

GEOG 7902 – RESEARCH METHODS IN GEOGRAPHY (SEMINAR)

FALL 2024

Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:00pm - 4:20pm

W245 Howe-Russell Bldg

(Personal Meeting Room in Zoom is: <https://lsu.zoom.us/j/3222765888>)

Instructor: Michael Leitner
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Office hours: Tu & Th 1:30pm – 4:20pm
& by appointment

REQUIRED BOOK: Montello, D.R. and P.C. Sutton (2006) An Introduction to Scientific Research Methods in Geography. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. (A copy of this edition is available on Moodle)

Most recent edition:

Montello, D.R. and P.C. Sutton (2013) An Introduction to Scientific Research Methods in Geography and Environmental Studies. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

READINGS: Additional readings will be posted on Moodle.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC
1 Aug 27-29	Introduction Topic: How to write a book review (Aug 29)
2 Sep 3-5	Presentations: Brief introductory presentation of selected book, all students (Sep 3) A Scientific Approach to Geography (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 1), presented by Student 1 (Sep 5)
3 Sep 10-12	Fundamental Research Concepts (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 2), presented by Student 2 (Sep 10) Data Collection in Geography: Overview (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 3), presented by Student 3 (Sep 12)
4 Sep 17-19	Topic: How to write a scientific paper (Sep 17) Physical Measurements (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 4), presented by Student 4 (Sep 19)
5 Sep 24-26	Topic: How to write a scientific paper (continued, Sep 24) Behavioral Observations and Archives (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 5), presented by Student 5 (Sept 26)
6 Oct 1-3	Explicit Reports: Surveys, Interviews, and Tests (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 6), presented by Student 6 (Oct 1) Topic: How to write a scientific paper (continued, Oct 3)
7 Oct 8-10	Presentations: First thesis/dissertation proposal draft, all students (Oct 8) Topic: How to review a manuscript submitted to a journal/edited book (Oct 10)
8 Oct 15-17	Submission: First thesis/dissertation proposal draft (Oct 15) Experimental and Nonexperimental Research Designs (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 7), presented by Student 7 (Oct 15) <i>Fall Holiday (Oct 17)</i>
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Oct 22-24	Sampling (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 8), presented by Student 8, (Oct 22) Statistical Data Analysis (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 9), presented by Student 9 (Oct 24)
10 Oct 29-31	Guest lecture: Dr. Huanping Huan, Professor, G&A, LSU (Oct 29), confirmed Presentations: First book review draft, all students (Oct 31)
11 Nov 5-7	Data Display: Tables, Graphs, Maps, Visualization (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 10), presented by Student 10 (Nov 5) Presentations: Comments on fellow student's first thesis/dissertation proposal draft, all students (Nov 7)
12 Nov 12-14	Reliability and Validity (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 11), presented by Student 11 (Nov 12) Guest lecture: Dr. Kristine DeLong, Professor, G&A, LSU (Nov 14)
13 Nov 19-21	Geographic Information Techniques in Research (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 12), presented by Student 12 (Nov 19) Guest lecture: Dr. Sophie Moore, Professor, G&A, LSU (Nov 21), confirmed
14 Nov 26-28	Scientific Communication in Geography (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 13), presented by Student 13 (Nov 26) Submission: Final and revised thesis/dissertation proposal (Nov 26) Thanksgiving Holiday (Nov 29)
15 Dec 3-5	Ethics in Scientific Research (Montello & Sutton, Chapter 14), presented by Student 14 (Dec 3) Submission: Final book review (Dec 3) Artificial Intelligence in geographic research, presented by Student 15 (Dec 5)

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Book review:

Each student should select a new academic book related to his/her thesis or dissertation research interest, write a book review, and submit it to an academic journal for review. The criteria for selections are: (1) very recent publication in 2022, 2023, or 2024; (2) book should be published with a respective academic publishing house (e.g., Springer, Elsevier, Taylor and Francis, various University Presses, etc.); (3) submit and review by respective academic journal (*AAG Review of Books*, *Journal of Historical Geography*, *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, etc.)

Timeline:

Sep 3: Brief introduction of selected book's main content to class; justification for selection; how does the book's content relate to own research interest; and in which journal the book review may be published in.

Oct 31: Presentation of first book review draft to class and submission of draft to me.

Dec 3: Submission of final book review manuscript to me and selected journal, if possible.

2. Thesis or dissertation proposal:

Each student needs to first prepare a draft dissertation/thesis proposal containing the following sections: (1) problem statement, (2) literature review, (3) methodology; and (4) contribution. Full citations for material cited is expected. You may use any citation style, but be consistent within your proposal. Second, each student will read and prepare short written constructive criticism on a fellow student's draft. Third, each student will revise his/her draft and turn in a revised version. Part of your final grade will reflect how effectively you responded to comments.

Proposal writing guidelines appear at:

University of Oxford: http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/graduate/apply/research_proposal.html

University of Victoria:

<http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept2/faculty/smithd/477/manuals/techniques/03%20Geog%20477.pdf>

University of London: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/geds/study-here/mphil-phd/how-to-apply/proposal>

Timeline:

Oct 8: Prepare and present a first draft of thesis or dissertation proposal.

Oct 15: Hard copy of first draft handed in to me.

Nov 7: Present comments on one fellow student's first draft proposal.

Nov 26: Hand in final and revised draft proposal to me.

3. Presenting one book chapter; answering two review questions on seven of the fifteen book chapters

Each student will lead a class discussion on one topic from one chapter in the required text book (Montello & Sutton, 2006). This should be done with a prepared power point presentation. The presentation and

discussion should cover an entire class (one hour and 20 minutes). Chapter topics and dates of presentations have already been assigned (see syllabus). At the end of the presentation, presenters select two review questions (or their own) listed at the end of each chapter. Seven of the fifteen total review questions need to be answered by all other students on a single page and submitted by the next class. Students, who presented the chapter topic will grade their fellow students' assignments.

Timeline:

Throughout the semester

GRADING

1. **Book review** (200 points for final review plus 50 points for presentation) – **250 total points**
2. **Thesis or dissertation proposal** (200 points for final proposal plus 50 points for presentation plus 50 points on comments of fellow proposal) – **300 total points**
3. **Presenting one book chapter** (50 points) plus **answering two review questions for all other chapters** (100 points) – **150 total points**
4. **Class participation** (100 points) – **100 points total**

OVERALL TOTAL: 800 POINTS

The grading policy in this course is as follows: A+: 98-100%; A: 92-<98%; A-: 90-<92%; B+: 88-<90%; B: 82-<88%; B-: 80-<82%; C+: 78-<80%; C: 72-<78%; C-: 70-<72%; D+: 68-<70%; D: 62-<68%; D-: 60-<62%; F: <60%.