

SOCIOLOGY 5

Evaluation of Evidence

Spring 2014
Dr. Christopher Sullivan

Lectures: Tues. & Thurs. 3:30 – 5pm, 10 Evans Hall
Sections: See page 3.
Office Hours: Thursdays 1pm-3pm, 496 Barrows Hall
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Course Objectives:

How do we sort through the endless sources of data on the Internet? How do we make sense of the competing claims of pundits crowding the airwaves? Our role not just as sociologists, but also as everyday citizens and consumers of information, demands that we find ways to develop the ability to evaluate statements that begin with “The evidence shows...” – but how? And with what? This course aims to help us develop our ability to evaluate these competing statements, to encourage a healthy skepticism towards such claims, and to nurture our ability to carry out research and investigate claims on our own.

This course is an introductory undergraduate social science research methods course. It is not intended to give you deep proficiency in any single method of research that social scientists use – rather it will give you an overview of the different tools social scientists have available in their research toolkits. Students will learn the fundamentals of research design and social science research methodologies. We will consider: selecting and framing a research question; engaging with existing literatures; the logic of experiments and hypothesis testing; inductive and deductive approaches to research; and an introduction to various sociological research methods, including interviewing, participant observation, historical and comparative methods, and quantitative methods. Finally, we will discuss the emergence of “big data” and how it relates to sociology – and to us as individuals.

This is a challenging course. The readings require careful attention and thoughtful engagement. Lectures will go beyond merely summarizing the material and expand on the information presented in the readings, while sections will be a chance for you to engage with the material in a more intimate setting. The four assignments will challenge you to apply what you have learned in the classroom and get “hand-on” experience doing sociology.

Grading:

You will be graded on your understanding of the course materials presented in the readings and in lecture. This will be determined by a midterm and final examination, as well as four hands-on assignments. Exams will cover key terms and concepts, and ask you

to demonstrate your comprehension of the material covered in lecture and in the readings through short-answer and essay questions.

Assignment 1 “Measurement and Conceptualization”	5%
Assignment 2 “Participant Observation”	10%
Assignment 3 “Developing an Interview Questionnaire”	10%
Assignment 4 “Survey Research Report” (Group Project)	15%
Participation in Section	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	35%

Prerequisites: None.

Required Textbooks:

There are no required textbooks for this course. However, readings will be available online via the bCourse website, and as two separate course readers (divided into pre- and post-midterm readers). The course readers are available through Copy Central (located at 2576 Bancroft Way, across from Barrows Hall). I also recommend the following three resources for students wishing to engage the material from different perspectives:

Alford, Robert R. 1998. *The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, Methods, Evidence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
ISBN-10: 0195119037

Babbie, Earl. *The Practice of Social Research*.
13th Edition: ISBN-10: 1133049796
12th Edition: ISBN-10: 0495598410
11th Edition: ISBN-10: 0495093254

Cargan, Leonard. 2007. *Doing Social Research*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
ISBN-10: 0742547159

These three books will be on course reserve at the library.

Attendance and Participation:

I expect you to attend both lecture and section. Material in lecture will extend beyond the readings, and will also help you work through the assignments. You are responsible for all material covered in lecture, as well as all announcements made in class and through the course website. Consistent lecture attendance greatly enhances your chances of earning a good grade in this course.

Your Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) will assign ten percent of your grade. This ten percent will be based on section participation. Participation includes attendance,

contribution to class discussion, and asking questions. Remember, quality of contribution is valued over quantity.

Special Accommodations:

Those requiring special accommodations for lecture, section, and/or exams should speak to the instructor or GSI early in the semester. A letter from DSP must accompany requests for exam accommodations: <http://dsp.berkeley.edu>.

Academic Integrity:

Students who are detected cheating will receive a failing grade, and be referred to Student Judicial Affairs. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using notes (written or electronic) during an exam; copying another person’s exam or assignment; allowing someone to copy your exam or assignment; having someone take an exam for you; or plagiarizing an assignment. Plagiarism includes copying other students’ work on an assignment/exam or using electronic/internet resources without proper citation. Please refer to university guidelines on proper citations:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Citations.html>.

Website:

There is a website for Sociology 5 on bCourses:

<https://bcourses.berkeley.edu/courses/1195708>.

All registered students should be automatically added to this site. Electronic copies of the readings will be posted here, and I will post supplementary readings here as well (study guides, lecture notes, etc.).

