/registration/> and follow the instructions on that web site. Use your 8-digit student ID (5-digit ID for Concurrent Enrollment students).

I adopted this technology for several reasons. Research by cognitive psychologists (e.g., Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel 2014 *Make It Stick*) indicates that students should be graded frequently throughout the semester rather than at only a few points in time. Clickers make this possible in large classes. Clickers also make it possible for me to determine how well you grasp the material so I can spend less time on the concepts you understand well and more time on the challenging ones. This, in turn, leads to more interesting discussions. Finally, using clickers makes it easier for your reactions and opinions to serve as launching point for in-class discussion and debate.

Bring your clicker to class every day. The care and keeping of your clicker is your responsibility. If you forget it, if it runs out of batteries, if it fails to communicate with the receiver, or if it experiences any other kind of technical difficulty, you will get 0 on that day's quiz. I will not change any quiz grade based on a report of a technical malfunction. I understand, however, that freak accidents happen and that even the most conscientious person can forget something once in a while. To allow for that possibility, I will drop your 2 lowest quiz scores.

Sections are an indispensable part of the course. They provide you with opportunities to ask questions about the readings or lectures, and otherwise engage the material actively, which is hard to carry off in a large lecture. Sections begin Wed. 28 Jan. (for M/W sections) or Thurs. 29 Jan. (for Tu/Th sections).

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Sections are led by Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs). Section meetings and your GSI's office hours are your main points of contact. Do not deluge the GSIs with emails. Do not phone your GSI unless she or he invites you to do so (GSIs are not required to give out their phone numbers). Each GSI has a mailbox in 410 Barrows.

Your GSI will assign 15% of your grade based on your participation in section. Participation involves attending sections, contributing to discussions, asking relevant questions (they're usually the questions that other section members wonder about), and answering questions asked by GSIs. Motormouths beware: the quality of your contribution is far more important than the quantity.

Midterm and final exam. These will test you on your comprehension of course material. Both are closed-book tests. Each constitutes 10% of your grade. The midterm is **Tues. 3 Mar., in class**. The final exam is **Thur. 14 May, 3:00-4:30pm**. The exam period runs from 3:00-6:00, but the final for this course will take only 1.5 hours to complete.

Individual and group research projects are designed to give you hands-on experience with research. The list of research projects is at the end of the syllabus, after the schedule of classes and readings. These projects are **due in your GSI's mailbox in Barrows Hall by 4pm** on their respective due dates. Late projects will be marked down 1 full grade (*e.g.*, B→C) for each day late.

Individual research projects. You will complete two research projects as individuals (projects 1 and 2). You are to work on your own to complete these projects. Each constitutes 5% of your grade.

Group research projects. You will be assigned to groups of 3 or 4 students during section. You are to work together to complete four research projects (projects 3, 4, 5, and 6). Each constitutes 10% of your grade. A lot of sociological research is coauthored; doing this work in groups gives you a sense of what it is like to work on a research team. It also allows you to learn from each other.

I have designed a mechanism to reward group members who go above and beyond the call of duty, and punish group members who slack off. There is a peer evaluation form on bcourses, which allows you to evaluate other group members' relative contribution to your project. Every group member should fill in this form and hand it in to your GSI with every assignment.

Academic honesty. According to a recent national survey (the National Study of Youth and Religion Wave 2), 50% of college students reported cheating at least once in the previous year and 18% reported more frequent cheating. It is a mathematical certainty that some members of our class will try to cheat at some point during the semester. In fairness to students who are honest, those who are detected cheating will be dealt with as severely as University policy allows. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using notes or written or electronic materials during an exam or quiz; copying another person's exam, quiz or research project; allowing someone to copy your exam, quiz, or research project; having someone take an exam or quiz for you; or plagiarizing any written assignment. Any suspected cheating will be immediately reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

The use of clickers in lectures will allow us to have more enjoyable, more interactive discussions and to conduct daily quizzes quickly. It also, however, creates opportunities for academic dishonesty. Using someone else's clicker for them is the same as cheating on an exam. To ensure honesty and

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to avoid any appearance of dishonesty, no person may ever have more than one clicker in his or her possession. If I or one of the GSIs sees any student holding, touching, or otherwise interacting with more than one clicker at any time during class, those clickers will immediately be confiscated and the incident will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

Grading

You will be graded on your understanding of readings, lectures, and discussions in section meetings, and on your ability to complete hands-on research projects, as listed below.

