

# Evaluation of Evidence

## (Sociology 5)

### Spring 2017

#### Professor Daniel Schneider

Office: Barrows Hall 480

Email: [djschneider@berkeley.edu](mailto:djschneider@berkeley.edu)

Class: Tuesday and Thursday 2PM - 3:30PM, Lewis 100

Section: Twice per week either M/W or T/Th

Office Hours: Wed 2:30-4:30PM ([Sign-up](#))

Course Website: <https://bcourses.berkeley.edu/courses/1457474>

## Course Description

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 phones. The pressure to make sense of that information has never been greater. This course will introduce you to the major types of data and analysis used by sociologists, and seeks to make students better consumers of social scientific research reported by the media or used in political or policymaking debates. This course 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.

## Enrolling in the Course

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

Section	Time	Room	GSI	
101	T/Th 9-10AM	Evans 41	Rachel Komobuchi Howe	<a href="mailto:rachel_howe@berkeley.edu">rachel_howe@berkeley.edu</a>
102	T/Th 10-11AM	Evans 39	Rachel Komobuchi Howe	<a href="mailto:rachel_howe@berkeley.edu">rachel_howe@berkeley.edu</a>
103	T/Th 12-1PM	Evans 39	Boroka Bo	<a href="mailto:borokabo@berkeley.edu">borokabo@berkeley.edu</a>
104	T/Th 1-2PM	Evans 61	Boroka Bo	<a href="mailto:borokabo@berkeley.edu">borokabo@berkeley.edu</a>
105	T/Th 5-6PM	Kroeber 115	Shannon Ikebe	<a href="mailto:shannon.ikebe@berkeley.edu">shannon.ikebe@berkeley.edu</a>
106	T/Th 6-7PM	Dwinelle 263	Shannon Ikebe	<a href="mailto:shannon.ikebe@berkeley.edu">shannon.ikebe@berkeley.edu</a>
107	M/W 8-9AM	Evans 45	Ugur Yildirim	<a href="mailto:ugur.yildirim@berkeley.edu">ugur.yildirim@berkeley.edu</a>
108	M/W 9-10AM	Evans 39	Ugur Yildirim	<a href="mailto:ugur.yildirim@berkeley.edu">ugur.yildirim@berkeley.edu</a>
109	M/W 10-11AM	Evans 31	Ryan Copus	<a href="mailto:rwcopus@berkeley.edu">rwcopus@berkeley.edu</a>
110	M/W 11-12PM	Evans 41	Ryan Copus	<a href="mailto:rwcopus@berkeley.edu">rwcopus@berkeley.edu</a>
111	T/Th 8-9AM	Corey 237	Joe LaBriola	<a href="mailto:joelabriola@berkeley.edu">joelabriola@berkeley.edu</a>
112	T/Th 9-10AM	Evans 7	Joe LaBriola	<a href="mailto:joelabriola@berkeley.edu">joelabriola@berkeley.edu</a>

**Note:** First section meetings will be Monday, January 30th/ Tuesday January 31st.

**Waitlist:** There is a waitlist for the course. For those enrolled, you must attend lecture the first three classes to confirm your enrollment. I will take roll! If you are on the waitlist, you must also attend the first three classes. **You have a better chance of getting into the class if you pick a section with a shorter waitlist.**

If you would like to be in a different section than the one you are assigned to - talk with your current GSI and the GSI leading the section you want to switch into. The GSIs will work with you to try to accommodate your preference. But, there is no guarantee that it will be possible to switch.

## Required Readings

The readings offer you the chance to learn how working social scientists actually DO research, especially how they gather data. You are expected to do assigned reading before class. 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. I have also posted PDFs of each of these readings on the bCourses site.

There is one required textbook: Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 14th Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 978-1-133-04979-1. The book is available at the ASUC bookstore. It is very expensive - \$250 for the print version. It's the best book 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 online through Amazon, Abe Books, or other sites. 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/9781305104945>) Finally, you can purchase a second-hand copy of any editions between 9th and 13th (even the foreign edition) because the material is substantially the same in all these editions. But if you choose a different edition than the 14th, 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 (13th and 12th edition) on 2-hour reserve in Moffitt.