Graduate Student Instructors:

Section	Meeting Time / Location	Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)
S 101	T Th 8-9AM, 189 Dwinelle	Mario Castillo
S 102	T Th 9-10AM, 211 Dwinelle	Mario Castillo
S 103	T Th 10-11AM, 263 Dwinelle	Thomas Peng
S 104	T Th 11-12PM, 210 Dwinelle	Thomas Peng
S 105	T Th 12-1PM, 186 Barrows	Jacob Seiloe
S 106	T Th 1-2PM, 186 Barrows	Jacob Seiloe
S 108	M W 9-10AM, 60 Barrows	Dani Carrillo
S 109	M W 10-11AM, 122 Latimer	Dani Carrillo
S 110	M W 11-12PM, 122 Latimer	Rachel Wetts
S 112	M W 4-5PM, 80 Barrows	Rachel Wetts

** Sections 107 and 111 have been cancelled.*

Course Outline: Sociology 5 (Spring 2014)

Week One: Course Introduction

Tuesday, January 21: Introduction to the Course

1. Alford, Robert R. 1998. "Introduction," and "The Craft of Inquiry" in *The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, Methods, Evidence*, Oxford University Press; Chapter 1, pp. 1-20.

Thursday, January 23: What is Sociology? Sociology as a Social Science?

2. Durkheim, Emile. [1895] 1982. "What Is a Social Fact?" in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York: Free Press, pp. 50-59.

3. Weber, Max. [1918] 1946. "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills; New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 129-156, selections.

4. Berger, Peter L. 2012. "Sociology as an Individual Pastime (from *Invitation to Sociology*)," in *Reading for Sociology, 7th edition*, edited by Garth Massey, New York, NY: W. W. Norton; pp. 3-12.

Week Two: Starting the Research Process

Tuesday, January 28: Formulating a Research Question

5. Alford, Robert R. 1998. "Designing a Research Project," in *The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, Methods, Evidence*, Oxford University Press; Chapter 2, pp. 21-31.

6. Becker, Howard. 1998. "Imagery" in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press; Chapter 2, pp. 10-66.

Thursday, January 30: Conceptualization, Operationalization, Measurement I

7. Babbie, Earl. 2007. "Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement," in *The Practice of Social Research, 11th edition*, Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth; Chapter 4, pp. 120-151.

Week Three: Next Steps in the Research Process

Tuesday, February 4: Conceptualization, Operationalization, Measurement II

8. Becker, Howard. 1998. "Concepts" in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4, pp. 109-145.

9. Harris, David and Jeremiah Joseph Sim. 2002. "Who is Multiracial? Assessing the Complexity of Lived Race," in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 67, No. 4: 614-627.

Thursday, February 6: Writing a Literature Review

10. Cuba, Lee. "Literature Reviews" in *A Short Guide to Writing About Social Science*. New York: Longman, pp. 68-78.

11. Locke, Lawrence F., Spirduso, Waneen Wyrick, and Stephen J. Wilverman. 2007. "Content of the Proposal," in *Proposals That Work: A Guide to Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 63-73.

Week Four: Inductive and Deductive Approaches to Research

Tuesday, February 11: The Inductive Approach to Research

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

13. Becker, Howard. 1953. "Becoming a Marijuana User," in *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 59, No. 3: 235-242.

******* Assignment 1 due before 3 pm on Tuesday, February 11th *******

Thursday, February 13: The Deductive Approach to Research

14. Cargan, Leonard. 2007. "The Conceptual Framework" in *Doing Social Research*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield; Chapter 3, pp. 29-41.

15. Stinchcombe, Arthur. 1968. "The Logic of Scientific Inference," in *Constructing Social Theories*, New York: Harcourt Brace and World; pp. 15-37.

Week Five: Hypothesis Testing, Causality & Experiments

Tuesday, February 18: Hypothesis Testing & Causality

16. Babbie, Earl. 2007. "Experiments," in *The Practice of Social Research, 11th edition*, Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth; Chapter 8, pp. 220-241.

17. Pager, Devah. 2003. "The Mark of a Criminal Record" in *American Journal of Sociology* 108: 937-975.

Thursday, February 20: The Logic of Experiments

18. Willer, Robb, Christabel Rogalin, Bridget Conlon, and Michael T. Wojnowicz. 2013. "Overdoing Gender: A Test of the Masculine Overcompensation Thesis," in *American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 118, No. 4: 980-1022*.

Week Six: Introduction to Participant Observation

Tuesday, February 25: Participant Observation: Choosing a Field Site

19. Babbie, Earl. 2007. "Qualitative Field Research," in *The Practice of Social Research, 11th edition*, Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth; Chapter 10, pp. 285-317.

20. Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. 2003. "The Promise and the Pitfalls of Going into the Field." *Contexts* Spring: 41-47.

Thursday, February 27: Participant Observation: Collecting and Analyzing Field Data

21. McDermott, Monica. 2006. *Working-Class White: The Making and Unmaking of Race Relations*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1, Appendix 2, pp. 19-37, 159-162, 164.

