

Updated January 7, 2005

**Sociology 6652**  
**Issues in Social Research Methods**

**Spring 2004**  
**Tuesdays, 6:00-8:50**  
**Fretwell 480C**

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**Course Goals**

After completing this course, students should have a basic understanding of the process of sociological research, and the issues that sociologists must address as they plan and conduct their research. You will have a basic understanding of the variety of research methods available to sociologists. After completing this course, you should have the necessary foundation to begin your own research projects, and you should be able to critique others' research designs.

**Texts**

Royce Singleton, Jr. and Associates. 2004. *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th edition. Oxford University Press.

All other readings are available in the Sociology Department.

**Grading**

Application Assignments (3 @ 20 percent)	60 percent
Research/Grant Proposal	20 percent
Presentation of Proposal	5 percent
Final Exam	15 percent

You will be asked to conduct three application assignments in which you apply the readings and the lecture to an article from the *American Sociological Review*. The application assignments are due Jan 25, March 1, and March 9.

Each student will be required to write either a grant proposal or a research proposal (12-15 pages). This proposal will be due during the final exam week. Toward the end

of the semester, you will be required to present your proposal to the class. This presentation will account for 10 percent of your final grade.

You will have an in-class final exam that will account for 15 percent of your final grade.

### **Assignments**

#### **Lesson 1 (Jan 11): Literature Reviews (read only the introduction & literature review)**

Cohen Philip N. and Matt L. Huffman. 2002. "Individuals, Jobs, and Labor Markets: The Devaluation of Women's Work" *American Sociological Review* 68:443-463.

Huber, Evelyne and John D. Stephens. 2000. "Partisan Governance, Women's Employment, and the Social Democratic Service State" *American Sociological Review* 65:323-42.

Earl, Jennifer, Sarah A. Soule and John D. McCarthy. 2003. "Protests Under Fire? Explaining the Policing of Protest" *American Sociological Review* 68:581-606.

DiPrete, Thomas A., and Patricia A. McManus. 2000. "Family Change, Employment Transitions, and the Welfare State: Household Income Dynamics in the United States and Germany" *American Sociological Review* 65: 343-70.

James W. Ainsworth-Darnell and Douglas B. Downey. 1998. "Assessing the Oppositional Culture Explanation for Racial/Ethnic Differences in School Performance" *American Sociological Review* 63:536-53.

Edin, Kathryn and Laura Lein. 1996. "Work, Welfare, and Single Mothers' Economic Survival Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 61:253-66.

Dimaggio, Paul and Hugh Louch. 1998. "Socially Embedded Consumer Transactions: For What Kinds of Purchases Do People Most Often Use Networks?" *American Sociological Review* 63:619-37.

Horney, Julie D., Wayne Osgood and Ineke Haen Marshall. 1995. "Criminal Careers in the Short-Term: Intra-individual Variability in Crime and Its Relation to Local Life Circumstances" *American Sociological Review* 60:655-73.

Morgan, Laurie. 1998. "Glass Ceiling Effect or Cohort Effect? A Longitudinal Study of the Gender Earnings Gap for Women Engineers, 1982-1989" *American Sociological Review* 63:239-49.

## **Lesson 2 (Jan 18): Causal Modeling and Validity**

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "The Nature of Science," Pp. 14-40 in *Approaches to Social Research*. Oxford University Press.

Rosenberg, Morris. 1968. *The Logic of Survey Analysis*. Pp. 23-104. New York: Basic Books.

Cook, Thomas D. and Donald T. Campbell. 1979. "Validity" Pp. 37-94 in *Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

## **Lesson 3 (Jan 25): Application Assignment Due and Human Subjects**

*Reading for Application Assignment*

Ainsworth-Darnell, James W. and Douglas B. Downey. 1998. "Assessing the Oppositional Culture Explanation for Racial/Ethnic Differences in School Performance" *American Sociological Review* 63:536-53.

*Reading for Human Subjects*

Erikson, Kai. 1995. "Commentary" *The American Sociologist* 26:4-11.

Leo, Richard A. 1996. "The Ethics of Deceptive Research Roles Reconsidered: A Response to Kai Erikson" *The American Sociologist* 27:122-28.

Erikson, Kai. 1996. "A Response to Richard Leo." *The American Sociologist* 27: 129-30.

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Treatment of Human Subjects." Pp. 518-531 in *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dunn, Christopher S. and Erik W. Austin. 1998. "Protecting Confidentiality in Archival Data Resources." *ICPSR Bulletin* 19:1-6.

## **Lesson 4 (Feb 1): Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs**

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Experimental Designs." Pp. 187-218 in *Approaches to Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Webster Jr., Murray. 1998. "Laboratory Experiments in Social Science" *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement* 00:1-11.

Webster Jr., Murray. "Experimental Methods." *Group Processes*. 43-69.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L., Elizabeth Heger Boyle, Kathy J. Kuipers, and Dawn T. Robinson. 1998. "How Do Status Beliefs Develop? The Role of Resources and Interactional Experience" *American Sociological Review* 63:331-50.

### **Lesson 5 (Feb 8): Longitudinal and Pooled Cross-Sectional Designs**

DiPrete, Thomas A., and Patricia A. McManus. 2000. "Family Change, Employment Transitions, and the Welfare State: Household Income Dynamics in the United States and Germany" *American Sociological Review* 65: 343-70.

Cherlin, Andrew J., P. Lindsay Chase Lansdale, and Christine McRae. 1998. "Effects of Parental Divorce on Mental Health Throughout the Life Course." *American Sociological Review* 63:239-49.

