OVERVIEW

This course provides an introduction to social research. We will learn how social scientists conduct social research; i.e., how they observe, document, interpret, analyze, understand, and explain social phenomena. In the first part of the course we will focus on the logic of social science research and elements of research design. In the second part we will examine common research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, used by social scientists to gather data, assess or formulate hypotheses, and answer research questions.

Main topics we will cover include:

- the logic and ethics of social science research
- research design, conceptualization, operationalization, measurement, and sampling
- types of research methods such as experimental and quasi-experimental research, survey research, field research, comparative-historical research, and the use of existing statistics

By the end of the semester you should be a knowledgeable practitioner and an informed consumer of social science research. That is, you should be able to: (1) formulate research questions and hypotheses and select an appropriate research method, (2) know how to carry out a research project that generates data that can be used to test hypotheses and answer research questions, and (3) understand and critically evaluate social science research done by others.
REQUIRED TEXTS

Textbook:  

The textbook is on reserve at Dana Library. The textbook may be purchased at New Jersey Books (167 University Avenue), Rutgers University Bookstore (1st floor Bradley Hall), or from online sources.

Articles/Chapters:


The articles/chapters are available on Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

In order to pass this course it is imperative that you attend every class and keep up with the assigned readings. This course requires a lot of reading, working, and thinking. Much of the material will have to be re-read and thought through in order to be comprehended. Class participation is highly encouraged. Feel free to ask questions or express relevant thoughts at any time.

**Blackboard Assignments** (numerous) *(5%)*

These assignments are done outside of class. They involve either watching a tutorial or a set of PowerPoint slides and then taking an online quiz. Details will be provided in separate handouts.

**In-Class Exercises** (numerous) *(14%)*

In a number of classes we will conduct group exercises that will help you to better understand the material covered in class and in the readings. The lowest score from the in-class exercises will be dropped. Make-up exercises are not given.
Examinations (3) (81%)
There will be three in-class closed-book examinations consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. The exams are cumulative. A study guide will be distributed at least one week before each exam. Make-up exams are given only if there is an extraordinary emergency and you have contacted the professor prior to the exam.

Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackboard Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Exercises</td>
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<td>First Exam</td>
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<td>Second Exam</td>
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PLEASE NOTE

- In order to pass this class you must be able to read and write at a satisfactory college level.
- Excessive unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.
- If you happen to miss a class, then you will have missed something important. In addition to the assigned readings done outside of class you are responsible for all material covered and discussed in class, all handouts distributed in class, and all announcements made in class.
- According to university regulations an “incomplete” final grade may be given only under the following circumstances: (1) at least 75% of the course-work has been completed, and (2) there is a extraordinary and documented situation that prevents you from completing the remainder of the course-work.
- It is assumed that you are aware of and will adhere to the university’s policies on academic integrity, student conduct, and plagiarism. Violations of these polices will be dealt with according to university procedures. See the following Rutgers University webpage:
  
  http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/

- The professor encourages you to contact him by e-mail. However if you do e-mail the professor be sure to state your name in the text of the e-mail. E-mails that are sent anonymously will be deleted without a response.
**SCHEDULE**

Please have the readings done by the beginning of each week. Changes in the schedule will be announced in class.

**Week 1:** Tuesday 9/2 & Thursday 9/4

Topics: introduction to the course; introduction to social research

Readings: none

**Week 2:** Tuesday 9/9 & Thursday 9/11

Topics: social research

Readings: Babbie chapter 1

**Week 3:** Tuesday 9/16 & Thursday 9/18

Topics: paradigms, theory & research; ethics of social research

Readings: Babbie chapters 2 & 3

**Week 4:** Tuesday 9/23  *(No class on Thursday 9/25)*

Topics: research design

Readings: Babbie chapter 4

**Week 5:** Tuesday 9/30 & Thursday 10/2

Topic: conceptualization, operationalization, & measurement

Readings: Babbie chapter 5
**Week 6:** Tuesday 10/7 & Thursday 10/9

Topic: first exam

Readings: none

**Week 7:** Tuesday 10/14 & Thursday 10/16

Topic: sampling

Readings: Babbie chapter 7

**Week 8:** Tuesday 10/21 & Thursday 10/23

Topic: experimental research

Readings: Babbie chapter 8

**Week 9:** Tuesday 10/28 & Thursday 10/30

Topic: survey research

Readings: Babbie chapter 9

**Week 10:** Tuesday 11/4 & Thursday 11/6

Topic: field research

Readings: Babbie chapter 10; article by Williams et al. (*on Blackboard*)

**Week 11:** Tuesday 11/11 & Thursday 11/13

Topic: second exam

Readings: none
**Week 12:** Tuesday 11/18 & Thursday 11/20

Topic: unobtrusive research

Readings: Babbie chapter 11

**Week 13:** Tuesday 11/25

Topic: evaluation research

Readings: Babbie chapter 12

**Week 14:** Tuesday 12/2 & Thursday 12/4

Topic: single subject designs

Readings: chapter by Rubin & Babbie *(on Blackboard)*

**Week 15:** Tuesday 12/9

Topics: TBA

Readings: none

**Finals Week:** Tuesday 12/16

Final exam from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.