COURSE OVERVIEW
This course is a practical introduction to research methods commonly used by social scientists. It will focus on four central questions: How do I translate a theoretical issue into a concrete research question? Which research method is most appropriate to investigate this research question? How do I make sense of data collected? How do I best communicate my findings? Taking a hands-on approach, the class will conduct a survey with Emory undergraduates and you will collect and analyze these data as the basis for your final empirical research paper. This course will give you the competence and skills necessary to not only understand and critically evaluate arguments and data presented to you at work or in the media every day, but also to engage in social inquiry yourself.

Blackboard site: https://classes.emory.edu, Log in, and then click on Soc355W: Social Research I-000 (Browne). This site will include all materials that are handed out in class (the syllabus, instructions for written assignments, etc.), as well as outlines of the lectures. Any important announcements will also be posted on this site.

READINGS
The book listed below is the required text for this course. It is available in the Emory Bookstore and on reserve in the Woodruff Library (Note: You can use earlier editions of the book (e.g. 12th edition), but you are responsible for finding the appropriate chapters/readings as the page numbers have shifted between editions.)


Reserve Readings
There are additional readings to help you understand the research process. Some are already part of the syllabus. Others will be announced as we go through the semester. These readings will be in e-reserves in electronic format, and can be accessed through Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
The goal of this class is to teach you to DO social research, thus, we focus on activities that involve doing different aspects of research. Because there are no exams, you are expected to put a lot of energy and effort into the assignments and the final paper!
A. **Class Participation (10%)**

Participation in class discussions and **in-class exercises** is very important. Attendance is **strongly encouraged**. Missing more than 2 required classes will lead to deductions in points, as will little or no participation. (Note: if you are shy and have difficulty speaking in class, please see me; there will be other options for this requirement – e.g., writing memos about the readings.)

Many classes will involve **in-class exercises**. Some are already noted on the syllabus; other exercises will be determined as we go through the semester. These exercises will not be graded beyond: participation or no participation.

B. **8 written assignments (50% total)**

These 8 assignments are integral to the course and your final research paper. Together they account for 50% of your final grade.

- Assignments 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, & 8 are worth 5% each (30% total)
- Assignments 2 & 5 are 10% each (20% total)
- The first 4 assignments constitute the beginning of your research project. The 1st assignment has you choose a research topic and formulate research questions based on that topic. The 2nd assignment is an annotated bibliography on your topic which will be the basis of your literature review in the final paper. The 3rd assignment focuses on clarifying your hypotheses and your research design. The 4th assignment is data collection for the class survey.
- Assignments 5 & 6 are exercises on using other (non-survey) research methods such as in-depth interviews and content analysis.
- Assignments 7 & 8 involve analyses of the survey data collected for your research project using SPSS.

C. **Extra-Credit Reading Memos**

For 12 of the readings (marked by * on class schedule below), I will post discussion questions on Blackboard (under ‘extra-credit’). Each extra-credit assignment is worth .25 points towards your final grade. Memos must be typed and uploaded to Bb. I do not accept late submissions of extra credit assignments.

D. **Final Research Paper (40%)**

- The Final Research Paper will be 15-20 pages in length.
- It is due Thursday, April 28 by 7pm.

All written assignments must be typed and uploaded to Bb. I do not accept assignments through email. You will submit your final paper on Blackboard through SafeAssign.

**Goal and class format:** The overall goal of this class is to teach you how to develop your own sociological research project, implement it, and write it up. Thus, the major assignment for this class is completion of a research paper, based on your own sociological research topic. For practical reasons, everyone’s research project will involve the method of a) **survey** research and b) **in-depth interviews**. We will develop and implement the survey as a class and you will develop the in-depth interviews.
individually. The survey will be broad enough to allow many different research questions. Many of the short assignments will be preliminary sections of the paper. More specific instructions for the paper will be handed out separately and will be posted on Blackboard.

