



SOCIOLOGY 5: EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE

SUMMER 2012

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LECTURES: Tues, Wed, Thurs 10am-12pm
LECTURE HALL: Room 175, Barrows Hall
OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays 12:30-1:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sociology 5 provides a general overview of the ways in which sociologists collect information about social phenomena, and it provides an elementary introduction to both quantitative and qualitative analyses of such data. I have several goals for this course: (1) To spark your interest in sociology and to encourage you to see sociology as a research enterprise, as a process of learning about our social world. (2) To introduce you to the elements of research design and to the basic principles of data analysis so that you will have a good foundation for future learning. (3) To teach you how to read a research report with a critical eye, so that you can know how to tell how trustworthy its information is. (4) To have you learn first hand about the problems of research by trying out several data collection methods on a small scale. (5) To show you that research is a personal, human activity involving both your brain and your emotions, combining brilliant insights with spectacular failures, and invoking both dramatic visions and inescapable practical limitations.

COURSE MATERIALS

I have ordered the following two books for this course. They are going to be our core texts. From time to time, I will supplement these with additional articles, videos, and movie fragments. On average, you will be asked to read about 100 pages per week. The core textbooks are available for purchase at the Cal Student Store. All other supplementary materials will be available to you online at our bSpace class website.

Earl Babbie. 2013. *The Practice of Social Research*. Thirteenth Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.

Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method*. Second Edition Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The way to learn a research method is to read real research reports and to get your hands dirty doing real (although small) data collection exercises. These activities take time and effort, but there are no shortcuts. The exercises in this class are not “real” research. As you will learn, real research is much too time-consuming (and much too expensive) to fit into a semester-length course. You will be doing scaled-down projects that teach you important lessons about research without taking so much time. Your grade in this course will be based on the quality of your three data collection exercises, weekly homework assignments, daily reactions, and a final in-class exam.

Data Analysis Projects: You will be asked to complete three major exercises in collecting and analyzing data. The largest share of your grade will be based on these projects (each of these will be worth 15% of your total grade). The exercises will involve developing structured questionnaire items, a field experiment, and a field observation. Details and due dates will be explained in class.

Homework Assignments: Together these will be worth 20% of your grade. Homework assignments will be short (one paragraph to one page) essay-type answers to questions about the assigned readings. There will be four such assignments and they are due *at the beginning of class* on the following Thursdays: June 21st, June 28th, July 12th, and July 26th. These assignments will be counted but not graded. You will get 5 points for each assignment that you hand in, 0 otherwise. Homework must be submitted on time in order to receive full credit.

Daily Reactions: Beginning with the second lecture, you will need to bring a 3x5 ruled index card with you each time we meet. You will use these index cards to submit at least one sentence of reaction to that day’s class, indicating what you learned, or something you liked or did not like, found interesting or controversial, found clear or too simplistic, or found confusing and in need of further (or better) explanation; you may also submit comments on the course in general. Please note that you can submit a “reaction” only if you were actually in class. As with the homework assignment, we will count but not grade these daily reactions. You will get 1 point for each daily reaction submitted, 0 otherwise. Your daily reactions will contribute to 20% of your overall grade in the class (there will be 20 such reactions throughout the semester).

Final Exam: You will be asked to complete an objective final exam on the last day of class (Thursday, August 9th). This will be cumulative (multiple choice, true/false) exam and it will focus on basic methodological concepts and ideas. This exam will be worth 15% of your final grade. I will provide you with study questions throughout the semester to help you get prepared for this exam. In addition, I will give you a more targeted study guide on the Tuesday right before the exam.

FINAL GRADES

In assigning final grades, we do not “curve” the class. It is, therefore, entirely possible for everyone to get an A. Needless to say, it is also possible (although quite unlikely) for everyone to fail. In assigning final grades, we will use the following basic scheme:

A	95 – 99.99%	C	73 – 76.99%
A-	90 – 94.99%	C-	70 – 72.99%
B+	87 – 89.99%	D+	67 – 69.99%
B	83 – 86.99%	D	63 – 66.99%
B-	80 – 82.99%	D-	60 – 62.99%
C+	77 – 79.99%	F	00 – 59.99%

In this grade-inflated world of ours we are not opposed to the idea of awarding students an A+ for exceptional work. However, in order to earn such a grade, you will have to earn 100 points in this class.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at Berkeley. If you are found to be cheating on assignments or to be engaging in scholarly misconduct, you will receive no credit for that task. “Helpfully” signing in a friend for class participation will result in both of you failing the class participation of your total grade.

CLASS WEBSITE

I have set up a bSpace website for the class. You can find here a copy of the syllabus, an electronic version of our class schedule, PDF files for some of the assigned readings (under “Resources”), handouts and lecture notes (also under “Resources”). This is also where you will find announcements from me and see your grades. It is essential that you gain access to our class website as soon as possible because (1) many of our required readings reside here and (2) your homework assignments will be posted here.

