

SOCIOLOGY 606: Research Methods and Design

Wednesday 12:00-2:30 pm, Sakamaki B211

Prof. Patricia G. Steinhoff, Saunders 241

steinhof@hawaii.edu

(808) 956-7676

Office hours: Tuesday, 1:30-4

Course Aims

This is a required 3 credit course for graduate students in sociology. The purpose of the course is to prepare graduate students in Sociology and other relevant fields to conduct original research for their MA thesis or doctoral dissertation. It focuses on how to prepare to do research, how to develop research questions that will provide answers to social science questions, and how to choose appropriate research strategies and specific research methods. It provides an introduction to a wide range of research methods, within the context of research ethics, theoretical approaches, and previous research on the topic. Prerequisite for the course is completion of an undergraduate level introductory course on social statistics so that students have sufficient background on the logic and basic principles of social research. The course is divided into three basic sections. Phase I addresses issues of ethics, theory construction, and research appropriateness. Phase II covers quantitative methods, research designs, and analytic strategies. Phase III covers qualitative methods, research designs, and analytic strategies. The course will model professional practices in sociology by having students present a research method to the class, participate in human subjects review of their research proposal, and participate in peer review of student proposals (including their own).

Student Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this seminar, a student should have a broad understanding of research methods, be able to design a research project to address a sociological problem of issue of theoretical interest, be able to apply principles to protect human subjects in the design of sociological research, have the ability to carry out an independent research project to collect and analyze research data, and be able to interpret research results. Students will develop their reading and critical learning skills by preparing a literature review on the subject of their research proposal, and then developing a research proposal, and by evaluating and critiquing other students' proposals. Students will develop their writing and oral presentation skills through writing a literature review and research proposal, by revising their work in response to the instructor's and other students' comments, and by presenting their work orally to the class. All of these experiences will help students become clear thinkers, thoughtful readers of social research, ethical and creative researchers, and articulate communicators of theoretically informed empirical research.

Course Requirements

You are expected to read all required materials prior to class and to complete and submit all writing assignments on time. You will have several short writing assignments to prepare for the final research proposal. In addition, you will be responsible for a 30-45 minute class presentation on a specific research method used in the social sciences, to be determined in consultation with the instructor. Near the end of the semester you will complete a research proposal built on the short writing assignments, submit it for peer review, and participate in a peer-review exercise as

a primary and secondary reviewer of other students' papers. You will then submit the revised final paper for grading.

Textbook and Readings

Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods, 5th edition*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016. Paperback.

The textbook is available at UH Bookstore and Amazon.com. This is primarily an undergraduate textbook with lots of text boxes and other student aids. We will be covering the basic content in the assigned chapters and the book will be a useful reference for your work in the seminar. You are expected to read the assigned chapters before each seminar session as preparation for further exploration of the issues through presentations and discussion in class. A few additional readings may be posted on Laulima. These will be announced well in advance and also should be read prior to class.

Course Deadlines

- August 29 List of individual presentation topics on methods due in class
- September 5 Assignment #1 on research topic and research questions due in class and Laulima
Instructor will assign research presentation topics and dates
- September 12 Agreement with instructor on topic for your final research proposal/paper
- October 3 Assignment #2 on literature review due in class and Laulima
- October 31 Assignment #3 on research methods due in class and Laulima
- November 7 Assignment #4 on IRB application due in class and Laulima
- November 14 Submission of final paper for peer review panels due in class and Laulima
- December 14 Final revised proposal/paper submitted for grading to Saunders 240 and Laulima

Readings and Course Schedule

August 22 Introduction and Distribution of Materials

Reading: Bryman, chapters 1-2

Be prepared to introduce yourself and briefly what kinds of research you are interested in
Discussion of the research process and fitting research strategies to research issues

August 29 Formulating Research Questions and Preparing for Research

Reading: Bryman, chapters 1-4

Bring to class your list of preferred methods presentation choices

Be prepared to discuss your choices

Be prepared to discuss your research ideas

Discussion of research questions and literature review

September 5 Ethics in Research and First Steps in Research

Reading: Bryman chapters 5-6

Assignment #1 on research topic and research questions due in class

Discussion of the topics and suggested research questions

Discussion of ethics and human subjects review process

Instructor will make final assignments of research method presentation topics

September 12 Library Resources

Commitment to specific topic for research paper due

September 19 Quantitative Methods I

Reading: Bryman chapters 7 and 8

Discussion of general principles of quantitative research and sampling

September 26 Quantitative Methods II

Reading: Bryman chapters 9-11

Student presentations

Discussion of questionnaires, interviews, and types of questions

October 3 Quantitative Methods III

Reading: Bryman, chapters 12-16

Assignment #2 Literature Review due in class and to Laulima

Student presentations

Discussion of structured observation, content analysis, and secondary analysis of existing data