**Overview of Assignments and Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Developing a research question</td>
<td>Jan-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Feb-25</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Conceptualization, Operationalization and Hypotheses</td>
<td>Mar-03</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Survey Project which consists of several parts</td>
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<td>Pilot test Online Survey</td>
<td>Feb-01</td>
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<td>1st EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
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<td>2nd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>Feb-14</td>
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<td>3rd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>Feb-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Interview study</td>
<td>Apr-07</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Content Analysis (in class)</td>
<td>Mar-31</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Univariate Data Analysis</td>
<td>Apr-14</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Bivariate Data Analysis</td>
<td>Apr-19</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Apr-28</td>
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**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Accommodating Disabilities:**
If you have or acquire any sort of condition that may require special accommodation(s), please inform me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (e.g., not the day of an exam) so that we may make the appropriate arrangements. Proper documentation from the Office of Disabilities Services will be required. Please contact their office to get more information on available services and accommodations, as well as documentation requirements. They can be reached at 404-727-9877 or via the web at [http://www.ods.emory.edu](http://www.ods.emory.edu).

**Academic Conduct:**
All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the policies of Emory College with respect to conduct and academic honesty. Anyone engaging in acts that violate these policies, such as plagiarism or cheating, will be referred to the Honors Council. For more information on the Emory Honor Code, see [http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html](http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html).

**Late Assignments:**
I will accept late assignments, but your grade on the assignment will be lowered by 10% per day (e.g. if the assignment is worth 5 (or 10) points, I will deduct 0.5 (or 1) point) for each day the assignment is late. Assignments turned in to my office, to my box, under my door, via stork, or via email are considered late, so give yourself plenty of time to complete assignments. ONLY assignments submitted on Blackboard BEFORE 1 p.m. on the DAY THE ASSIGNMENT IS DUE are considered on time. Most reasons to turn in a late assignment are not valid. I will be the judge of what constitutes a valid excuse and what does not. Personal illness and family emergencies are valid.
excuses, but they still will require documentation. Oversleeping, trips out of town, interviews, car trouble, and work-related absences are not valid excuses for missing an assignment

*The use of cell phones, pagers or other electronic devices is not permitted in this class. Please turn OFF your phones and pagers before entering the classroom. Receiving phone calls or texting during class will lower your participation grade.*
**TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**  (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK 1</th>
<th>Why Research Methods?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 12:</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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| Jan 14:| Babbie, Chapter 1 – Human Inquiry and Science  
  In class exercise: Journalism vs. Empirical Research |

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<tr>
<th>WEEK 2</th>
<th>Theory and Research: How do they relate?</th>
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| Jan 19:| Babbie, Chapter 2 – Paradigms, Theory and Social Research  
  Read Blog: “What the heck is research anyway?” (Link on BB)  
| Jan 21:| Babbie, chapter 4 – Research Designs  
  Discuss Questions for Surveys & Pilot Testing Surveys  
  In class exercise: Research Questions |

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<tr>
<th>WEEK 3</th>
<th>Research Design: Decisions, Decisions</th>
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| Jan 26:| Babbie, Chapter 17 – Reading and Writing Social Research (pp. 486-500)  
  Librarian presentation for completing Assignment 2  
  Discuss surveys  
  Assignment #1 handed out |
  In class exercise: Critique of Stack & Gundlach  
  Assignment #1 due  
  Assignment #4 handed out |

**Feb. 1:**  
*PILOT TEST SURVEY by Sunday 1/1, 11:59 p.m. (part of Assignment 4)*

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<tr>
<th>WEEK 4</th>
<th>Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement</th>
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| Feb 2: | Babbie, Chapter 5 – Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement  
  Assignments #2 & #3 handed out |
Feb 4: Babbie, Chapter 6 – “Indexes, Scales and Typologies” pp.158-164 (read until end of “Examination of Empirical Relationships”), 174-175 (Likert Scaling)

Feb 7: **SEND FIRST SURVEY EMAIL on Sunday, FEB 7 (part of Assignment 4)**

WEEK 5 **Surveys and Survey Design**
*Feb 9: Babbie, Chapter 9 – Survey Research (pp. 246-267)
**Assignment #2 due**

*Feb 11: Babbie, Chapter 9 – Survey Research (pp. 267-286)
**In Class Exercise: Survey Design**

