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.

Canvas 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.


Reserve Readings
There are additional readings on the syllabus 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 Canvas.

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, 5, 7, & 8 are worth 5% each (30% total)
- Assignments 2 & 6 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. Reading Preps (5%)  
You are required to complete 10 of the reading preps (marked by * on class schedule below). (I’ll take the 8 highest scores if you do more than 10). Each reading prep assignment is worth .5 points towards your final grade. Reading preps must be typed and submitted through Canvas. I do not accept late submissions of reading preps.

D. Final Research Paper (35%)  
- The Final Research Paper will be 15-20 pages in length.
- It is due Friday, Dec. 14 by 11:59 pm.

All written assignments must be typed and submitted through Canvas. I do not accept assignments through email. You will submit your final paper on Canvas.

**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 Canvas.

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>Sept 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Sept 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Conceptualization, Operationalization and Hypotheses</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Survey Project which consists of several parts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pilot test Online Survey</td>
<td>Sept 16</td>
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<td>1st EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>Sept 23</td>
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<td>2nd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3rd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>Oct 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Content Analysis (in class)</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Interview study</td>
<td>Nov 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Univariate Data Analysis</td>
<td>Nov 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bivariate Data Analysis</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Dec 14</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 one day before the assignment due date) 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.

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.

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 Canvas 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)

TOPIC 1  Why Research Methods?
Aug 30:  Introductions
        *Tanenbaum, Deborah.  Introduction.  SLUT! Growing Up Female with a Bad
          Reputation.
        In class exercises: journalism vs. empirical Research; confirmation bias; correlation
          and causation

TOPIC 2  Research Design: Decisions, Decisions
         Read Blog: “What the heck is research anyway?” (Link on Canvas)

         In class exercises: Critique of Stack & Gundlach
         Assignment #1 distributed

TOPIC 3  Theory and Research: How do they relate?
            Research.”
            * Steers, Maily, Robert Wicham and Linda Acitelli.  2014. “Seeing Everyone Else’s
              Highlight Reels: How Facebook Usage is Linked to Depressive Symptoms.” Journal

Sept 13:  Librarian presentation for completing Assignment 2
         Discuss surveys
         Assignment #2 distributed
         Assignment #1 due

Sept 16:  PILOT TEST SURVEY by Sunday 9/16, 11:59 p.m. (Assignment #4a)

Sept 18:  Discuss Questions for Surveys & Pilot Testing Surveys
          Bobo, Larry and Camille Zubrinsky. 1996. “Attitudes on Residential Integration:
          Perceived Status Differences, Mere In-Group Preference, or Racial Prejudice?”
          Social Forces 74(3):883-909.

          “Culture and Conflict: The Portrayal of Blacks in U.S. Children's Picture Books
          Through the Mid- and Late-Twentieth Century.” American Sociological Review
          62(3)  Pp. *443-446 only (stop at “Data and Methods”).

Sociology 355
5
TOPIC 4  Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement


In-class exercise: Identifying and writing operational definitions

Sept 23: SEND FIRST SURVEY EMAIL on Sunday, SEPT 23 (part of Assignment #4b)


In class exercise: Hypotheses and measurement

TOPIC 5  Surveys and Survey Design


Assignment #3 distributed
Assignment #2 due


In Class Exercise: Survey Design

TOPIC 6  Sampling: How to decide who will be in the study?

For those familiar with probability sampling theory: Gerlitz, Caroline, and Bernhard Rieder. 2013. "Mining One percent of Twitter: Collections, Baselines, Sampling." *M/C Journal* 16.2

and
In Class Exercise: Sampling

**Oct 9: **** NO CLASS. FALL BREAK ******


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

**TOPIC 7  Writing a Literature Review**
**Oct 16:** Carr et al. Chapter 17: “Communicating Social Science Research Findings.”
Aldrich, Howard. Writing a Literature Review.

**TOPIC 8  Ethics in Research**
*Carr et al. Chapter 3: Ethics in Social Science Research*

**Oct 23:** *Watch first 38 minutes of Alice Goffman at UBC: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sz2XVtCAbqg*


(* One RP for all three assigned ‘readings’)

In Class Exercise: Ethics

Assignment #3 due

**TOPIC 9 Experiments**


*Developmental Psychology.*

Assignment #5 distributed

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

**TOPIC 10 Qualitative Methods**


Carr et al. Chapter 11: “In-Depth Interviewing.”

Assignment #4 due


**TOPIC 11 Qualitative Methods: Analysis**

Unobtrusive Research: Content Analysis & New Modes of Research

Nov 6: *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.*


Assignment #5 in class

Assignment #6 distributed

**TOPIC 12 Quantitative Data Analysis I: Data Entry and Univariate Analysis in SPSS**

Nov 13: *** Class meets in Woodruff library room 312 ***

Carr et al. Chapter 14: “Univariate and Bivariate Analysis of Quantitative Data” (Just the sections on univariate analyses)

**Assignment #7 handed out**

**Nov 15:** Work on Assignment #7 in class

**Class meets in Woodruff library room 312**

Assignment #8 handed out

**Nov. 18:** Assignment #6 due (Sunday)

**Nov 20-22:** **** NO CLASS. THANKSGIVING ****

**TOPIC 13** Quantitative Data Analysis II: Bivariate Analysis and Creating Tables in SPSS

**Nov 27:**

**Class meets in Woodruff library room 312**

Carr et al. Chapter 14: “Univariate and Bivariate Analysis of Quantitative Data.” (Sections on bivariate analyses)


**Nov 29:** Assignment #7 due

**Class meets in Woodruff library room 312**

Work on Assignment #8 in class

Final paper instructions handed-out

**TOPIC 14** Putting It All Together: Writing Up Your Research Study

**Dec 4:** Analysis and Writing Discussion

Assignment #8 due

**Dec. 6:** In class: Work on final paper

**Dec. 11:** Wrap-up

**Dec 14:** Final Paper due by 11 pm (submitted through Canvas)
<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>9/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>9/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Specific research question, conceptual and operational definitions, and hypothesis</td>
<td>10/23</td>
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<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Pilot test and administer the survey:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Pilot test Online Survey</td>
<td>9/16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d) 3rd EMAIL for Online Survey</td>
<td>10/28</td>
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<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Content analysis (in class)</td>
<td>11/8</td>
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<td>Assignment 6</td>
<td>Conduct 4 interviews; write fieldnotes and report</td>
<td>11/18</td>
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<td>Assignment 7</td>
<td>Conduct univariate analyses of survey data</td>
<td>11/29</td>
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<td>Assignment 8</td>
<td>Conduct bivariate analyses of survey data</td>
<td>12/4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Paper</strong></td>
<td>Incorporate and expand upon assignments</td>
<td>12/14</td>
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