## Lecture

The 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.

## Course Assignments

Students will be evaluated and graded based on two examinations, four research projects, five online quizzes, and their participation and attendance at lecture and in discussion sec-

tion. The table at the end of this section notes the due dates for each assignment and the percentage of the final grade that each assignment is worth.

## **Exams**

There will be two in-class closed-book examinations. The mid-term examination will be held on February 23rd during the normal class time (2PM - 3:30PM) in our normal classroom. The final will be held on Monday, May 8th from 11:30-2PM (location TBD). The final will also cover material from lecture and readings. It will focus on the topics covered after the mid-term, but all course material is eligible for inclusion.

## **Research Projects**

A key part of understanding research methods is through learning-by-doing, that is, applying textbook or lecture knowledge to the real world. Your GSI will instruct you to load projects to bCourses or submit them to your GSI's mailbox in 410 Barrows Hall. Late projects will be graded down a full letter grade for each day late (e.g., An A- becomes a B-). Note that if your GSI instructs you to hand assignments in at 410 Barrows, they will be due there by 3pm; anything submitted after then will be considered a day late. Detailed information on each project, including deadlines, is found after the schedule of readings.

In short, there are three individual assignments (assignments #1, #2, and #3) and one group assignments (assignment #4). You may not submit the group assignments individually. A lot of sociological research is coauthored; doing this final piece of work in a group gives you a sense of what it is like to work on a research team. It also allows you to learn from each other. Your GSI will assign you to your research project group for assignment #4 in section. For this last assignment, you will be graded on both your individual components and collectively on the group component.

## **Quizzes**

I will post 5 quizzes to bCourses over the semester. Your best 4 scores will be counted. Each quiz is worth 3% of your final grade for a total of 12%. Quizzes will be available for 24 hours starting at 6pm Thursday on days I specify in lecture and via email. They will ask 5-15 multiple choice or short answer questions based on lecture and readings. My aim is to keep you on track with course material. Quizzes are open-book and can be done in discussion with a study group. BUT if I think someone is taking quizzes for you - for example, if your quiz scores are very different from the rest of your performance - I will quiz you orally in my office.

## **Participation and Section**

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 Mon. 30 Jan. (for M/W sections) or Tues. 31 Jan. (for Tu/Th sections).

Sections are led by Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs). Section meetings and your GSI's office hours are your main points of contact. Each GSI has a mailbox in 410 Barrows.

The course GSIs are:

Name	Email
Boroka Bo	borokabo@berkeley.edu
Ryan Copus	rwcopus@berkeley.edu
Shannon Ikebe	shannon.ikebe@berkeley.edu
Rachel Komobuchi Howe	rachel_howe@berkeley.edu
Joe LaBriola	joelabriola@berkeley.edu
Ugur Yildirim	ugur.yildirim@berkeley.edu

In consultation with me, your GSI will assign 15% of your grade, based on your participation in section, lecture, and office hours. Participation involves attending section meetings, contributing to discussions, asking pertinent questions, and answering questions asked by GSIs. The quality of your contribution is far more important than the quantity.

## Key Assignments, Weights, and Due Dates

Assignment	% of Grade	Due Date
<b>Quizzes and Exams</b>		
Quizzes on-line, best 4 of 5	12%	Take online
Mid-term Exam	15%	In-class Exam February 23rd
Final Exam	15%	In-Class Exam May 8th
<b>Research Projects</b>		
Project 1: Identifying Dependent & Independent Variables	6%	February 9th
Project 2: Data Analysis	12%	March 14th
Project 3: Designing a Survey	12%	April 6th
Project 4: Doing Participant Observation	13%	April 28th
<b>Participation</b>	15%	Semester-basis

## Course Policies

### Readings and Lecture

Students will be responsible for both material in the readings and material covered in lecture. I will post slides from lecture on the bCourses site. However, these slides are designed to be rhetorical aids and not comprehensive records of all that was said in class. Please do all of the readings in a timely fashion. Each lecture date has one or two readings associated with it. You will get the most out of lecture if you do these readings before the class for which they are assigned.

