METHODS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

Ali Kamali, Ph.D.
Office location: 212 E Popplewell
Phone: X4144
e-mail: Moodle only

SOC 460-01
Meeting time: MWF 10:00-10:50
Location: MW Murphy 224
F Murphy 114

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Meeting time: MWF 10:00-10:50
Location: MW Murphy 224
F Murphy 114

Office Hours: MWF 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
SOC 460, Methods of Social Research, entails a discussion of tools, methods, ethical, theoretical and practical foundation of research process. It is a practice of social scientific inquiries. The aim is to support theoretical explanations with empirical evidence. Hence, this course teaches different ways (methods) of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information for any particular interest or purpose. Aside from familiarizing students with different methods, the course deals with the appropriateness of a given method and its practical applications. The course is also designed to prepare students for their post-graduate life—graduate school or employment. This course deals with hypothesis construction, data collection, the use of computers for statistical analysis, and data manipulation. Students’ performance is evaluated partially based on the knowledge gained in the areas mentioned above (see also requirements below).

OBJECTIVES:
All together, the aims are:
1. to learn research ethics;
2. to use research in practice;
3. to understand basic assumptions of research;
4. to be able to design research strategy appropriate to a specific situation;
5. to master how to construct and test hypotheses (developing concepts and translating them into measurable variables);
6. to practice how to collect data by using various methods;
7. to learn how to utilize computers in data analysis;
8. to be able to translate senseless numbers into sensible information.
9. to enhance your ability in problem solving.

TEXT

c. Hand-outs to be distributed in class

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
Behavior disrupting the classroom environment or interfering with other students' ability to learn may be grounds or justification for dismissal from the classroom. Sleeping, conducting private conversations, doing homework for another class, reading a book other than your sociology book, using computers for other than assigned purposes, eating, drinking, damaging property, and using vulgar or deliberately offensive language are some examples that can damage the learning environment. Let's establish a cordial and respectful atmosphere in which we can have fun while learning.

Title IX: A Note on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

Consistent with its mission, Missouri Western seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX and University policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Missouri Western encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the Student Handbook (https://www.missouriwestern.edu/studentaffairs/wp.../handbook.pdf) about what happened so they can get the support they need and Missouri Western can respond appropriately.

There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Missouri Western is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the website.

Students have received information via email regarding training regarding Title IX. Student employees may have additional required training. Please follow the link in the email sent to your MWSU student account to complete the training. Students who do not complete the training will receive a hold on their account, prohibiting future semester enrollment until the training is complete. These training courses will ensure that all students are appropriately educated about these important regulations.

DISABLED STUDENT INFORMATION
Students who are seeking accommodation must first provide documentation of needed accommodations to the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) located in Eder Hall, Suite
203. Once accommodations have been approved by the ARC, students are responsible for notifying their instructors of those accommodations. This should be done within the first two weeks of classes. Accommodations are not retroactive.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Class attendance is required of all students. Because of the nature of this course (each class session provides the prerequisite information for the subsequent class session), it is to your advantage to attend class religiously. You should be given and submit a prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervising the event when acting as an official representative of the university. All other absences will be deemed unexcused. Students who miss 6 or more class sessions will be given an “F” grade for the course regardless of the grades they earn on the exams and quizzes. It is your responsibility to make proper arrangements so that the events do not interfere.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Since honesty in the course is required, knowingly furnishing false information to the instructor, as well as college, constitutes a violation. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another’s work, falsifying documents or academic records, submitting a paper written for another class without new or different information, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University.

FORMAT
Class time will be devoted to lectures, exercises (hands on practices), computer/other lab sessions, and field research. This format helps you to relate the subject matter of this course to research situations. It also provides an opportunity for analyzing and interpreting freshly collected information. Problem solving will be of particular interest.

REQUIREMENTS
1. There will be a total of two take-home essay examinations. You are required to take both exams. Failure to complete one will result in an “F” grade for the course. The exams will cover all materials in this course.