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
In-class quizzes	15%	
Research project 1: Identifying variables & units of analysis	5%	Tues. 10 Feb.
Research project 2: Identifying independent & dependent variables	5%	Thurs. 19 Feb.
Midterm exam (in class)	10%	Tues. 3 Mar.
Research project 3: Constructing & analyzing data tables	10%	Tues. 17 Mar.
Research project 4: Designing a survey	10%	Tues. 7 Apr.
Research project 5: Doing a direct-observation study	10%	Tues. 21 Apr.
Research project 6: Analyzing archival data	10%	Thurs. 30 Apr.
Participation in section meetings	15%	
<u>Final exam (in exam period)</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>Thurs. 14 May</u>

Students in this course will be graded on the following scale:

91-100% = A+	86-90% = A	80-85% = A-
77-79% = B+	74-76% = B	70-73% = B-
67-69% = C+	64-66% = C	60-63% = C-
57-59% = D+	54-56% = D	50-53% = D-
<50% = F		

Note that the median grade in past years has been either a B or a B+.

Procedure for appealing grades. To appeal a grade on research project or the midterm please follow this procedure:

- 1) Within **7 days** after the project or midterm is handed back to you, write a note explaining why you think your grade should be changed. One or two paragraphs should be sufficient to argue the merits of your case.
- 2) Make an appointment to meet with your GSI during office hours (for group assignments, not all group members have to be present), during which time your GSI will explain his/her decision about your appeal. If you can't meet your GSI during office hours, your GSI will respond to you via email.
- 3) If you are not satisfied with your GSI's decision and reasoning, within **7 days** of receiving your GSI's decision, make an appointment to meet Professor Haveman, who will be the final arbitrator.

Soc 5 – Evaluation of Evidence – Schedule of Classes and Readings

1. Tues. 20 Jan. Introduction

What are the goals of this course? What do I have to do to get a good grade? What should I do if I'm on the wait list?

2. Thurs. 22 Jan. Sociology and Social Science

What is social science? What does science do?

Reading: . Babbie. Chapter 1. Human inquiry and science.

3. Tues. 27 Jan. Paradigms, Theories, and Hypotheses

How is scientific knowledge organized? What are the elements of scientific theories? How does scientific knowledge evolve?

Reading: Collins, Harry, and Trevor Pinch. 1993. The sex life of the whiptail lizard. Chapter 6 in *The Golem: What Everyone Should Know about Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Reader)

4. Thurs. 29 Jan. Paradigms, Theories, and Hypotheses

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 2. Paradigms, theories, and social research.

Notes: Section meetings begin Wed. 28 Jan./Thurs. 29 Jan.
GSI office hours begin the week of 2 Feb.

5. Tues. 3 Feb. Research Design

What are the main purposes of sociological research? How do we know that X causes Y? What kinds of entities should we study – people, informal groups, organizations, social artifacts? How should we time our observations of those entities?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 4. Research design.

6. Thurs. 5 Feb. Inductive Research: Generating Hypotheses

How do sociologists come up with new ideas? How do they develop novel explanations from observing the social world?

Why can we say that Becker's article takes an inductive sociological approach? What role does theory play in his argument? In what ways does he provide an example of pure inductive research, and in what way does he deviate from pure induction? How might you build on Becker's findings to study drug users today?

Readings: Ian Dey. 1999. Introduction. Chapter 1 in *Grounding Grounded Theory: Guidelines for Qualitative Inquiry*, pp. 1-12. New York: Academic Press. (Reader)

Babbie. Chapter 13. Qualitative data analysis (read only the first 3 sections – introduction, linking theory and analysis, and qualitative data processing)

Howard S. Becker. 1953. Becoming a marijuana user. *American Journal of Sociology*, 59 (3): 235-242. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2771989>)

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7. Tues. 10 Feb. Deductive Research: Testing Hypotheses

How do sociologists test predictions derived from theory? How do they relate empirical observations to theoretical concepts? How do we know that X causes Y?

