

SOCIOLOGY 315: A1 (54620)
Introduction to Social Methodology – Fall, 2015
Department of Sociology, University of Alberta

Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30 – 10:50 AM
Tory Basement (TB) - 96

Course Outline¹

Instructor: Dr. Harvey Krahn
Office: 6-24 Tory Building
Email: harvey.krahn@ualberta.ca
Telephone: 780-492-3322

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00 – 3:00 PM, or by appointment (contact Dr. Krahn by e-mail)

Teaching Assistant: Jillian Paragg, MA

Labs (students must register for one of these two weekly lab sessions)

D1: Tuesday 1:00 – 2:50 PM TB-39

D2: Friday 1:00 – 2:50 PM TB-39

NOTE: Lab sessions (10 in total) will begin in the second week of classes (Sept. 7-11) and end in the second last week of classes (November 23-27). No lab will be held during the week of October 12-16.

Course Description:

Research design, data collection and data processing strategies used by sociologists. Topics include research values and ethics, reliability and validity, experimentation, survey research techniques, historical methods, field research, and content analysis.

Prerequisite course:

SOC210: *Introduction to Social Statistics or consent of instructor*

Course Objectives:

The course instructor's primary goals for this course are to: (1) expose students to the range of research methods used by sociologists, including quantitative, qualitative, and interpretive approaches; (2) help students understand the advantages and disadvantages of these different methods, as well as the need to choose a method that best answers a particular research question; (3) assist students in acquiring the baseline skills needed to conduct valid sociological research; (4) train students to be more discerning assessors of social science research findings they frequently encounter in everyday life; and (5) encourage them to use their sociological training to make the social world a better place.

¹ University policy about course outlines can be found in section 23.4(2) of the University of Alberta Calendar.

Required Textbook:

Bryman, Alan, Edward Bell & James Teevan. 2012. Social Research Methods. (3rd Canadian edition). Toronto: Oxford University Press. [ISBN: 9780195442960]

Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Most importantly, treat others respectfully, as you want to be treated yourself. This includes:

- Focusing on what is being discussed in class, rather than discussing some other topic with the person sitting next to you
- Engaging in, rather than dominating, classroom discussions
- Being respectful of other students' opinions, even if you disagree
- Arriving on time for class, if at all possible, and remaining till the end
- Turning off (or silencing) your cell phones
- Turning off the wireless connection on your laptop computer

Not surprisingly, students who attend class regularly tend to get better grades. Completing assigned readings in advance of the classes in which they will be discussed is also helpful. The instructor will not be posting his teaching notes or Powerpoint slides on line, so taking notes in class is another way of improving one's grade. If you have to miss a lecture, arrange to get notes from another student who was present.

If you are having problems with this class, talk to the instructor sooner rather than later. If you fall too far behind in a course, you might be better to withdraw and take the course again, rather than get a *Fail* on your transcript. If you withdraw from the course by **October 2**, you will have 50% of your fee refunded. You can still withdraw up until **November 30**, but you will not receive a tuition refund.

Recording of Lectures

Audio or visual recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used only for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent of the content author(s).

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:

Students with a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health, and who might require accommodations to assist them in completing this course, should contact *Student Accessibility Services (SAS)*, 1-80 SUB, 780-492-3381 for assistance; <http://www.ssds.ualberta.ca/>

Please contact your instructor within the first two weeks of this course to tell him about any accommodations recommended by SAS. Students registered with SAS who will be using accommodations in the classroom, or who will be writing exams through SAS, are required to provide a “Letter of Introduction” by September 14. Students who need accommodated exams must submit their “Exam Instructions and Authorization” (orange) form at least one week before each exam.

Examinations and Lab Assignments:

Your final grade for SOC 315 will be based on two examinations and two lab assignments. Lab assignments will be discussed in class and in the labs. Each exam is non-cumulative (i.e., it is based only on the material covered in the previous half of the course), although general knowledge obtained earlier in the course will likely assist you in subsequent exams.

Mid-term Exam	30%	October 15 (in class)
Lab Assignment 1	20%	Due: October 16
Lab Assignment 2	20%	Due: December 4
Final Exam (<i>tentative date & time</i>)	30%	Dec. 17 (9:00 – 11:00 AM; <i>location TBA</i>)

Both examinations (mid-term and final) will include a combination of multiple choice and written answer (of various lengths) questions. Students will be provided with examples in class, one week in advance of each examination. Examination questions will be based on required readings, lectures, guest lectures, and any additional in-class activities (e.g., class discussions, audio or video presentations).

The date and time for the Final Exam are tentative. Students are responsible for confirming the Final Exam date, time and location on Beartracks.

Grading:

Using the percentage weights noted above for the mid-term examination, the final examination, and two lab assignments, final letter grades for this section of SOC 315 will be assigned as follows:

	<u>Total Term Percentage</u>	<u>Final Letter Grade</u>	<u>4-Point Value</u>
Excellent	90 – 100	A+	4.0
	86 – 89	A	4.0
	82 – 85	A-	3.7
Good	78 – 81	B+	3.3
	74 – 77	B	3.0
	70 – 73	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	66 – 69	C+	2.3
	62 – 65	C	2.0
	58 – 61	C-	1.7
Poor	54 – 57	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	50 – 53	D	1.0

Fail	0 – 49	F	0.0
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NOTE: The “total term percentage” cutting points for each letter grade noted above will not be moved up. Some of them might be moved down, depending on the distributions of term examination and final examination percentages.

