

SYA 4300

**Sociological Analysis:
Survey of Methods**

SPRING 2012

Credits: Three

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Class Hours: Tuesday 7:10 – 10:00 pm (LA 331)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursdays 1 – 4 and by appointment

Course Description

Survey of Research Methods gives students an understanding and hands-on experience of how social scientists research people. If you do well in this course, you should graduate from FAU with skills that will make you marketable for many jobs in community organizations, industries and government. You will be able to say you can conduct research and analyze data; however, you will *not* be able to do *all* types of data collection and analysis. That is too much for one course. For your information, I do *not* expect students to know any statistics or have had any previous research methods courses although both are a plus. You will be exposed to some statistical concepts but mostly you will learn to plot and graph data to understand these concepts. You will learn to find, read, interpret and evaluate information about patterns in people's behavior and thoughts whether collected by you or by others. You will also learn the relationship between theorizing about why people do what they do and collecting data (or using others' data) to test these theories against empirical realities.

Course Objectives:

- Students will be able to evaluate data encountered in everyday life for its accuracy and utility.
- Students will know the difference between their own experiences and those representative of larger populations.
- Students will be able to collect good data from people using at least two different data collection strategies (surveys and interviews). Emphasis will be on asking appropriate questions.
- Students will be able to analyze and present their research findings.
- Students be able to understand the relationship between theory and methods through developing and testing hypotheses.

Required Readings

Daniel F. Chambliss and Russell K. Schutt (2009) Making Sense of the Social World (3rd edition)
SAGE Publications

There will also be additional reading that will be available as PDF files through Blackboard.

Course Assessment and Evaluation

Students are required to attend and participate in class discussions, to take a mid-term exam, to complete class activities and pop quizzes and to write a term paper (team effort).

Attendance/Participation	10%
Mid-Term Exam	35%
Class & Group Activities	20%
Final Paper:	35%

Attendance and Participation:

Class attendance is important because lectures will include material not covered in the readings. Students should come to class having completed the assigned reading for that week and prepared to discuss the material. Students are expected to be on time for class and to turn off their personal computers and cell phones before they enter the classroom. This class follows standard FAU policy regarding student absence for illness, religious observations, etc. I will only excuse students who are absent due to a medical professional-substantiated condition (i.e, I require a doctor's note); those who are absent for religious observations or specific activities condoned by FAU policy. Note: missing more than three (3) classes will represent an automatic F for the course.

You will get credit for class participation through attendance and by asking or answering questions or commenting on issues that are raised during class. An opportunity to earn extra-credit points is by bringing to class and presenting to the entire class an article from the newspaper or something you saw on TV or on the internet that relates to the topic of the course. The specific topic of this extra-credit opportunity needs to be discussed with the professor before class.

Mid-term Exam: A mid-term exam will consist of short-essay questions. The exam will be based on lectures and course readings. Make up exams will only be available for documented, excused absences. All make up exams will be designed to be more difficult than the standard exam.

Class & Group Activities

We will do many in-class hands-on exercises, will watch several videos, and group activities during the semester. Only those in class on the day of the activities will get the credit. There will be no prior announcement of the activities to be completed.

NOTE: If you have trouble understanding the readings or the lecture material, please feel free to talk to the professor at any time before class, after class, during office hours, or make a special appointment if none of these time suit your schedule.

Term Paper:

You will collect some data as part of this class and you, with your team, will do data analysis and write up the analysis on the whole class's data. Everyone in this class will work on the same research. However, each team will conduct its own data collection,

analysis and thus write up and present this analysis. There will be more details regarding this project in April when the assignment is given out.

Grading Scale

100-94 = A	82 – 80 = B-	69 – 67 = D+
93 – 90 = A-	79 – 77 = C+	66 – 63 = D
89 – 87 = B+	76 – 73 = C	62 – 60 = D-
86 – 83 = B	72 – 70 = C-	59 and below = F

Plagiarism and Cheating: Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001> Code of Academic Integrity.pdf.

Special Needs: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) in Davie, MOD 1 (954-236-1222) and follow all OSD procedures.

Use of Electronic Equipment: Students **may not** use cell phones, personal computers, or any other type of electronic equipment in the classroom unless they are necessary by the OSD or in consultation with me.

Blackboard: The Blackboard site can be accessed at: <http://blackboard.fau.edu>. Here are instructions for signing in to the course page.

The student username is their FAUNet ID. If the student does not know their FAUNet ID they should go to <http://accounts.fau.edu> (they will need to enter their social security # and PIN in order to obtain their FAUNet ID). The student's initial password for Blackboard is their PIN (PINs are by default set to 2 zeros followed by the 2-digit DAY and 2-digit YEAR of birth). The student email address in Blackboard will be set as their FAU email address (to forward email to another account students should go to MyFAU email and select "auto forward" under "options"). If you are unable to log on Blackboard, contact the help desk immediately.

Course Outline and Readings*

(See Blackboard "Course Documents" Module for all readings, assignments, etc. for each week)

Week 1	01/10/2012	First day of class
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Week 2	01/17/2012	What is Social Science
Week 3	01/24/2012	Social Science Research Design I (5 W's Formula & Research Ethics)
Week 4	01/31/2012	Social Science Research Design II (Conceptualization and Measurement)
Week 5	02/07/2012	Social Science Research Design III (Sampling)
Week 6	02/14/2012	Conceptualization, Operationalization and Sampling in Practice
Week 7	02/21/2012	Mid-term
Week 8	02/28/2012	Data Collection with Surveys
Week 9	3/6/2012	SPRING BREAK
Week 10	3/13/2012	Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques
Week 11	3/20/2012	Quantitative Data Analysis – Exercise
Week 12	3/27/2012	Qualitative Methods
Week 13	4/3/2012	Qualitative Data Analysis
Week 14	4/10/2012	Qualitative Data Analysis – Exercise
Week 15	4/17/2012	Final Project Introduced
Week 16	4/24/2012	Individual Team meetings with professor
Week 17	5/1/2012	Term paper due and presentations

***Syllabus Caveat:** Please note that the instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus due to need and emergent circumstances. Students will be advised about any change made to the syllabus.