Reading: Arthur L. Stinchcombe. 1968. Fundamental forms of scientific inference. Chapter 2 in *Constructing Social Theories*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Reader)

8. Thurs. 12 Feb. Deductive Research: Testing Hypotheses

How is Pager's article an example of a deductive sociological approach? Identify one of the theories she discusses and the related hypotheses. How does she test these hypotheses?

Reading: Devah Pager. 2003. The mark of a criminal record. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108 (5): 937-975. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/374403>)

9. Tues. 17 Feb. Measurement (I): Conceptualization, Validity, and Reliability

How do we translate theoretical concepts into observable phenomena we can measure? How do we know that our measures of theoretical concepts are valid and reliable?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 5. Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement.

10. Thurs. 19 Feb. Measurement (II): Indices, Scales, and Typologies

Why and when do sociologists use composite measures? What is the difference between a scale and an index? How do you construct them? How do you construct typologies?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 6. Indexes, scales, and typologies.

11. Tues. 24 Feb. Data Analysis and Statistics Refresher

What are the basic ways to summarize quantitative data? How sure can we be about the conclusions we draw from gathering and analyzing data? How should we read tables of quantitative data and interpret them? How should we construct data tables?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 14. Quantitative data analysis.

Jane Miller. 2004. Creating effective tables. Chapter 6 in *The Chicago Guide to Writing about Numbers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Reader)

12. Thurs. 26 Feb. Midterm Review

13. Tues. 3 Mar. IN-CLASS MIDTERM (This will cover material up to class 10 ONLY)

*** Note: No Section Meetings Wed. 4 Mar./Thurs. 5 Mar. ***

14. Thurs. 5 Mar. Data Analysis and Statistics Refresher

How do we quantify the relationship between two or more variables? How do we draw inferences from our samples to the populations from which they are drawn?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 16. Statistical analysis. (Read only the sections up to and including "inferential statistics." Do not read the section on "other multivariate techniques.")

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15. Tues. 10 Mar. Sampling Plans

What should our unit of analysis be? How should we select units to observe – from what universe or population should we sample? How many observations should we take?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 7. The logic of sampling. (Also review chapter 14.)

16. Thurs. 12 Mar. Knowing What We Know: Reviewing the Literature

How can I find out what research has already been done on a topic?

Readings: Babbie. Chapter 17. Reading and Writing Social Research.

W. Lawrence Newman. 2011. How to review the literature and conduct ethical studies. Excerpt from chapter 5 in *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Seventh Ed.* (Reader)

17. Tues. 17 Mar. Ways to Gather Data: Experiments

What are the features of a good (laboratory or field) experiment? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this research design? What can we learn from this research design that we can't learn from other research designs?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 8. Experiments.

18. Thurs. 19 Mar. Ways to Gather Data: Experiments (cont'd)

What hypotheses did the authors set out to test? In what ways did they make sure that their methods and results were scientifically sound? Suppose that all their subjects (women and men) had more macho attitudes after the test than they had before the test, regardless of the result they were given. What conclusions would you draw? Think of another widely held belief in our culture. How might you test that belief through a laboratory experiment?

Reading: Robb Willer, Christabel Rogalin, Bridget Conlon, and Michael T. Wojnowicz. 2013. Overdoing gender: A test of the masculine overcompensation thesis. *American Journal of Sociology*, 118 (4): 980-1022. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/668417>)

*** Spring Break 23-27 Mar. ***

19. Tues. 31 Mar. Ways to Gather Data: Surveys

What does it take to design and construct a good survey? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this research design? What can we learn from this research design that we can't learn from other research designs?

Readings: Babbie. Chapter 9. Survey research.