Week Seven: Introduction to Interviewing

Tuesday, March 4: Interviewing: The Basics

22. Weiss, Robert. 1995. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*, New York: Free Press; Chapters 2 & 4, pp. 15-37; 61-83.

23. Luker, Kristin. 1985. "World View of the Activists" in *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, Berkeley: University of California Press; Chapter 7, pp. 158-191; 284-285.

***** **Assignment 2 due before 3 pm on Tuesday, March 4th** *****

Thursday, March 6: Interviewing: Techniques and Pitfalls

24. Waters, Mary C. 1999. "*Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*." Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Appendix, pp. 347-371; 406-407.

Week Eight: Midterm & Review

Tuesday, March 11: Midterm Review

Thursday, March 13: In-Class Midterm Examination

No additional readings this week.

Week Nine: Research Ethics

Tuesday, March 18: Research Ethics I

25. Babbie, Earl. 2007. "The Ethics and Politics of Social Research," in *The Practice of Social Research, 11th edition*, Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth; Chapter 3.

Thursday, March 20: Research Ethics II

26. Humphreys, Laud (1975) "Methods: The Sociologist as Voyeur" and "Rules and Roles" in *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter; selections

27. Milgram, Stanley (2009) *Obedience to Authority*, New York: Harper Collins; selections.

~~~~~ **SPRING BREAK** ~~~~~

## **Week Ten: Introduction to Quantitative Research Methodologies**

Tuesday, April 1: Sampling

28. Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and Anna Leon-Guerrero. 2009. "Sampling and Sampling Distributions" in *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press; Chapter 7, pp. 205-215.

**\*\*\*\*\* Assignment 3 due before 3 pm on Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> \*\*\*\*\***

Thursday, April 3: Statistics and Measures of Central Tendency

29. Best, Joel. 2001. *Damned Lies and Statistics*. University of California Press. Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-29.

30. Levin, Jack, James Alan Fox, and David R. Forde. 2010. "Measures of Central Tendency." in *Elementary Statistics in Social Research, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon; Chapter 3, pp. 83-99.

## **Week Eleven: Statistical Analysis**

Tuesday, April 8: Bivariate Analysis

31. Best, Joel. 2001. *Damned Lies and Statistics*. University of California Press. Chapter 4, pp. 96-127.

32. Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and Anna Leon-Guerrero. 2009. "Relationships Between Two Variables" in *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press; Chapter 10, pp. 307-339.

Thursday, April 10: Statistical Analysis and "Control"

33. Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and Anna Leon-Guerrero. 2009. "Sampling and Sampling Distributions" in *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press; Chapter 7, pp. 215-228.

34. Babbie, Earl. 2007. "Social Statistics," in *The Practice of Social Research, 11<sup>th</sup> edition*, Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth; Chapter 16, pp. 460-470.

## **Week Twelve: Statistical Analysis (continued)**

Tuesday, April 15: Coefficients, Significance Levels, and Confidence Intervals

35. Hout, Mike & Claude Fischer. 2002. "Why More Americans Have No Religious Preference: Politics and Generations." *American Sociological Review* 67(2): 165-90.

Thursday, April 17: Correlation and Causation

36. Marwell, Gerald and N.J. Demerath III. 2003. "Secularization' By Any Other Name." *American Sociological Review* 68(2): 314-316.

37. Hout, Mike and Claude Fischer. 2003. "O Be Some Other Name." *American Sociological Review* 68(2): 316-318.

**Week Thirteen: Historical & Comparative Methods**

Tuesday, April 22: Macro-Comparative Methods

38. Alford, Robert R. 1998. "Foreground Historical Arguments," in *The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, Methods, Evidence*, Oxford University Press; Chapter 6, pp. 86-102.

39. Bloemraad, Irene. 2013. "The Promise and Pitfalls of Comparative Research Design in the Study of Migration." *Migration Studies* 1(1): 1-20.

Thursday, April 24: Historical Research

40. Fox, Cybelle. 2010. "Three Worlds of Relief: Race, Immigration, and Public and Private Social Welfare Spending in American Cities, 1929." *American Journal of Sociology* 116(2): 453-502.

**Week Fourteen: Sociology and "Big Data" & Course Review**

Tuesday, April 29: Perils and Promises of "Big Data"

40. Anderson, Chris. 2008. "The end of theory: the data deluge makes the scientific method obsolete." *Wired Magazine*.

41. Pigliucci, Massimo. 2009. "The End of Theory in Science." *EMBO reports* (10): 534.

Thursday, May 1: Course Review

No additional readings.

\*\*\*\*\* Assignment 4 due before 3 pm on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* FINAL EXAM \*\*\*\*\*  
**Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 7pm - 10pm**  
**Location: TBA**