Ihanktonwan Community College

**Sociology Research Methods**

Spring 2016 Wednesday 6-9pm

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**Book**

Babbie, E. (2014). *The basics of social research*. Cengage: Belmont, CA. ISBN 978-1-133-59414-7

**Course Description**

This course introduces scientific methods used in contemporary sociological research with focus on ethics, quantitative and qualitative research design, data collection, and data analysis. The language and assumptions of natural scientific research will be examined as well as how the social sciences have attempted to utilize the language and assumptions in research. Students will develop research designs and familiarize themselves with a variety of research methodology.

**Objectives**

-Evaluate various types and forms of social science research that includes qualitative and quantitative research methodologies

-become familiar with the role of theory in research, the process of operationalizing concepts, choice of variables, choice of research design, the logic of sampling, data collection, ways of quantifying data, and the limitations of various methods and design

-become familiar with interpreting basic statistical concepts and procedures and the differences between causation and correlation

-become familiar with ethical and legal concerns when conducting research

**Teaching Philosophy/teaching methods**

I believe the fundamental goal of teaching is to foster learning. Learning takes place in many different circumstances and contexts. Although everyone is capable of learning, a student's desire to learn is a vital pre-condition to effectively mastering new concepts and skills. Humans have multiple learning styles: some learn best in lecture atmospheres, some are motivated by discussion, and others absorb best when they read and reflect on what they have read. The classroom setting can encourage or inhibit learning depending on the dominant learning style of each student. Accommodating different learning styles creates an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Students take many of their learning habits from the instructor. If the instructor doesn't show interest in the subject and a passion for learning, students are less likely to put forth the effort to learn in that class. An instructor must convince students of his or her knowledge and expertise before they will show a willingness to learn.

My job, as an instructor, is to create an atmosphere that fosters learning. I am an instructor because I have a passion for guiding students through the learning process, in addition to a passion for the material I present. One of the best ways to foster learning is to demonstrate those feelings to my students. I encourage learning by creating a relaxed environment for students, stimulating conversation about concepts being presented and organizing material in a way that makes it easiest to understand. I treat subject matter as interconnected, emphasizing that everything students are learning fits together into a holistic understanding of the world, from which they develop their personal worldview. I believe this is best accomplished when I am demonstrating general research methodology. I demonstrate that learning how to find information applies to all areas of life and I use topics and examples that are multidisciplinary. Finally, I believe that respect for my students is one of the most important things I can show - not only to encourage their openness to the material I am presenting, but also to inspire them to respect each other and all other humans.

One of the most important concepts I hope to impart to students is that learning is a process that never ends. For me, the learning process includes improving myself professionally. I want to read more about formal learning theories to expand my understanding of how learning takes place. As I continue to instruct classes, I also aim to enhance my ease and confidence in front of classrooms and audiences. Finally, I plan to experiment with different methods and means of presenting information to classes in order to improve the learning atmosphere I create for students.

All policies found in the student handbook will be followed. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the policy and procedures.

**Instructional Methods:**

Students will learn the subject small group lessons, one on one instruction, and class discussion. Student collaboration is encouraged.

S**tudent Expectations**

Students are expected to be in class on time, prepared, participating in discussion, complete assignments when they are due, and exhibit those qualities and character of a professional teacher.

**Assessment Methods**

Students will be evaluated by writing critical critiques on peer reviewed research as well as videos relevant to chapter topics. Students will take daily chapter tests. Students will answer writing prompts and respond to two of their classmates in a daily journal. Students will develop research methods based on given scenarios.

**Attendance**

Attendance will be assessed in this course. The student will develop attendance characteristics and behaviors necessary for success in college work, and everyday settings. Employers have high expectations of educators in the area of punctuality and attendance. Two reasons why people fail to keep a job are being late for work and missing days from work, which are the same for failing a class.

**Schedule**

1/20 Introduction-What is sociology and what kind of research is available?

1/27 chapter 1 human inquiry and science/get state library card

2/3 chapter 2 paradigms, theory, and research

2/10 chapter 3 ethics and politics of social research

2/17 chapter 4 research design

2/24 chapter 5 conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement

3/2 chapter 6 indexes, scales, and typologies

3/9 chapter 7 logic of sampling

3/16 spring break

3/23 chapter 8 experiments

3/30 chapter 9 survey research

4/6 chapter 10 unobtrusive research/chapter 11 evaluation research

4/13 no class

4/20 chapter 13 qualitative research/chapter 14 quantitative research

4/27 chapter 15 reading and writing social research

4/4 final critique

**Grading**

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

Below 60 F

**Attendance** 25 points

**Article Critiques** 25 points

**Journal Prompts** 10

**Daily Tests** 20-30 points

**Research Methods** 10 points

**The following components must be included in your article critique**:

**1.Summary (explanation)**

In order to explain something, you should concisely and accurately summarize the author’s major points. Do not just copy the author’s words. Summarize in your own words. As you summarize, keep the material for class discussion in mind. In addition, list the evidences being presented to support the author’s position. The summary should account for less than 50% of the paper. Begin the summary section with the bolded heading: **Summary**

**2.Analysis**

In order to analyze the author’s position you should state how the evidence is being interpreted. Analyze the author’s position in a critical fashion. Critical does not necessarily mean to find fault; instead, it means to think about the arguments presented carefully and offer other comments or insights. For example, is the author’s interpretation logically valid? Is the author consistent? Include an analysis of how the evidence presented is interpreted and what the author’s (implied) conclusion may be. In addition, show how the interpretation both supports the Indian Education Beliefs or practices as we discuss and/or argues against the other views. Begin the analysis section with the single bolded heading: **Analysis**

**3.Synthesis (recommendation)**

Finally synthesize your own response to the author. You can do this several ways. You might state whether you agree or disagree with the author and explain WHY? Do not use the words “I agree” or “I disagree” to start this section. You may state whether you believe the article presented is good with strong evidence for the points discussed and why. Augment your answer with relevant material from class discussion. You will not be graded on if you agree or disagree-but rather on the logical strength of your argument and the references you make. Begin the synthesis section with the bolded heading

**Extended time will not be granted past finals week unless arrangements are made ahead of time with a valid reason.**

**Grade changes will not be granted without a class completion contract that is approved by me and the college administration.**

**I reserve the right to adjust this schedule as I deem necessary.**