### Accommodation

I will provide accommodation to any student who provides me with a written letter from a DSP Specialist. If you require accommodation, the first step is to have DSP send me an official written accommodation letter. Once I receive this letter and if I have any questions, I will contact you by email. Please arrange for me to receive the letter as early in the semester as possible. I will also provide accommodation for observation of religious rituals. University policy is that such requests should be made by the second week of the semester. Please submit them by email, cc'ing your GSI.

## **Late Work**

There are several written assignments for this course. The precise due dates and where the assignments should be handed in are noted above. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one letter grade for every day late (e.g. one day late makes a B a C). If you have a real emergency, email Professor Schneider and your GSI about it at least 24 hours before the deadline. Exams will be given on the posted dates (February 23rd and May 8th). If you know now that you will have a conflict with the scheduled exam times, either do not take this course or speak with me as soon as possible so that we can work out an accommodation. If you have a true unforeseen emergency that prevents you from attending the exam, contact Professor Schneider and your GSI as soon as possible to discuss an accommodation.

## **Grading Policy**

If you wish to contest a grade, please first speak with your GSI for the course and outline in writing (1) what assignment you are contesting, (2) the grade you received on the assignment, and (3) the reason(s) why you believe the grade you received is unfair. The GSI will consider your appeal and, in consultation with Professor Schneider, may decide to re-grade your assignment. Please note, a re-grade likely involves closer scrutiny of the work and so may result in an increase or a decrease in your grade. Whatever the outcome, the score from the re-grade will be final. The grade appeals process should be initiated within seven days of receiving the grade in question.

## **Academic Honesty<sup>1</sup>**

The UC Berkeley Honor Code states that, “As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others.” (<http://asuc.org/honorcode/index.php>). I expect that you will adhere to these principles in your conduct in the course. You may not copy specific text or ideas from others, whether from fellow students, from authors of our readings, or from authors of material you find on the internet, without specific attribution. To do otherwise is to plagiarize. You may not cheat on any of the exams by bringing in outside material, copying from fellow students, or engaging in other dishonest practices. You may of course discuss the lectures and readings with your fellow students. But, the assigned papers and your written responses to exam questions must reflect your own independent work. Violations of these rules will result in a failing grade on the assignment and possibly on the course and may result in you being reported to University authorities.

## **Email**

Email should not be used for substantive questions about the reading or course materials. Please ask such questions in class or sign-up for office hours. I will endeavor to respond to other email messages within 24 hours.

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<sup>1</sup>Text is adapted from the ASUC honor code guide.

## **Office Hours**

I very much encourage you to sign-up for office hours. You may also just “stop-by” my office during office hours and if I don’t have another student scheduled, I’ll be happy to talk with you. Office hours are a good time to just introduce yourself, to talk about ideas that you find particularly engaging or difficult, or to discuss problems that you may be having in the course. My office hours are held on Wednesdays from 2:30-4:30PM. You may sign up at <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/hdaew>. Your GSI will also hold office hours.

## **Technology Policy**

You are permitted to use a laptop during class for the purpose of note taking or consulting the readings. Please do not use your cell phone during class. Please do not text, chat, surf the web, read the news, or watch videos during class! This behavior is distracting to other students sitting around you. I have asked the GSIs to (politely) ask students who are not engaged in class-related activities on their laptops to stop. If you do choose to use a laptop, please sit in the back of the classroom so that your use of this technology will not distract others.

# Course Outline and Weekly Readings

## **Jan 17: Overview of the Course & Logistics**

*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?*

## **Jan 19: What is Science? What is Sociology?**

*What is social science? What does science do?*

1. Babbie. Chapter 1. Human Inquiry and Science

## **Jan 24: The Creation of Sociological Knowledge**

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

2. 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.