Absence from Exams:

“Excused absence for a missed exam is not automatic and is granted at the discretion of the instructor (in the case of term exams) or the student’s Faculty (in the case of final exams). Instructors and Faculties are not required to grant excused absences for unacceptable reasons that include, but are not limited to personal events such as vacations, weddings, or travel arrangements. *When a student is absent from a term or final exam without acceptable excuse, a final grade will be computed using a raw score of zero for the exam missed.* Any student who applies for or obtains an excused absence by making false statements will be liable under the Code of Student Behaviour. [University Calendar 23.5.6]

To request an excused absence from a mid-term exam, you must let the Instructor know within two working days of the exam date (or as soon as possible, given the circumstances). If the reason for the requested excused absence is illness, medical documentation is not required. However, students may choose to present a Medical Declaration Form for Students available at: http://www.foa.ualberta.ca/en/Undergraduate_Programs/Student_Services/Forms%20Cabinet.aspx

If the absence is for non-medical reasons, appropriate documentation can be requested by the Instructor (e.g., court attendance form for jury duty; death certificate for bereavement).

If a mid-term exam is missed, and a documented excuse is provided to the satisfaction of the instructor, a re-write will be allowed on the following set dates. If the rewrite is missed, the student will receive a grade of zero for this mid-term exam.

Mid-term Exam Rewrite date: **Saturday, October 17**, 9:00 AM in Tory 6-7

The Instructor cannot approve requests for a deferred final exam. Instead, students must report to their Faculty Office within two working days following the date of the missed exam, or cancelling their exam during the exam period (or as soon as possible, given the circumstances). Deferred exams are intended to accommodate students who have experienced an incapacitating illness or severe domestic affliction; applications based on minor inconsequential ailments will not be approved. In Arts and Science, students must provide appropriate documentation or, in the case of illness, swear out a Statutory Declaration in support of their request. If approved by the student’s Faculty, the deferred final exam will be held on **Saturday, January 16, 2016** at 9:00 AM in Business 1-06.

Late or Missing Assignments:

Assignments 1 and 2 are due (hard copy) on October 16 and December 4, respectively. Late lab assignments will be penalized 10% per day late (excluding weekends). In other words, if your assignment is turned in 11 working days late (or not at all), it will receive a 0% final mark.

University Policy on Academic Integrity and Misconduct:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (on-line at: <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/>) and avoid any behavior which could result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University. For further information about Academic Integrity, visit the Office of Student Judicial Affairs website at: <http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/en/Students.aspx>

Schedule of Lectures and Assigned Readings:

<u><i>Date</i></u>	<u><i>Required Reading in Textbook</i></u>
September 1 & 3 Introduction & Course Overview Research Designs No Labs this week	Chapter 1 Chapter 2
September 8 & 10 Conducting a Research Project The Ideal Stages of Research Lab 1 (September 8 & 11) - TOPIC TBA	Chapter 18 Appendix B
September 15 & 17 Sampling Lab2 (September 15 & 18) - TOPIC TBA	Chapter 12
September 22 & 24 The Nature of Quantitative Research Survey Research Lab3 (September 22 & 25) - TOPIC TBA	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
Sept. 29 & October 1 Survey Research (continued) Asking Questions Lab 4 (Sept. 29 & Oct. 2) - TOPIC TBA	Chapter 4 Chapter 5
October 6 & 8 Structured Observation Other Sources of Data Lab 5 (Oct. 6 & Oct. 9) - TOPIC TBA	Chapter 6 Chapter 7

October 13 Quantitative Data Analysis Chapter 13

October 15 **Mid-term Examination**
No Labs this week; 1st lab assignment due Friday, October 16

October 20 & 22 The Nature of Qualitative Research Chapter 8
 Interviewing in Qualitative Research Chapter 10
 Lab 6 (Oct. 20 & 23) - TOPIC TBA

October 27 & 29 Ethnography & Participant Observation Chapter 9
 Labs 7 (Oct. 27 & 30) - TOPIC TBA

November 3 & 5 Research Ethics Chapter 11
 Lab 8 (Nov. 3 & 6) - TOPIC TBA

November 10 & 12 Fall Reading Week – no classes

November 17 & 19 Qualitative Data Analysis Chapter 14
 Lab 9 (Nov. 17 & 20) - TOPIC TBA

November 24 & 26 Content Analysis Chapter 16
 Breaking Down the Quant/Qual Divide Chapter 15
 Lab 10 (Nov. 24 & 27) - TOPIC TBA

December 1 & 3 Review
No Labs this week; 2nd lab assignment due Friday, December 4

December 17: Final Exam (2:00 – 4:00 PM)
*The date and time for the Final Exam are tentative; location is yet to be determined;
 students are responsible for confirming date, time and location on Beartracks.*