Connections between sampling and quantitative data analysis

October 10 Quantitative Data Analysis

Reading: Bryman, skim chapters 15-16

Rosenberg, Morris, *The Logic of Survey Analysis*, New York: Basic Books, 1968,
ch. 1; Appendix A and Appendix B.

Discussion of the logic of quantitative data analysis; relation to sampling, generalizability

October 17 Qualitative Methods I

Reading: Bryman, chapters 17-18

Blumer, Herbert, "Sociological Analysis and the Variable" in *Symbolic Interactionism, Perspective and Methods*, ch. 7. (reprinted from ASR, vol.XXII).

Discussion of general principles of qualitative research and relevant considerations

October 24 Qualitative Methods II

Reading: Bryman, chapters 19-21

Discussion of qualitative interviewing, ethnographic research, and focus groups

October 31 Qualitative Methods III

Assignment #3 on Research Methods due in class and on Laulima

Reading: Bryman, chapters 22-23

Discussion of use of documents as data, discourse analysis and conversation analysis

November 7 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Assignment #4 on IRB application due in class

Reading: Bryman, chapters 24-25

Discussion of the logic of qualitative data analysis and various approaches

November 14 Mixed Methods and Writing Up Research

Submission of final paper for peer review panels

Reading: Bryman, chapters 26-28

Discussion of research strategies, end-products, and audiences for research

November 21 Project preparation, critical reviews, and problem-solving

Discussion of your project's development and problems

Discussion of how to be a reviewer and how to deal with critical comments

November 28 Paper Presentation and Peer Review Session

December 5 Paper Presentation and Peer Review Session

December 14 Final submission deadline for papers

Course Assignments

Seminar Presentation

Each student will prepare a 30-45 minute presentation on a particular research method and will also be responsible for facilitating a discussion regarding the research methods topic. This discussion will be at least 5-10 minutes in duration. At the conclusion of the session, all students will be provided with copies of the PPT slides and the relevant references produced on the research methods topic.

Assignments #1-4 represent parts of the final research proposal:

- #1 Research topic and research questions
- #2 Literature review of the research topic and revised research questions
- #3 Research methods for the proposed project
- #4 Practice IRB submission

Final paper draft for peer review, based on assignments 1-4

Peer Review of Student Papers

Each student will submit his or her own paper to peer review and will also act as a primary and secondary reviewer for the papers of other students. This models professional practice in sociology, and is similar to the committee review processes used in the department.

COURSE GRADING

	Points
Writing assignments	
#1 Research topic and research questions	10 points
#2 Literature review	10 points
#3 Research methods	10 points
#4 IRB application	5 points
Written evaluation as a primary reviewer	5 points
Written evaluation as a secondary reviewer	5 points

Seminar presentation, leading discussion

Method presentation	10 points
Leading discussion	5 points
<i>Final proposal/paper presentation</i>	10 points
<i>Final revised proposal/paper</i>	20 points
<i>Participation</i>	10 points
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Total possible points	100 points

97.50—100.00	A+
92.50—97.49	A
90.00—92.49	A-
87.50—89.99	B+
82.50—87.49	B
80.00—82.49	B-
77.50—79.99	C+
70.00—77.49	C
65.00—69.99	C-
60.00—64.49	D+
50.00—59.99	D
<50.00	F

PLAGIARISM

Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following: a. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty. b. Furnishing false information to any UH official, faculty member, or office. c. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any UH document, record, or form of identification. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the UH faculty, staff or student (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. [E7.208 UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEMWIDE STUDENT CONDUCT CODE, July 2009]

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808)956-7511 or (808) 9567612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

eCAFE

The Department of Sociology is committed to a continual improvement of the quality of its course offerings. To allow for this to occur, your help, as the consumers of these courses is

needed. You are there and only you can tell us about your educational experience in your classes. Towards the end of the semester you will be informed that the eCAFE system is available to you to complete your course evaluation. We encourage you to login to <http://www.hawaii.edu/ecafe> to submit your evaluations.