## **Jan 26: 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?*

3. Babbie Chapter 4. Research Design.

## **Jan 30th and 31st: First Section Meetings**

### **Jan 31: 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?*

4. Ian Dey. 1999. "Introduction." Chapter 1 in *Grounding Grounded Theory: Guidelines for Qualitative Inquiry* pp. 1-12. New York: Academic Press.
5. Babbie. Chapter 13. Qualitative Data Analysis (read only the first 3 sections - introduction, linking theory and analysis, and qualitative data processing).
6. Howard S. Becker. 1953. "Becoming a Marijuana User." *American Journal of Sociology* 59 (3): 235-242.

### **Feb 2: 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?*

7. Arthur L. Stinchcombe. 1968. "Fundamental Forms of Scientific Inference." Chapter 2 in *Constructing Social Theories*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
8. Crabb, Peter B. and Deb L. Marciano. 2011. "Representations of Material Culture and Gender in Award-Winning Children's Books: A 20-Year Follow-Up." *Journal of Research in Childhood Education* 25(4): 390-398.

### **Feb 7: 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?*

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

### **Feb 9: Measurement: Conceptualization**

*How do we translate theoretical concepts into observable phenomena we can measure?*

10. Babbie Chapter 5. Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement.
11. Christopher Jencks. 2015. "The War on Poverty: Was It Lost?" *New York Review of Books*.

### **Feb 9: Research Project #1 (Identifying Variables) Due**

### **Feb 14: Measurement: Validity and Reliability + Scales**

*How do we know that our measures of theoretical concepts are valid and reliable? Why and when do sociologists use composite measures? What is an index? How do you construct one?*

12. Babbie. Chapter 6. Indexes, Scales, and Typologies. Please focus on pp. 156-172.
13. Susan Mayer and Christopher Jencks. "Poverty and the Distribution of Material Hardship." *Journal of Human Resources* 24(1): 88-114.

### **Feb 16: Data Analysis and Statistics (I)**

*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?*

14. Babbie. Chapter 14. Quantitative data analysis.
15. Jane Miller. 2004. "Creating Effective Tables." Chapter 6 in *The Chicago Guide to Writing about Numbers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



## Feb 20 No Monday Section - Presidents' Day

### Feb 21: Mid-Term Review

### Feb 23: In Class Mid-Term

## Feb 23 No Thursday Section

### Feb 28: Data Analysis and Sampling (II)

*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?*

16. Babbie. Chapter 16. Statistical Analysis (p. 451-460). (Read only the sections up to "Inferential Statistics." Do not read the section on "Inferential Statistics" or on "Other Multivariate Techniques.")

17. Babbie. Chapter 7. The Logic of Sampling. (Also review chapter 14.)

### March 2: Sampling Plans (III)

*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?*

18. Babbie. Chapter 7. The Logic of Sampling.

19. Nancy Reichman, Julien Teitler, Irwin Garfinkel, and Sara McLanahan. 2001. "Fragile Families: Sample and Design." *Children and Youth Services Review* 23(4-5): 303-326.

### March 7: Inferential Statistics (IV)

*Under what conditions are we able to make claims about larger groups of people based on samples? How do we quantify uncertainty in our estimates?*

20. Babbie. Chapter 16. Statistical Analysis (p. 460-470). (Read only the section on "Inferential Statistics." Do not read the section on "Other Multivariate Techniques.")

### March 9: Experiments (I)

*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 cannot learn from other research designs?*

21. Babbie. Chapter 8. Experiments.

### March 14: Experiments (II): Guest Lecturer David Pedulla, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Stanford University

*What is Pedulla's research question? What is Pedulla's experimental manipulation? Why does Pedulla have to use an experiment to answer his research question?*

22. David Pedulla. 2016. "Penalized or Protected? Gender and the Consequences of Nonstandard and Mismatched Employment Histories." *American Sociological Review* 81(2): 262-289.

