**Sociological Research Methods: A Conceptual Approach (사회조사방법론)**

Ewha Womans University

Fall Semester 2021

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Tuesday 11:30-12:15; Thursday 9:30-10:45

**Course Description:**

The basic purpose of this class is to help students get acquainted with the basics of "how to conduct sociological research." We will begin with how to broadly conceptualize a sociological inquiry in a manner that is feasible for quantitative analysis, how to define and construct variables for it, how to gather the appropriate data, and ultimately how to make sense of them and interpret them in addressing the research questions at hand. There are two parts to the class. The first part consists of learning the "ABCs" of quantitative analysis, which will require us to go through some technical issues using a well-written textbook by a highly respected methodologist, as well as an introductory co-authored book on basic statistics. There are no formal prerequisites for this class (though some familiarity with introductory statistics will be helpful). The class will be conducted in such a way as not to penalize students for the lack of prior exposure to statistical training. Throughout the course, quantitative concepts and methods will be made clear to students through the actual handling of data using statistical software (SPSS).

In the second part of the class, we will first spend time reading/discussing published sociological articles. Then, with the lessons learned from it on how to conduct social science (sociological) research, students will work on their own projects. Depending on the size of the class, this may be an independent or a group project. Basically, students will come up with a particular research question of their interests, examine the feasibility of conducting a quantitative analysis based on it, perform the investigation, and write a report on it. Students will have a choice to either come up with their own research design and data or use one of the existing datasets provided in the class, though the latter option is strongly encouraged.

Students will be evaluated based on their in-class participation, performance on two midterm exams, and the quality of the final report. Though the research projects can be group-based, student grades will be given based on individually written reports.

**Grading Policy:**

Midterm Exam (30%)

Final Assignment (40%)

In-class formal presentation (20%)

Attendance (10%): 3 unexcused absences will result in a failing grade (F).

**Textbooks:** (You do not have to purchase them; everything is in the Reading Packet)

*Quantitative Data Analysis: Doing Social Research to Test Ideas* (D. Treiman)

*Elementary Statistics in Social Research* (Levin, Fox, and Forde)

**Note**: Strictly speaking, this is *not* a class on introductory statistics. Rather, the course is about how to use basic quantitative concepts in analyzing sociological issues. First and foremost, the focus is on the application of methods, not the explication of statistical measures and concepts.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

(Reading Packet is available for purchase: call 02.312.1207 or email [3121207@naver.com](mailto:3121207@naver.com) for order)

**Week I (9/1 & 9/3)**

Reading: Chapter 1 (p. 1-24) *Why the Social Researcher Uses Statistics*

- Introduction on how to frame a "sociological" question

- What are Variables and Hypothesis Testing?

**Week II (9/8 & 9/10)**

Reading: Chapter 3 (p. 83-99) *Measures of Central Tendency* & Chapter 4 (107-127) *Measures of Variability*

What is a “hypothesis” and why is it important?

**Week III (9/15 & 9/17)**

Reading: Chapter 5 (p. 137-165) *Probability and the Normal Curve* &

Chapter 6 (p. 172-203) *Samples and Populations*

* How to clean data using SPSS

**Week IV (9/22 & 9/24)**

Reading: Chapter 10 (p.345 – 365) *Correlation* & Basic introduction to OLS regression

**Week V (9/29 & 10/1)**

Reading: Chapter 11 (p.375 – 406) *Regression Analysis*

No class on Thursday 10/1

**Week VI (10/6 & 10/8)**

Reading: Chapter 5 *Intro to correlation and regression (OLS)* & Chapter 6 *Intro to multiple correlation and regression (OLS)*

**Week VII (10/13 & 10/15)**

Reading: *Intro to SPSS* (PDF file) & *SPSS Linear Regression* (PDF file)

**Week VIII** (Both are in-class exams)

**10/20 (Tuesday):** Midterm Exam I

**10/22 (Thursday):** Midterm Exam II

**Week IX (10/27 & 10/29)**

Readings for this week will be available online as PDFs

(Understanding Multivariate Research Chp. 1-4)

**Week X (11/3 & 11/5)**

Chapter 15 (p. 329 -375) *Quantitative data analysis*

*SPSS Multiple Regression* (PDF file)

**Week XI (11/10 & 11/12)**

A primer on data analysis: how to use SPSS (jamovi)

**Weeks XII – XIV (In-class student presentations)**

More details will follow

**Week V (Class review on 12/8 & Final assignment due Thursday 12/10)**