

Quantitative Methods in Sociology
SOC 304, Section 01
Tuesday & Thursday, Noon to 3:20pm

INSTRUCTOR: Rachel Campbell
PHONE: 616.331.8977
EMAIL: campbera@gvsu.edu
OFFICE: AuSable Hall 2164
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 1 to 3pm, Thursday 10:30 to 11:50am, & by appointment

NOTE:

Tuesday classes: **AuSable Hall 2113**
Thursday classes: **Henry Hall 117** (computer lab)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This is a course in which you'll learn how to collect quantitative data, conduct statistical analysis, and use these findings to make arguments about the social world. The course is structured to mirror an actual research project, moving from conceptualizing the project, to collecting data, and into analysis of data. This class will provide you practical experience in doing survey research that you can use in graduate studies or future employment.

Upon completion of this course you will have gained:

1. the skills needed to understand and evaluate quantitative survey research;
2. hands-on experience conducting a survey from start to finish
3. experience working as a member of a team to achieve a polished finished product
4. proficiency at using computer programs, in particular SPSS, for conducting research; and
5. awareness of ethical issues in the responsible conduct of research.

PREREQUISITE

Successful completion of STA 215 (Introductory Applied Statistics), SOC 201 (Introduction to Sociology), and 3 additional credits in Sociology.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Both books have been used previously, so used editions should be available.

- Babbie, Earl (2009). *The Practice of Social Research, 12th edition*.
- Nardi, Peter (2006). *Doing Survey Research: Guide to Quantitative Methods*

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard and announced in class.

OTHER MATERIALS

- A flash/jump/thumb storage drive
- A basic calculator
- A copy of SPSS for students (not required but will allow you to work off campus or on your own computer)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<i>Assignment Type</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Date Due</i>
Reading and Class Participation	50 points (10% of grade)	Based on participation over term
Two in-class tests	Each worth 75 points (15% of grade each) Total = 150 points or 30% of term grade	Thursday July 14 Tuesday Aug 2
Lab assignments	3 @ 25 points each (5%) 75 points total (15% of term grade)	Tuesday July 5 Tuesday July 26 Tuesday Aug 2
Survey project	45% (215 points)	
	1: Research Questions and Literature Review (5% / 25 points)	Tuesday July 5
	2: Questionnaire (5% /25 points)	Tuesday July 12
	3: Ethics Protocol & Sampling (2.5%/ 12.5 points)	Tuesday July 19
	4: Analysis (5% / 25 points)	Thursday July 28
	5: Project Presentation (7% /35 points)	Tuesday August 9
	6: Peer Evaluation (3%/15 points)	
	7: Project Paper (15%/75 points)	
Drop date		July 29
Class out of total of 500 points.		

Reading and Class Participation (10%)

Prepare for class!! In class I will usually start by presenting some material and then we will work together, either as a class, in small groups, or individually, on understanding and applying that new information. Reading the material ahead of time and participating during class are critical to this process. I realize that not everyone feels comfortable speaking up, but I encourage you to push your boundaries. And for this to happen I require that the classroom be a supportive place for everyone. Part of this grade will be attendance and showing respect of fellow students.

To help encourage (aka ensure) that you are doing this I will occasionally have a “pop quiz” or minute paper. A minute paper will involve me asking you to reflect for a moment on what you have learned that day and to help me ensure that the key concepts are understood.

Although I do not take attendance, it is a major component of your participation grade and for you to have all of the information needed for the tests. This is particularly true because this is a summer course. If you miss a class, please ask a classmate for notes. The notes posted on Bb do NOT include everything covered and I do not give out my notes.

Tests (30%)

We will have two tests that will focus on themes covered in class, lab, and the assigned readings. You will have one hour to write the class at the start of the class session for the day. After a break we will resume discussions. Each test is worth 15%, to make up a total of 30% of your course grade. Exams will be composed of multiple choice and short answer questions. Details will be discussed in class.

Absence from an examination

Make-up exams will only be granted if you have written documentation for an excused absence (e.g., a letter from a registered health professional). If you do not contact me with a valid reason *and* written documentation within 48 hours of the exam you will receive a grade of o. If possible, please contact me prior to the exam to make arrangements.