### **March 14: Research Project #2 (Data Analysis) Due**

#### **March 16: Surveys (I)**

*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?*

23. Babbie. Chapter 9. Survey Research.

24. Howard Schuman. 2002. "Sense and Nonsense about Surveys." *Contexts* 1: 40-47.

#### **March 21: Surveys (II)**

*How do Schneider and Harknett obtain their sample? How does the sample depart from the standards of traditional probability samples? What concerns do you have with their methodology? What kinds of survey questions do they use? Come prepared with one piece of feedback on how to improve the survey!*

25. Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett. 2016. "Schedule Instability and Unpredictability and Worker and Family Health and Wellbeing." Working Paper (will be posted to bCourses)

26. Take the Survey! (will be posted to bCourses).

#### **March 23: Natural Experiments**

*Why do researchers use "Natural Experiments"? What are some common strategies for doing this kind of analysis? What is Card and Krueger's "natural experiment"? What do they find?*

27. Thad Dunning. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2. pp. 1-60.

28. David Card and Alan Krueger. "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast-Food Industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania." *The American Economic Review* 84(4): 772-793.

### **March 28 and March 30: No Class - Spring Break**

#### **April 4: In-depth Interviews**

*What are structured interviews, and what is the best way to conduct them? 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?*

29. Babbie. Chapter 10. Qualitative Field Research.

30. Also review Babbie. Chapter 9 "Interview Surveys" section pp. 267-271 in 14th Edition

and Babbie. Chapter 13. Qualitative Data Analysis, pp. 380-392 in 14th Edition.

31. Robert S. Weiss. 2004. "In their Own Words: Making the Most of Qualitative Interviews." *Contexts* 3(4): 44-51.

32. Joanna Reed et al. 2015. "Consistent and Inconsistent Contraception Among Young Women: Insights from Qualitative Interviews." *Family Relations* 63: 244-258.

#### **April 6: Ethnography and Direct Observation**

*What is Reed et al's research question? What method do the authors employ? What do you think the authors learn from using in-depth interviews that they could not learn from a survey? How does in-depth interviewing differ from ethnographic methods? When might one approach be more appropriate than the other?*

33. Patricia Adler and Peter Adler. 2003. "The Promise and Pitfalls of Going into the Field." *Contexts* 2(2): 41-47.

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

#### **April 6: Research Project #3 (Survey Design) Due**

#### **April 11: Ethnography: Sidewalk (FILM)**

*What is Duneier'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?*

35. Mitchell Duneier. 1999. *Sidewalk*. pp. 3-14, 43-80, 157-187.

36. Mitchell Duneier. 1999. *Sidewalk*. "Methodological Appendix." pp. 333-357.

#### **April 13: Saying and Doing**

*On what basis do Jerolmack and Khan criticize interview data? Identify a few specific critiques, and evaluate whether you agree. What is Vaisey's response, in defense of (survey-based) interview data? How should a researcher decide between observation and interviewing?*

37. Jerolmack, Colin and Shamus Khan. 2014. "Talk Is Cheap: Ethnography and the Attitudinal Fallacy." *Sociological Methods & Research* 43(2): 178-209.

38. Vaisey, Stephen. 2014. "The "Attitudinal Fallacy" is a Fallacy: Why We Need Many Methods to Study Culture." *Sociological Methods & Research* 43(2): 227-231.

#### **April 18: 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?*

**April 20: Ethics**

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

39. Babbie. Chapter 3. Ethics.

**April 25: Ethics + Summing Up**

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

**April 27: No Class**

**April 28: Research Project #4 (Observation) Due**

**May 2: Review for Final Exam**

**May 8: Final Exam**

*11:30AM - 2:30PM. Location TBD*

# Research Projects

## Project 1: Identifying Independent and Dependent Variables

*Due Thursday. 9 February. 6% of Final Grade. Individual Project*

Go to bCourses and download this research article: Alvarado, Steven. 2016. “Delayed Disadvantage: Neighborhood Context and Child Development” *Social Forces* 94(4) 1847 - 1877.