Howard Schuman. 2002. Sense and nonsense about surveys. *Contexts*, 1 (2): 40-47. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=Contexts>)

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20. Thurs. 2 Apr. Ways to Gather Data: Surveys

What theory is Fligstein trying to test? Identify the IV(s), DV(s), and any moderator or mediator variables. What is his unit of analysis and sampling method? How does he measure his variables? To conduct a similar study on Americans, what kind of data would you gather?

Readings: Neil Fligstein. 2007. Who are the Europeans? Chapter 5 in *Euroclash: The EU, European Identity, and the Future of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Read pages 121-145 [theory and results] and pages 158-159 [data sources].) (Reader)
Selections from Eurobarometer 61, Basic English Questionnaire. (bcourses)
(The complete survey instrument is available at http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/eurobarometer/questionnaires/ZA4056_bq_en.pdf)

21. Tues. 7 Apr. Ways to Gather Data: Interviews and Direct Observation

What are structured interviews, and what is the best way to conduct them? What is ethnography? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this research design? What can we learn from this research design that we can't learn from other research designs?

Readings: Babbie. Chapter 10. Qualitative field research. Chapter 13. Qualitative Data Analysis (pp. 378-390 only). (Also review Chapter 9 pp. 264-269)

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Field Notes*, pp. 48-52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Reader)

Patricia Adler and Peter Adler. 2003. The promise and pitfalls of going into the field. *Contexts*, 2 (2): 41-47. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=contexts>)

Robert S. Weiss. 2004. In their own words: Making the most of qualitative interviews. *Contexts*, 3 (4): 44-51. (available at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=contexts>)

22. Thurs 9 Apr. Ways to Gather Data: Interviews and Direct Observation

What is Lande's research question? In what way is his study inductive? In what way is it deductive? How did he gather data? Why did he choose that method? How did he summarize his data? How generalizable are his findings? What conclusions does he draw?

Reading: Brian Lande. 2007. Breathing like a soldier: Culture incarnate. *The Sociological Review*, 55 (s1): 95-108. (available at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/enhanced/doi/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2007.00695.x/>)

23. Tues. 14 Apr. Ways to Gather Data: From Archives

What are archival data? Where can we find them? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this way of gathering data? What can we learn from this type of data that we can't learn from other types?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 11. Unobtrusive research.

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24. Thurs. 16 Apr. Ways to Gather Data: From Archives

What is Haveman's research question? Why does she gather data from archives, rather than doing an experiment, a survey, or a direct-observation study? How did she summarize her data? What theoretical conclusions does she draw?

Reading: Heather A. Haveman. 2014. *Magazines and the Making of America: Modernization, Community, and Print Culture, 1741-1860*. Chapter 1, 7, and Appendix 1. Forthcoming, Princeton University Press. (These readings will be available on bcourses by 1 April.)

25. Tues. 21 Apr. Comparing the Different Ways to Gather Data

What are the pros and cons of each way of gathering data? What kinds of research questions are best answered using which data-gathering method?

26. Thurs. 23 Apr. Ethics

How can we be sure to conduct research ethically? What special requirements for ethics must we fulfill if our research involves human subjects?

Reading: Babbie. Chapter 3. Ethics.

27. Tues. 28 Apr. Ethics

Reading: Before class, visit these web sites to familiarize yourself with these 2 (in)famous experiments:

- 1) The Milgram Obedience Experiment:
<http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.individual&videoid=5512184>
- 2) The Stanford Prison Experiment: <http://www.prisonexp.org/>.

28. Thurs. 30 Apr. Final Exam Review

Thurs. 14 May Final exam: 3:00-4:30 (1.5 hours only, just like the midterm)

Soc 5 – Evaluation of Evidence – Research Projects (Individual and Group)

(Individual) research project 1: Identifying variables and units of analysis (DUE TUES. 10 FEB.)

Download this article: Brian Uzzi. 1999. Embeddedness in the making of financial capital: How social relations and networks benefit firms seeking capital. *American Sociological Review*, 64 (4): 481-505. (available at <http://www.istor.org/stable/2657252>)

Most studies have only 1 unit of analysis; a few have 2 or more. What is the unit of analysis for this study? Copy and paste/type a short passage from the article to justify your answer. Explain how this passage justifies your answer.