Huber, Evelyne and John D. Stephens. 2000. "Partisan Governance, Women's Employment, and the Social Democratic Service State" *American Sociological Review* 65:323-42.

Morgan, Laurie. 1998. "Glass Ceiling Effect or Cohort Effect? A Longitudinal Study of the Gender Earnings Gap for Women Engineers, 1982-1989" *American Sociological Review* 63:239-49.

### **Lesson 6 (Feb 15): Hierarchical Designs**

Cohen Philip N. and Matt L. Huffman. 2002. "Individuals, Jobs, and Labor Markets: The Devaluation of Women's Work" *American Sociological Review* 68:443-463.

Horney, Julie D., Wayne Osgood and Ineke Haen Marshall. 1995. "Criminal Careers in the Short-Term: Intra-individual Variability in Crime and Its Relation to Local Life Circumstances" *American Sociological Review* 60:655-73.

### **Lesson 7 (Feb 22): Sampling**

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Sampling." Pp. 111-152 in *Approaches to Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Groves, Robert M. 1989. "Probing the Causes of Non Response and Efforts to Reduce NonResponse." Pp. 185-238 in *Survey Errors and Survey Costs*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Goyder, John. 1987. *The Silent Minority*. Pp. 1-35 Oxford: Polity Press.

## **Lesson 8 (March 1): Application Assignment and Survey Design**

### *Application Assignment Reading:*

Edin, Kathryn and Laura Lein. 1996. "Work, Welfare, and Single Mothers' Economic Survival Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 61:253-66.

### *Survey Design Readings*

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Survey Research." Pp. 219-262 in *Approaches to Social Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. 1994. *The Social Organization of Sexuality*. Pp. 1-74.

## **March 7-12: Spring Break**

### **Lesson 9 (March 15): Validity Versus Reliability**

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Measurement." Pp. 76-110 in *Approaches to Social Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Suchman, Lucy and Brigitte Jordon. 1992. "Validity and the Collaborative Construction of Meaning in Face-to-Face Surveys." Pp. 241-70 in Judith M. Tanur (ed) *Questions About Questions*. New York: Russell Sage.

Schaeffer, Nora Cate. 1991. "Conversation with a Purpose—or Conversation? Interaction in the Standardized Interview." Pp. 367-91 in Paul P. Biemer and Associates *Measurement Error in Surveys*. New York: Wiley and Sons.

Schober, Michael F. and Frederick G. Conrad. 1997. Does Conversational Interviewing Reduce Survey Measurement Error?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61:576-602.

### **Lesson 10 (March 22): Survey Design**

Fowler, Floyd J. 1995. *Improving Survey Questions* pp. 1-103 Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Singleton, Royce, Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2004. "Survey Instrumentation." Pp. 263-305 in *Approaches to Social Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

### **Lesson 11 (March 29): Application Assignment and Topics in Survey Research**

#### *Reading for Application Assignment:*

Dimaggio, Paul and Hugh Louch. 1998. "Socially Embedded Consumer Transactions: For What Kinds of Purchases Do People Most Often Use Networks?" *American Sociological Review* 63:619-37.

*Readings for Topics in Survey Research: Data Editing and Index Construction:*  
Tomaskovic-Devey, Donald, Jeffrey Leiter, and Shealy Thompson. 1995. "Item NonResponse in Organizational Surveys" *Sociological Methodology* 25:77-110.

Gutterboch. 1997. "Why Money Magazines 'Best Places' Keep Changing" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61:339-55.

### **Lesson 12 (April 5): Qualitative Research: Comparative Historical**

Ragin, Charles C. 1987. *The Comparative Method*. Pp. 1-84. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lieberson, Stanley. 1992. "Small N's and Big Conclusions" *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*, pp. 105-18. Charles Ragin and Howard S. Becker (eds). Cambridge University Press.

Orloff, Ann and Theda Skocpol. 1984. "Why not Equal Protection? Explaining the Politics of Public Social Spending in Britain, 1900-1911, and the United States, 1880s-1920," *American Sociological Review* 49:726-50.

### **Lesson 13 (April 12): Qualitative Research: Semi-Structured Observation**

Martin, Karin A. 1998. "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools." *American Sociological Review* 63: 494-511.

Bernard, H. Russell. "Unstructured and Semistructured Interviewing" *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* Pp. 208-37. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

### **Lesson 14 (April 19): Ethnography and Participant Observation**

Hagan, Jacqueline Maria. 1998. "Social Networks, Gender, and Immigrant Incorporation: Resources and Constraints." *American Sociological Review* 63:55-79.

Reinhartz, Shulamit. 1992. "Feminist Ethnography" *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. 46-75. Oxford University Press.

Bernard, H. Russell. "Participant Observation" *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* Pp. 136-64. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bernard, H. Russell. "Field Notes: How to Code, Take and Manage Them" *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* Pp. 180-207. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

### **Lesson 15 (April 26): Content Analysis**

Earl, Jennifer, Sarah A. Soule and John D. McCarthy. 2003. "Protests Under Fire? Explaining the Policing of Protest" *American Sociological Review* 68:581-606.

Reinhartz, Shulamit. 1992. "Feminist Content Analysis" *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. 145-163. Oxford University Press.

### **Lesson 16 (May 3): Causation**

Abbott, Andrew. 1998. "The Causal Devolution." *Sociological Methods and Research* 27:148-81.

Cook, Thomas A. and Donald T. Campbell. 1979. "Causal Inference and the Language of Experimentation" Pp. 1-36 in *Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* Pp 75-114. Princeton University Press.