How do you log in to bSpace? Log in to <http://bSpace.berkeley.edu> with your CalNet ID and Passphrase. If you are enrolled through Telebears, you should see a tab at the top of the screen for our course when you log in. If you are enrolled in more than one course using bSpace you will, of course, see a tab for each course. If you are a concurrent enrollment student you cannot be assigned bSpace access until the status of your application is “Approval Completed.” It is your responsibility to make sure that your application is reviewed and approved in a timely fashion. If you have questions about this, please email concurrent@unex.berkeley.edu.

COURSE TIMELINE

This is a writing intensive course with a heavy workload. Every Thursday you will be handing in work. On most Thursdays, this will be your homework assignment; other times, you will be sharing with us the results of your research. You will be devoting about two to four hours of work per week to this class and you may also need to set aside an hour or so on the weekends to complete your research projects. If you become ill or some other crisis arises during the semester, please communicate with us as soon as possible.

DATE	FOCUS	DEADLINES & ACTIVITIES
Tuesday, June 19	Getting Started with Social Research	Hand out HW #1
Wednesday, June 20th	Social Research as Science	
Thursday, June 21st	Observation Exercise	Collect HW #1 Hand out Observation Ex.
Tuesday, June 26th	Research Ethics	Hand out HM #2
Wednesday, June 27th	The Process of Social Research	
Thursday, June 28th	Research Design	Collect HW #2
Tuesday, July 3rd	No Class - HOLIDAY	
Wednesday, July 4th	No Class - HOLIDAY	
Thursday, July 5th	Field Experiment	Hand out Experiment Ex. Collect Observation Ex.
Tuesday, July 10th	Measurement	Hand out HM #3
Wednesday, July 11th	Indexes, Scales, and Typologies	
Thursday, July 12th	Sampling	Collect HW #3
Tuesday, July 17th	Experiments	
Wednesday, July 18th	Survey Research	
Thursday, July 19th	Survey Research Exercise	Hand out Survey Ex. Collect Experiment Ex.
Tuesday, July 24th	Field Research	Hand out HW #4
Wednesday, July 25th	Research Using Available Data	
Thursday, July 26th	Multiple Methods	Collect HW #4
Tuesday, July 31st	Evaluation Research	
Wednesday, August 1st	Public Sociology	
Thursday, August 2nd	Reading & Writing Social Research	Collect Survey Ex.
Tuesday, August 7th	The Promise of Social Research	Hand out Study Guide
Wednesday, August 8th	Review for Final Exam	Go over Study Guide
Thursday, August 9th	Final In-Class Exam	

MANAGING YOUR SUMMER WORKLOAD

Our task this summer is to cover an entire semester's worth of material in eight weeks. This is completely feasible, but it will require a lot of work and organization on all of our parts. Each class period is worth more than one session in a normal term. On many days, the class will be divided into two sections on two different topics. We will take a short break about half way through each class, so you can breathe and stretch your legs. I have given a great deal of thought to how to reorganize this course so it can be done in eight weeks, allowing you enough time to write your papers and me enough time to grade them. The trick is to move quickly and be willing to work simultaneously on different projects at the same time. We will have time in the last week to return to the concepts with which we began the course, as part of preparing for the final exam.

For each of the three exercises, you have control over how long the data collection takes by your choice of sample and method. It is possible to collect the data for each exercise in two hours or less, if you make the right choices. One key is to plan thoroughly before collecting the data, and another is not to spend too much time changing your mind about what to do. I am prepared to help advise you to keep on the path of the possible rather than the impossible so you can get this work done and still sleep each night.

For the reading, you do not need to study it intensively before class, just read through it once so you can be ready to learn from class. Homework focuses on identifying variables and measures in articles. Do your best on this, but do not waste a lot of time struggling with it – just make a guess if you really do not know. Homework is counted for effort but not graded for correctness. Textbook reading gives you more depth on methodological concepts and information relevant to doing your exercises. Exam will focus on methodological concepts and will emphasize material discussed in class, not minor trivia from the readings.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

In order to obtain the greatest benefit from our classroom discussions, we strongly recommend that you complete the assigned readings before our class meets.

Tuesday, June 19: Getting Started with Social Science Research

- Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "What is (and Is Not) Social Research," pages 5-32 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition), edited by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage. (textbook)
- Mills, C. Wright. 2001. "The Promise." Pages 19-26 in *Down to Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings* (Eleventh Edition), edited by Garth Massey. New York, NY: W. W. Norton. (online)

Wednesday, June 20: Social Research as Science

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Human Inquiry and Science." Pages 2-29 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Berger, Peter L. 2003. "The Craft of Sociology." Pages 3-12 in *Reading for Sociology* (Fourth Edition), edited by Garth Massey. New York, NY: W. W. Norton. (online)

Thursday, June 21: Observation Exercise – Handed Out and Described

- Humphreys, Laud. 1975. "Chapter 2. Methods: The Sociologist as Voyeur" (pages 16-44) and "Chapter 3. Rules and Roles" (pages 45-58) in *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* by Laud Humphreys. New York, Aldine de Gruyter. (online)