Most studies focus on multiple variables that describe their unit of analysis. Identify 2 variables and give a complete list of their attributes, as described in the article. Copy and paste/type a short passage from the article to justify your answer.

This project could be done in about a half-page but you can take up to 2 pages maximum.

(Individual) research project 2: Identifying independent and dependent variables (DUE THURS. 19 FEB.)

Go to bcourses and download this research article: Erin L. Kelly, Phyllis Moen, and Eric Tranby. 2011. Changing workplaces to reduce work-family conflict: Schedule control in a white-collar organization. *American Sociological Review*, 76 (2): 265-290. (available at <http://www.istor.org/stable/23018945>)

Identify 1 dependent variable and 1 independent variable. Make sure that these 2 variables are predicted to be related to each other. Copy and paste (or type) into a word document one or more short passages from the article to justify your choices of variables. Explain how these passages justify your answers. Explain, in your own words, how and why the independent variable is related to the dependent variable.

This project should be 2 pages maximum.

(Group) research project 3: Constructing and analyzing data tables (DUE TUES. 17 MAR.)

Given the rise of the Internet since the first commercial web browser (Mosaic) was released in 1994, sociologists have begun to investigate “the digital divide,” meaning inequality in access to and use of this valuable resource. You will analyze data from the most recent General Social Survey (GSS) to investigate the association between one dimension of social status, education (level/highest degree), and web use (hours spent on various Internet-related activities – email and the web).

To do this, you will download 2 files from bcourses: GSS 2012 data.xlsx and GSS 1972-2012 codebook.pdf. The spreadsheet contains data from the General Social Survey, downloaded from <http://sda.berkeley.edu/archive.htm>. The worksheet labelled “500 observations” contains the data you are to analyze – a subset of variables on 500 observations taken from the 2012 survey. The codebook lists the variables and explains what each means and how each is coded.

Note: In the GSS, 4 codes are used for different forms of missing values: IAP = inapplicable, DK = don’t know, NA = not available, and REFUSED. These are coded differently for different variables, so before you start tabulating the data, check the codebook for the each variable you are analyzing to make sure your tables don’t include observations with missing values on either variable.

- ◆ Create 2 tables to display the distributions of 2 variables: education (LEVEL) and the number of hours spent on email and the web (EMAILHR, WWWHR, and their sum). (Beware that there are only $7 \times 24 = 168$ hours in a week. If you come up with a number of hours above that, there’s something wrong!)

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- ◆ Create another table (a cross tab) to show the bivariate association between education and amount of Internet use.
- ◆ In your report, describe the level of measurement for each variable.
- ◆ In your report, describe the central tendency of each variable. Be sure to use measures that are appropriate for each variable, given its level of measurement.
- ◆ In your report, describe the association you observe between the variables (the direction and your assessment of its strength).

This project should be 3-4 pages long – 4 pages maximum.

(Group) research project 4: Designing a survey (DUE TUES. 7 APR.)

You will design a questionnaire that might be used in a survey to assess people's attitudes toward economic inequality.

Your questionnaire should obtain the following from each respondent:

- ◆ their age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and occupation;
- ◆ their attitude toward climate change in the form of a matrix question, using Likert-type responses to five statements.

This project should be 4-6 long – 6 pages maximum.

The first page should be the questionnaire laid out in the format you would use if you were actually conducting the survey. Make sure that the format will be easy to read and will not be difficult for respondents to answer. Be sure to provide appropriate spaces for respondents to check or write-in their answers.

Question wording should be simple and straightforward: avoid double-barreled questions, loaded terms, and negations. Justify your choice of open or closed-ended question. For closed-ended questions, response categories should be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Matrix questions using Likert-type responses should have a consistent scale.

In the following 3-5 pages, discuss these issues:

- ◆ *Question wording*: For each question, why are you asking this question? What concept or aspect/dimension of a concept do you hope to measure? Why did you word it this way? Why did you ask an open- or closed-ended question?
- ◆ *Question type*: For each statement in the five-part question about economic inequality, identify the level of measurement and explain why it is appropriate.
- ◆ *Question order*: Why did you put the questions in this order?

