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Fall 2015

## SOC 2708

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*University of New Orleans*

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**SOC 2708, METHODS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH (3 Cr.)**

Fall, 2015

MH 311, Time: 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. T, Th

Professor: Francis O. Adeola, Ph.D.

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Office: MH 187

Phone: (504) 280-5554

Office Hrs.: 8:30 – 9:30; 12:15 – 1:30 T, Th or by appointment only.

Required Text: Schutt, Russell K. 2015. Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Social Research, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Additional Readings: Will be posted and made available on Moodle. TBA.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

SOC 2708, Methods in Social Research is a comprehensive study of the logic and applications of the scientific method in social sciences. It explores the basic principles, process, and practice of researching the social world. The variety of tools and techniques used by sociologists and other social scientists conducting social inquiry are thoroughly examined. For sociology and other social science majors, this course is a key component in the core curriculum, therefore, learning and meeting the objectives of this course are crucial to understanding the discipline of sociology. Among the topics to be covered are: Foundations for social research--an orientation to science, society, and social research; the process and problems of social research; the nature and logic of causation, the structuring of social inquiry, theory, conceptualization and measurement; basic research designs, different modes of observation/data collection; research ethics and proposals; data analysis and presentation, and computer applications, and summarizing and reporting research results.

**OBJECTIVES**

The major objectives of this course are:

1. To introduce the student to fundamental principles, concepts, issues, and the major approaches to conducting social research.
2. To aid the student in developing critical thinking and analytical skills independently and as a group.

3. To expose the student to current research literature and methodological approaches and issues in the field of social research.
4. To provide the student an orientation to understanding data collection, processing, analysis, and findings.
5. To enable the student to be able to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of various techniques of data collection frequently used in the social sciences.
6. To help the student to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to the ethical and socio-political issues involved in social research.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLOs):**

The key SLOs for this course are stated below. At the end of the semester, students who put in the time and efforts to learn the materials presented in the course lectures and readings, will be able to:

1. Define “the scientific method” and critically assess its strengths and weaknesses as a means of obtaining knowledge and its superiority to other means of obtaining knowledge.
2. Identify a research topic, move from a general question to the formulation of concise, well-constructed researchable problem.
3. Know the quantitative and qualitative research approaches and their strengths and limitations.
4. Understand various methods of data collection used most frequently in the social sciences including their respective strengths and weaknesses and be able to understand the need for methodological triangulation or what some scholars refer to as mixed methods approach.
5. Develop a research proposal with appropriate research design and independently carry out a research project.
6. Be able to critique and evaluate a social science research article—highlighting the strengths and shortcomings of the article.
7. Be able to effectively communicate research findings both orally and in writings to appropriate audiences.
8. Understand the ethical codes of conduct in social research.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

Class sessions will be devoted to a combination of lectures, class discussions, and problem solving.

Students are encouraged to participate in class discussion. Each student should be prepared to participate in class discussion by reading assigned materials ahead of time.

*PLEASE NOTE: NO CELL-PHONE, BEEPER, OR ANY PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE IS ALLOWED DURING CLASS SESSIONS.*

### **DELIVERY FORMAT & NAME POLICY**

**Format:** All students must submit assignments, papers in formats I can read, i.e., typed and well written. No handwritten papers or assignments will be accepted. Failure to conform to the acceptable format will lead to the rejection of your document submission or lower score.

**Name:** Each student must place his/her name in two places when sending messages or assignments to me. That is, place your name in the closing of any e-mail correspondence (e.g., Sincerely, Mary John, Student, SOC 2871). This is especially very important so that your papers will not get mixed up with other courses. You must also place your name in the header of the documents you submit. For assignments and papers, your name, student ID and special code must appear on top of your document.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Each student must abide by this motto: **Honesty is the best policy!** Academic integrity is basic to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Any form of academic dishonesty involving cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsification, and being an accessory to any of these deviant acts, will not be condoned. Any violation of academic integrity code will be met with severe negative sanctions. In addition to academic sanctions by the instructor including automatic "F," students found guilty of academic dishonesty may be subject to academic sanctions including probation, suspension, and possible expulsion or dismissal from the program or from the University. For more information about academic integrity requirements, please refer to the UNO Judicial Code available online at: <http://www.studentsaffairs.uno.edu> or [http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial\\_code\\_pt2.html](http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial_code_pt2.html).