Begin by telling us what kind of data the author analyzes using the language for describing data that we learned about in lecture on January 26th. Then, 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, in your own words, (1) why the author expects that this independent and dependent variable are related and (2) how the independent variable is actually related to the dependent variable. This project should be 2 pages maximum.

## Project 2: Constructing and Analyzing Data Tables

*Due Tuesday. 14 March. 12% of Final Grade. Individual Project*

The Beatles famously argued that “money can’t buy you love” and grandparents are known to reassure us that “money can’t buy you happiness.” Are John, Paul, George, Ringo, and your gramps right? Or can money buy you love and happiness? If money matters at all, then is it better at buying love or happiness?

To find out, you will download 2 files from bCourses: “GSS\_data.xlsx” and “GSS\_data\_codebook.pdf.” The spreadsheet (the file ending with .xlsx) contains data from the General Social Survey, downloaded from <http://gss.norc.org/get-the-data/stata>. The spreadsheet contains the data you are to analyze - a subset of variables on 1,158 observations of married respondents taken from the 2014 survey. The codebook lists the variables in the data and explains what each means and how each is coded (that is how each numeric value corresponds to a substantive response). You’ll need to look through the codebook to locate the variables of interest.

Note: In the GSS, some numeric values indicate valid responses and some numeric values indicate various kinds of missing data. You must carefully cross-reference the code book and the data to make sure your tables don’t include observations with missing values on either variable.

- Create a table to display the distributions of 3 variables: INCOME06, HAPPY, and HAPMAR. Since INCOME06 has a large number of categories (25, plus missing values), you should recode this variable into a smaller number of categories - I’d suggest 5-6 at most. Choose wisely - you will be graded on the reasonableness of your categorization scheme.
- Create a second table (a cross tab) to show the bivariate association between INCOME06 AND HAPPY and then create a third table (another cross-tab) to show the bivariate association between INCOME06 and HAPMAR. Again, you should recode income06 into a smaller number of categories (a maximum of 5-6).

- 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 INCOME06 and each of the two other variables (the direction and your assessment of its strength).
- Conclude with an assessment of whether money (INCOME06) matters for happiness (HAPPY) and love (HAPMAR) and whether it matters more for one than the other

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

### **Project 3: Designing a Survey**

*Due Thursday, 6 April. 12% of Final Grade. Individual Project.*

You will design a questionnaire that might be used in a survey to assess people's attitudes toward governmental policy to reduce poverty. The survey should try to capture general attitudes about the role of government in reducing poverty rather than their positive or negative views of specific social welfare programs. Your questionnaire should obtain the following from each respondent:

- Their age, gender, race/ethnicity, and occupation
- Whether or not they voted in the last election and, if so, whether they voted for Clinton, Trump, or someone else (a 2-part contingency question)
- Their attitudes toward governmental policy to reduce poverty in the form of a matrix question, using Likert-type responses to five statements.

This project should be 3-4 pages long. 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 2-3 pages, discuss these issues:

- Question wording: For each question, why are you asking this question? What concept or aspect of a concept do you hope to measure? Why did you word it this way? Why did you measure as an open- or closed-ended question?
- Question type: For each closed-ended question, state the concept or dimension of a concept tapped by each question; also identify the level of measurement and explain why it is appropriate.
- Question order: Why did you put the questions in this order?

## **Project 4: Doing a Participant-Observation Study**

*Due Thursday, 28 April. 13% of Final Grade. Group Project.*

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. Different team members can visit the site at different times; you need not all visit the site at the same time. In fact, it may be advantageous to vary the time and/or day that you go to this place since different people might use different public spaces depending on the day of the week or the time of the day.

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 write 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, write up your field notes immediately after leaving the field of study. Read through your field notes and code (with a different colored pen or pencil) important observations that highlight social hierarchy.

Working with the other members of your group, combine your field notes and write a 3-5 page report (5 pages maximum) outlining:

- Where you did your participant observation
- Why you chose this location
- How you identified social hierarchy (what did you look for as markers of 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.