Make-up Exam Policy:
   a. There will be no make-up exams unless your reasons for taking one are legitimate—e.g., hospitalization, military appointment, arrest and imprisonment, jury duty, and the like. Doctors’ appointments, notes indicating “in care of a physician,” not feeling good are not legitimate excuses, unless your physician directly orders you not leave home for a period of time. You must call and inform the instructor in advance.
   b. You need to provide sufficient documentation—copies of the police report, court warrant/citation, hospital admission, etc.—in order to be eligible to take a make-up exam. The instructor has the prerogative to
deny make-ups if the student does not provide valid documentation for missing the exam. **A make up is not a right. It is a privilege.**

c. At the discretion of the professor, eligible students (see “a” above) are only allowed to take **one make-up per class per semester**.

2. **Quizzes.** Students will be given four quizzes during the semester. The date for these quizzes have been designated and listed in the syllabus (see Topical Outline below). There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes since you will be given ample time to complete each.

3. **Homework Assignments.** You will be given exercises relevant to the assigned readings. Homework assignments are given subsequent to the completion of a method. **There will be a reduction of 10% per each day that the assignment is handed in late. You will receive an F grade for an assignment handed in 4 days later than the due date.**

4. **Term Project.** This project is the result of your efforts in carrying out a survey research at the end of the semester. It focuses on the class findings on a topic (to be announced later) based on the data that the class will collect later in the semester. The term project is part of the learning process that compels you to complete a survey from A-Z. The class will decide on a topic to be surveyed. More information will be given when we actually start conducting the survey.

   **The paper is due on the designated final exam time during the exams’ week**

   **Late papers will not be accepted**

**METHODS OF EVALUATION:**
Your course grade will be determined based on all points accumulated from the abovementioned items. It follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Assignments</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following scale will be used for evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
<td>(225-250 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89.9%</td>
<td>(200-224 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79.9%</td>
<td>(175-199 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>55 – 69.9%</td>
<td>(137-174 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>54.9 % and below</td>
<td>(0-136)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TOPICAL OUT-LINE

FOUNDATIONS OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Week 1 (Aug. 31-Sept. 4)  Introduction to the Course
Ethical Issues in Social Research
Read: Chapters 1 and 3

Week 2 (Sept. 7-11)  Research in the human services
The logic of research
Read: Chapter 2

Week 3 (Sept. 14-18)  Issues in problem formulation: Conceptual and
Operational foundations of Research
Read: Chapter 4

Week 4 (Sept. 21-25)  Issues in Problem Formation, continued
Read: Chapter 4

September 21  Quiz 1: Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Week 5 (Sept. 28-Oct. 6)  The Process of Measurement
Read: Chapter 5

RESEARCH DESIGNS AND DATA COLLECTION

Week 6 (Oct. 5-9)  Analysis of available data
Read: Chapter 8, Appendix A

Week 7 (Oct. 12-16)  Observational techniques
Read: Chapter 9
Lab session

October 12  Quiz 2: Chapters 4, 5, and 8

Week 8 (Oct. 19-23)  Observational techniques (data analysis)

October 19: Exam I Due: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8

Week 9 (Oct. 26-30)  Experimental Designs
Read: Chapter 10

Week 10 (Nov. 2-6)  Single Subject Design
Read Chapter 11
DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

Week 11 (Nov. 9-13)  Survey Research: Questionnaire Construction
                      Read: Chapter 7
                      Scaling
                      Read Chapter 13

November 9  Quiz 3: Chapters 9, 10, 11

Week 12 (Nov. 16-20) Sampling
                      Read: Chapter 6

CONDUCTING THE SURVEYS BEGINS AROUND HERE

Week 13 (Nov. 23-27) Fall Break

Week 14 (Nov. 30-Dec. 4) Conducting surveys/data collection
Data Analysis and Statistics: Coding and Data Entry
                      Read: Chapter 14: 376-394
                      Contingency Table
                      Read Chapter 14: 394-402

These sections are also covered on Fridays throughout the semester

Week 15 (Dec. 7-11)  Data Analysis:
                      Consideration of choosing statistics
                      Measures of Association
                      Measure of Central Tendency
                      Bivariate analysis
                      Read Chapter 15

These sections are also covered on Fridays throughout the semester

December 7  Exam II Due: Chapters 6 thru 11, 13, and 14

Wednesday December 16 at 8:30  Term Project Due
(You may hand in your paper earlier.)

HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAYS 😊