Feb 14: **SEND 2nd SURVEY EMAIL on SUNDAY, FEB.14th (Assignment #4)**

WEEK 6 **Sampling: How to decide who will be in the study?**
*Feb 16: Babbie, Chapter 7 – The Logic of Sampling (pp. 182-201)
**In Class Exercise: Sampling**

*Feb 18: Babbie, Chapter 7 – The Logic of Sampling (pp. 201-222)

WEEK 7 **Writing a Literature Review**

*Feb 23: **SEND 3rd SURVEY EMAIL on Sun, Feb 28 (Assignment #4)**

*Feb 23: Babbie, Chapter 17 – Reading and Writing Social Research (pp. 500-508)

*Feb 25: Work on literature review
**Assignment #2 due**

WEEK 8 **Ethics in Research**
*Mar 1: Babbie, Chapter 3 – Ethics and Politics of Social Research (pp. 60-83)*
In Class Exercise: Ethics


Mar 7-11: Spring Break!

WEEK 9 Experiments
Mar 15: Babbie, Chapter 8 – Experiments Assignment #5 handed out


WEEK 10 Qualitative Methods
Mar 22: Babbie, Chap. 10 – Qualitative Field Research


WEEK 11 Qualitative Methods: Analysis
Unobtrusive Research: Content Analysis & New Modes of Research
Mar 29: Babbie, Chapter 13 – Qualitative Data Analysis (pp. 381-392 until end of “concept memoing”)
*Glasser, Carol L., Belinda Robnett, and Cynthia Feliciano. 2009. —Internet Daters’ Body Type Preferences: Race-Ethnic and Gender Differences. Sex Roles, April 14th, Published Online.

Mar 31: Babbie, Chapter 11 – Unobtrusive Research (pp. 322-344 until end of “strengths and weaknesses of content analysis”)
Assignment #6 in class

WEEK 12 Quantitative Data Analysis I: Data Entry and Univariate Analysis in SPSS
Apr 5: Babbie, Chapter 14 – Quantitative Data Analysis (pp. 411-425, up to “Bivariate Analyses,” pp. 429-432, “Ethics and Quantitative Data Analysis” Assignment #7 handed out

Apr 7: Babbie, Chapter 16 – Statistical Analyses (pp. 450-460, up to “Regression Analysis”)

Sociology 355
Work on Assignment #7 in class  
Assignment #5 due  
Assignment #8 handed out

WEEK 13  
Quantitative Data Analysis II: Bivariate Analysis and Creating Tables in SPSS  
Apr 12:  
Babbie, Chapter 14 – Quantitative Data Analysis (pp. 425-429 “Bivariate Analysis”)  
Babbie, Chapter 16 – Statistical Analyses (pp. 460-470, “Inferential Statistics”)  

Apr 14:  
Assignment #7 due  
Work on Assignment #8 in class

WEEK 14  
Putting It All Together: Writing Up Your Research Study  
Apr 19:  
Analysis and Writing Discussion  
Final paper instructions handed-out  
Assignment #8 due

Apr 21:  
Further Analysis & Writing Discussion  
Review resources and examples under “Guidelines & Resources” on BB

Apr 28 (Thurs):  
Final Paper due by 11 pm (post in SafeAssign on Bb)

List of Assignment Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Develop a broad research question(s)</td>
<td>1/28</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>2/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Specific research question, conceptual and operational definitions, and hypothesis</td>
<td>3/3</td>
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<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Pilot test and administer the survey:</td>
<td>2/1</td>
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<td>- Pilot test Online Survey</td>
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<td>- 3rd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>2/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Conduct 4 interviews; write fieldnotes and report</td>
<td>4/7</td>
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<td>Assignment 6</td>
<td>Content analysis (in class)</td>
<td>3/31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 7</td>
<td>Conduct univariate analyses of survey data</td>
<td>4/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 8</td>
<td>Conduct bivariate analyses of survey data</td>
<td>4/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>Incorporate and expand upon assignments</td>
<td>4/28</td>
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