Lab assignments - (combined 15% of term grade)

A key component of this course will be taking the information you have learned and using it in the computer lab to develop your research skills. We will meet in the lab almost every Thursday (see schedule / class announcements to confirm). Three assignments given in the lab will be due at the start of the next class. (Each will be worth 5% for a total of 15% of the course grade).

Survey Project - (45% of term grade)

The major component of this course will be proposing and conducting a social science research project using survey methods. This project will be completed in stages over the course of the term. At each stage you will be given feedback so that any problems are resolved by the time the final paper is submitted. Some of the work here will be individual projects, some will be group assignments. Details on this will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

NOTE: When you submit the final paper I also want you to give me all of the earlier versions with my feedback. *Make sure you keep these earlier versions!* I will deduct grades if these are not included!

Late Policy

Late work (assignments and projects) will be penalized for each partial or full day (including Saturdays and Sundays) they are late. The penalty for late work will be 10% for each late day. Materials will not be accepted more than a week after the due date. If you have an *emergency* health or other situation that means you cannot get your work in on time, you must contact me within 48 hours of the due date. With appropriate documentation and in consultation me you *may* be able to hand in work late without penalty.

Academic Honesty

“Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged and offering the work of someone else as one’s own is plagiarism. The language and ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from the internet, books, periodicals, speeches, or from the writings of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been

taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.” (*Student Code*, <http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/index.cfm>).

Anyone who engages in these practices will be penalized in accordance with the GVSU Student Code.

Other details and information

Email is the best way to contact me during this course. Please include the course number in the subject line. I will try to reply to your email within 24 hours, but if you have not heard back in 48 hours please resend your message, as technology is not perfect. I strongly encourage you to use my office hours, as in person it is much easier to cover questions about your understanding of lecture material, assignments, and readings than it is over email.

Announcements, PowerPoint slides, assignment details, and links to websites discussed in class will be available through Blackboard. Please refer to Blackboard frequently. Remember: reading the PowerPoint slides is not a substitute for attending lecture!

If you need academic accommodations because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at 331-2490, then let me know how I can assist your learning in this course. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

Conversion of marks to grades (tentative)

The cumulative percentage score from all of the assignments will be converted into a final percentage that will be translated into a grade based on the below:

<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
60-66	D
59 and below	F

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

The following schedule of classes is a tentative outline and may be revised during the semester. Any changes to readings, assignments or exams will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard. You are responsible for finding out about changes even if you have missed class.

<i>Tentative Lecture Schedule, Assigned Readings & Due Dates:</i>			
T June 28	Introduction to the course & term project Topics of sociological & survey research	Babbie, Chapter 1 Nardi, Chapter 1	Group formation and discussion
R June 30	Library Workshop Conceptualization & Operationalization	Nardi Chapter 2 & 3 Babbie Chapters 4 (p. 98 to 112) & 5	
T July 5	Writing Survey Questions	Babbie Chapter 9 Nardi, Chapter 4	Survey Project #1 Lab assignment #1 due
R July 7	Intro to SPSS & Quantifying Data	Nardi Chapter 6	Pre-test of surveys
T July 12	Sampling Review for Test #1	Babbie Chapter 7 Nardi Chapter 5	Survey Project #2 due
R July 14 In lecture!	Research Ethics	Babbie Chapter 3	Test #1
T July 19	Research Ethics Descriptive Statistics	Babbie Chapter 14	Survey Project #3 due
R July 21	Data Input and Modification Bivariate analysis Scatterplots and T-tests	Nardi Chapters 7 & 8	
T July 26	Inferential Statistics	Salkind chapter (posted on Bb)	Lab assignment #2 due
R July 28	ANOVA & Regression in SPSS Review for Test #2	Babbie, Chapter 9 Nardi, Chapter 4	Survey Project #4 due

T Aug 2	Writing up final papers	Nardi chapter 10	Lab assignment #3 due Test #2
R Aug 4	Data Analysis		
Tuesday August 9	Project Presentations & Final Project Paper Due		