Tuesday, June 26: Research Ethics

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "The Ethics and Politics of Social Research." Pages 61-85 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "The Ethics of Social Research." Pages 79-108 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition), by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage. (textbook)

Wednesday, June 27: The Process of Social Research

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Paradigms, Theory, and Social Research." Pages 30-59 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition), by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "The Process of Social Research: Ideas and Evidence." Pages 57-78 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition), by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage. (textbook)

Thursday, June 28: Research Design

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Research Design." Pages 88-122 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Becker, Howard S. 1998. "Imagery." Pages 10-66 in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It* by Howard S. Becker. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. (online)

Tuesday, July 3: No Class

Wednesday, July 4: No Class - Holiday

Thursday, July 5: Field Experiment Exercise – Handed Out and Described

- Milgram, Stanley. 2009. *Obedience to Authority*. New York, NY: Harper. Read: "Methods of Inquiry" (pages 13-26), "Expected Behavior" (pages 27-31), and "Closeness of the Victim" (pages 32-43). (online)

Tuesday, July 10: Measurement

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement." Pages 123-156 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Becker, Howard S. 1998. "Concepts." Pages 109-145 in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While Doing It*, by Howard S. Becker. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (online)

Wednesday, July 11: Indexes, Scales, and Typologies

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Indexes, Scales, and Typologies." Pages 156-184 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company. (textbook)

Thursday, July 12: Sampling

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "The Logic of Sampling." Pages 185-224 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. Read, "The Logic of Sampling," pages 185-224 (textbook)
- Becker, Howard S. 1998. "Sampling." Pages 67-108 in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While Doing It*, by Howard S. Becker. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (online)

Tuesday, July 17: Experiments

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Experiments." Pages 228-251 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company. (textbook)
- Lovaglia, Michael J. 2012. "From Summer Camps to Glass Ceiling: The Power of Experiments." Pages 535-543 in *The Contexts Reader*, Second Edition, edited by Douglas Hartmann and Christopher Uggen. New York, NY W. W. Norton. (online)

Wednesday, July 18: Survey Research

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Survey Research." Pages 252-293 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Schuman, Howard. 2012. "Sense and Nonsense About Surveys." Pages 509-517 in *The Contexts Reader*, Second Edition, edited by Douglas Hartmann and Christopher Uggen. New York, NY W. W. Norton. (online)

Thursday, July 19: Survey Research Exercise – Handed Out and Described

- Bobo, Lawrence. 1983. "White's Opposition to Busing: Symbolic Racism or Realistic Group Conflict?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 45 (No 6): 1196-1210. (online)
- Sampson, Robert J. 2008. "Rethinking Crime and Immigration." *Contexts* (Winter 2008): 28-33. (online)

Tuesday, July 24: Field Research

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Qualitative Field Research." Pages 294-328 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook).
- Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "Using Qualitative Methods to Study Commonalities." Pages 111-134 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition) by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press. (textbook)

Wednesday, July 25: Research Using Available Data

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. *The Practice of Social Research*. Thirteenth Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. Read, "Unobtrusive Research," pages 329-357 (textbook)
- Ragin, Charles C. and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "Using Comparative Methods to Study Diversity." Pages 135-162 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition) by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press. (textbook)

Thursday, July 26: Multiple Methods

- Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. Selections: "The Urban Inferno" (pages 1-13), "The City of Extremes" (pages 14-36), and "Dying Alone" (pages 37-78). (online)

Tuesday, July 31: Evaluation Research

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Evaluation Research." Pages 358-385 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition) by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)

Wednesday, August 1: Public Sociology

- Burawoy, Michael. 2005. "For Public Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 70 (February): 4-28. (online)
- Wilson, William Julius. 2007. "Speaking to Publics." Pages 112-123 in *Public Sociology*, edited by Dan Clawson et al. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press. (online)

Thursday, August 2: Reading and Writing Social Research

- Babbie, Earl. 2013. "Reading and Writing Social Research." Pages 497-521 in *The Practice of Social Research* (Thirteenth Edition), by Earl Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth. (textbook)
- Jasper, James M. 2002. "Why So Many Academics are Lousy Writers." *The Chronicle of Higher Education: Career Network*. Tuesday, March 26, 2002. (online)

Tuesday, August 7: The Promise of Social Research

- Ragin, Charles C and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2010. "Afterword: The Promised of Social Research." Pages 189-200 in *Constructing Social Research* (Second Edition) by Charles C. Ragin and Lisa M. Amoroso. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage. (textbook)
- Burawoy, Michael. 2007. "The Field of Sociology: Its Power and Its Promise." Pages 241-258 in *Public Sociology*, edited by Dan Clawson et al. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press. (online)

Wednesday, August 8: Review for Final Exam

Thursday, August 9: Final In-Class Exam