Also see:

Academic Dishonesty Policy:

[http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/studentpolicies/policymanual/academic\\_dishonesty.cfm](http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/studentpolicies/policymanual/academic_dishonesty.cfm)

Academic Integrity Brochure:

[http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/Judicial/judicial\\_pdfs/AcademicIntegrity\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/Judicial/judicial_pdfs/AcademicIntegrity_brochure.pdf)

### **COURSE REQUIREMENT:**

In order to pass this course, the following activities are absolutely required:

1. Attendance & Quizzes.

2. Home-works and Lab Assignments (TBA)
3. Research Article Critique
4. 2 Examinations

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY**

Please Note: All portable hand-held electronic devices including cell-phones, smart-phones, pagers, ipods, ipads, PDAs, MP3/MP4 players, etc., are not allowed in class during class session. They should be turned off or set in silent/vibration mode inside your bag before class begins. The use of tape recorders or other recording devices is not allowed. Exception may be granted only under unusual or special circumstances approved by the instructor. The use of laptop for note-taking may be permitted provided the student does not surf the internet or check e-mails and other media during class session.

### **STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in this course to:

1. Attend class regularly and punctually;
2. Complete in-class orientation;
3. Read all the assigned chapters and supplementary readings;
4. Actively participate in class discussions;
5. Complete and submit all required assignments & presentations on time on the due date; and
6. Take all tests including quizzes and examinations.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS & MAKE-UP POLICY**

Make-up examinations and quizzes will not be given except under certain exceptional circumstances, such as LIFE OR DEATH situations. The student must prove his/her particular case with solid evidence beyond any reasonable doubt. Please note that generally when given, make-ups are more rigorous than regularly scheduled examination and it can only be given at the time that is mutually convenient.

Unless otherwise announced or noted, papers and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specific due dates. Papers are considered late if they are turned in after class or dropped into my office bin or under my office door. There is a 5 points penalty for each day a paper is late and any paper that is more than 4 days late will not be accepted. I do not accept any course work that requires

grading via e-mail. **Please do not send your paper via e-mail.**

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Consistent with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), students with disabilities needing academic accommodative services will receive them, provided they are registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) on campus. It is the University policy to provide, on a flexible and individual basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. However, it is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services and follow the procedures for obtaining assistance. Students with disabilities should contact ODS at <http://ods.uno.edu/#contact> as well as the instructor to discuss his/her individual needs for accommodations. A letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type should be delivered to the instructor as soon as possible.

### **EVALUATION**

The final evaluation will be based on cumulative points from the following:

Activities	Points
2 Quizzes	150
Home-works/Lab Assignments	100
Research Article Critique	40
Mid-Semester Exam	100
Final Examination	100
Perfect Class Attendance & Active Participation	10
Total	500

Please Note: There is **No Extra Credit** outside the activities stated above.

**GRADING SCALE:** The cumulative points will be used to compute your percentage score. Letter grades are based on the following scale:

90-100	=	A
80-89	=	B
70-79	=	C
60-69	=	D
0-59	=	F

**COURSE OUTLINE (subject to change at the Professor's discretion)**

<b>The Week of:</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>	<b>Assigned Chapter(s)</b>
Aug 20	General Introduction & Orientation. Examine the Syllabus & Buy Your book	
Aug. 25	Foundations for Social Research: Science, Society, and Social Research The Process & Problems of Research	Chapters 1 & 2
Sept. 1	Paradigms, Theory, and Research: Explaining the Link between Theory & Methods	TBA
Sept. 8	Research Ethics and Research Proposal	Chapter 3
<b>Sept. 10</b>	<b>Quiz 1 (Bring Your Blue Scantron &amp; Pencil)</b>	
Sept. 15	Fundamentals of Social Research: Conceptualization & Operationalization	Chapter 4
Sept. 22	Sampling, Generalizability & Causality	Chapters 5&6
<b>Sept. 24</b>	<b>Research Article Critique &amp; Review Due*</b>	
Sept. 29	Research Design, Conceptualization & Measurement (contd.)	Chs. 5 & 6 as above
Oct. 6	Basic Social Research Designs: Experiments	Chapter 7
<b>Oct. 8</b>	<b>MID-TERM EXAMINATION</b>	
Oct. 13	Survey Research	Chapter 8
<b>Oct. 14</b>	<b>Final Date to Drop Course(s) or Resign from the University</b>	
<b>Oct. 15 – 16</b>	<b>Fall Semester Break</b>	
Oct. 20	Quantitative Data Analysis: Intro to Basic Statistics, Graphing & Tabulation	Chapter 9
Oct. 27	Qualitative Methods: Observation, Participation &	

	Listening	Chapter 10
<b>Oct. 29</b>	<b>Quiz 2</b>	
Nov. 3	Qualitative Data Analysis	Chapter 11
Nov 10	Historical and Comparative Research and Content Analysis	Chapter 13
Nov. 17	Evaluation & Policy Research	Chapter 12
<b>Nov. 19</b>	<b>Quiz 3</b>	
Nov. 24	Secondary Data Analysis	Chapter 14
Nov. 26 – 27	Thanksgiving Holiday	
Dec. 1-3	Secondary Data Analysis & Review	
December 10	<b>FINAL EXAMINATION (Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon)</b>	