

## INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL RESEARCH –SYA 4300

T-R 3:35-4:50pm

Room: HCB 210

Annie Tuttle  
516 Bellamy  
Florida State University  
Fall 2008

**Contact:** atuttle@fsu.edu

(please write 4300 in the subject line when contacting me via email)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday – after class or by appointment.

My office is 516 Bellamy. Phone: 644-3067.

### ***SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES***

This course is a general introduction to social research methods and will cover three broad topics: the foundations of social science, research design and data collection. In discussing each topic, we will also consider the ethical implications of social research. Social research is a craft, and like any other craft, it takes practice to do it well. Therefore our approach will be hands-on from the start. You will have opportunities to *learn by doing* in all aspects of the course – in class meetings and out-of-class assignments. By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Formulate good research questions and design appropriate research
2. Collect your own data using a variety of methods
3. Analyze both qualitative and quantitative data
4. Critically evaluate your own research and that of other social scientists
5. Use SPSS...Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

### ***REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS***

You must have a micro-cassette tape recorder by Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>.

### ***ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING***

Detailed descriptions of the assignments will be given out in class and posted on blackboard. For every 24 hours that a MAJOR assignment is late, I will deduct 5 points from the grade. I do not accept late homework or allow students to make up missed quizzes.

Your final course grade will be comprised of the following: daily homework/quizzes and four projects

Daily Work:

**10%** Homework/Quizzes

Projects:

1. **20%** Research Question and Literature Review Thursday September 18
2. **10%** First Half of Survey Project Tuesday October 7
3. **10%** Second Half of Survey Project Tuesday October 21
4. **20%** Qualitative project Tuesday December 2
4. **30%** Final Report Thursday December 11

\*\*Due dates are subject to change.

## ***GRADING SCALE***

A =93-100    A- =90-92    B+ =87-89    B=83-86    B- =80-82    C+ = 77-79  
C=73-76    C- =70-72    D+=67-69    D=63-66    D- =60-62    F=<59

## ***ATTENDANCE***

The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illnesses are serious in nature and require continued treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments.

**Colds, the flu, fatigue, and stress do not qualify as medical illnesses.** If you have a chronic illness that could affect your attendance, it is imperative that you alert me to this at the beginning of class. Documentation for an absence to be excused is required. Please provide a copy of the documentation to me and keep a copy for your own records. While one is not penalized for the absence of excused absences, he or she remains responsible for all content missed, including assignments, knowledge, or skills that were covered in the missed class(es).

\*\*\*\*If you come in late to class, leave early, sleep in class or disrupt class in any way...you will be counted absent for that day...no exceptions! If you are not in class when attendance is taken, you will be counted absent, even if you come to class at a later time. If you leave before class ends, you will be counted absent, even if your presence was recorded at the beginning of class.

**Finally, students in the course will be held to the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or possibly an "F" for the course and may be reported to the University Judicial Office. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.**

## ***CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR***

**Courtesy in the Classroom.** Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. This means no cell phones or text messaging, listening to ipods or talking during lectures (unless recognized by the professor or discussion leader), reading newspapers, etc. during class. **DO NOT TEXT MESSAGE.** Any of the aforementioned behavior will result in being counted absent.

If you must have a cell phone to receive emergency calls about kids or other family members, keep it on vibrate. Entering and leaving is distracting to your instructor and other students. **Therefore, you need to be on time for class and stay until the end.** If you must enter late or leave early, please inform me before class begins and take the seat nearest an exit and enter or leave as quietly as possible. Please make sure the door does not 'bang' as you enter or leave. Repeated disruption of class may lead to penalties that reduce your final grade (see below). Class discussions of the issues we study can stimulate strong feelings and heated debate. Because this is a college classroom, all discussions must be scholarly.

**(1) Scholarly comments are:**

Respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement; related to the class and course material; advance the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs; are delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner.

**(2) Unacceptable behaviors in the classroom are:**

(a) Personal attacks. This includes attacks on a person's appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs. (b) Interrupting your instructor or other students. Raise your hand and wait to be called on by the discussion leader or myself to prevent this problem. (c) Using the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed as scholarly endeavors (see above). (d) Using raised tones, yelling, engaging in arguments with other students, and being physically aggressive. (e) Ignoring your instructor's authority to protect the integrity of the classroom. Anyone who violates these guidelines will be asked to cease and desist and may be asked to leave the classroom and/or drop the course.

**Failure to abide by these principles can result in academic penalties ranging from a lowered grade, being counted absent, to dismissal, to failing the course.**

**ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY**

Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in *The Florida State University General Bulletin*. The Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of these expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Policy: <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor's discretion. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy (<http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf>).

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact: Student Disability Resource Center, 108 Student Services Bldg., Florida State University Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167, (850)644-9566 (voice), (850)644-8504 (TDD) E-mail: [SDRC@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:SDRC@admin.fsu.edu) Website: <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor's discretion. *Note that College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an "I" must be passing the course.*

### Class Calendar

#### WEEK 1

Tuesday August 26	Introduction and Overview
Thursday August 28	Ethics and what you should and should not do

#### WEEK 2

Tuesday September 2	Looking at the big picture...What is Research? Coming Up with Research Questions
Thursday September 4	What do we already know? Literature Review

#### WEEK 3

Tuesday September 9	Literature Review Continued
Thursday September 11	Independent/Dependent Variables and Hypotheses

#### WEEK 4

Tuesday September 16	Conceptualization/Operationalization
Thursday September 18	<b>***Research Question &amp; Literature Review DUE</b> Conceptualization/Operationalization

#### WEEK 5

Tuesday September 23	Developing a Survey
Thursday September 25	Questionnaire Construction

#### WEEK 6

Tuesday Sept 30	Survey and questionnaire...Wrap up
Thursday October 2	Coding your Survey

#### WEEK 7

Tuesday October 7	<b>***First Half of Survey Project DUE</b> Learning SPSS
Thursday October 9	LEARNING SPSS...continued

#### WEEK 8

Tuesday October 14	How to Write-up your Results
Thursday October 16	Optional Help Day

**WEEK 9**

Tuesday October 21      **\*\*\*Second Half of Survey Project DUE**  
Introduction to Qualitative Research/Ethics

Thursday October 23      Interviewing

**WEEK 10**

Tuesday October 28      Interviewing Skills/ Transcription

Thursday October 30      Coding

**WEEK 11**

Tuesday November 4      Coding

Thursday November 6      Making sense of the Data

**WEEK 12**

Tuesday November 11      Veteran's Day – No Class

Thursday November 13      Coding      **\*Interviews Due Today**

**WEEK 13**

Tuesday November 18      Making Sense of the Data...How to Write up results

Thursday November 20      Qualitative Wrap Up

**WEEK 14**

Thanksgiving Week      NO CLASSES!

**WEEK 15**

Tuesday December 2      **\*\*\*Qualitative Assignment DUE**  
Looking at the Big Picture

Thursday December 4      Pulling Everything Together

**Finals Week**

**\*\*\*Final Paper Due on Thursday December 11....at 12:00pm in my office...516 Bellamy.**

**\*\*\*Turn in paper to Turnitin.com and bring a hard copy to my class at 12:00pm.**

**\*\*\*No late Papers will be accepted.**