Soc 5 – Evaluation of Evidence – Research Projects (Individual and Group)

(Group) research project 5: Doing a direct-observation study (DUE TUES. 21 APR.)

One of the central concerns of sociology is the idea of social hierarchy. How is hierarchy manifested in our social world? For this project, we will define social hierarchy as differential access to some thing, to public space, to people's concern or attention or to a social position based on observable characteristics.

For this project, start by picking a public location where you might see examples of social hierarchy in the way people interact with each other. For example, you might wish to observe the area in a local coffee shop where people jockey for cream, sugar, cup tops, etc. Who moves to the front of the counter, and who stays back? Who politely asks for a place, and who just barges in? What are people's reactions to those around them? Do they vary by gender, race, age, style of clothing? Alternatively, you might wish to observe a busy store entrance (who walks through the door first?) or observe a crowded bus at rush hour (what is the reaction of those already on the bus to those entering the bus?). You may pick any location you wish as long as it is public and you can witness a variety of people using that public space. (You will want variety among a number of dimensions. Consider gender, age, ethnicity/race, class, etc.)

Each student must observe your social location at least twice for 30 minutes each time (not one 60-minute session). Different team members can visit the site at different times; you need not all visit the site at the same time.

While you are at the location, unobtrusively write short notes to yourself, if you can. These will then form the basis for detailed field notes that you will type up after leaving the site. For some social situations, you might not be able to write notes until after you leave the scene. In both cases, type up a clean/expanded version of your field notes immediately after leaving the field of study. Read through your typed field notes and code (with a different colored pen or pencil) important observations that highlight social hierarchy. From these codings, write a preliminary theoretical memo. Then go back into the field for your second visit, guided this time by your field notes, codes, and preliminary theoretical memo.

Working with the other members of your group, combine your typed and coded field notes your and theoretical memos. Write a 3-5 page report (5 pages maximum) outlining:

- ◆ where (and when) you did your participant observation;
- ◆ why you chose this location;
- ◆ how you identified social hierarchy (what did you look for as markers of social hierarchy?);
- ◆ what your observations imply about hierarchy in social interactions.

In projects like this, agreement among observers is an indicator of inter-rater reliability. What you all agree you see is reliable evidence; what you disagree on is less reliable. Therefore, your points of (dis)agreement should be discussed in the paper.

You must hand in your report and all your rough and typed field notes, no matter how messy, along with your theoretical memos. You will be graded on submitting your field notes, showing that you have thought systematically about your notes by coding them in theoretical memos, and on your final discussion of what you saw.

Soc 5 – Evaluation of Evidence – Research Projects (Individual and Group)

(Group) research project 6: Analyzing archival data (DUE THURS. 30 APR)

This project offers you a second way to investigate inequality, this time in terms of economic rather than social behavior. You will be analyzing data on people aged 25-34 from a publicly-available archive, the National Center for Educational Statistics (<http://ies.ed.gov/>). The dataset you are to analyze is in an excel spreadsheet on bcourses (NCES data.xls).

You are to answer 3 related research questions:

- 1) How much did the earnings of young people with a bachelor's degree change from 1995 to 2010 – absolute amount and percentage?
- 2) How much did the earnings of young people with some college education change over the same period?
- 3) Did the trends differ for men and women? If so, how?

The best way to answer these questions, without using any statistical techniques, is to chart or tabulate the data – either create line charts of trends in earnings for both levels of education and for both men and women, or extend/augment the data table to calculate changes over time and differences between levels of education and genders. With charts, you can easily visualize differences. With tables, you can calculate changes these things.

You can create 1 or 2 charts or tables for your report. Discuss each and explain how and why it answers one or more of the research questions above. Make sure to append them to your report.

Make sure you back up your answer to each question with examples from the data.

Your report should be 3-5 pages long (5 pages maximum), not counting any charts or tables.