

**SYLLABUS: Intro. to Research Methods  
SYA 5305-01 - Fall, 2008**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION:\***

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Office Hours: 2:00pm to 4:30pm on Wednesday and by appointment

\*Please direct all initial correspondence to Mr.Mckelvey. He will respond to all emails within twenty four hours.

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

*Required Text:*

Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and David Nachmias. 2008. **Research Methods in the Social Sciences** (Seventh Edition). New York: Worth Publishers. ISBN: 0-71675519-X

*Additional Required Readings* are available online in **Assignments Page** of the Blackboard course website.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will introduce the student to the methods and techniques needed to conduct quantitative social research. It covers the most important aspects of social research: theory and the development of testable research questions, conceptualization/measurement, and research design. The course provides an opportunity to develop knowledge of basic questions and mastery of basic skills to design and conduct social research.

There are no prerequisites for enrollment in this course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the completion of this course the student will be able to

\* .Understand the assumptions of the scientific approach including the conceptual foundations of scientific research, and philosophies of science.

\* Critique scientific research

\* Construct survey instruments

\* Understand the basic principles of data collection, data management, and data analysis

\* Write a research report

**GRADING/EVALUATION:**

Research Proposal	Points	Due Date
1.) Research question	5	Sep 9
2.) Introduction	15	Sep 16
3.) Background Section	15	Oct 2
4.) Research Design and Method		
a.) Sample	15	Oct 16
b.) Measurement	15	Oct 23
c.) Description of Data Analyses	15	Oct 28
5.) Management of the Study	15	Nov 4
a.) Human Subjects (5 points)		
b.) Confidentiality (5 points)		
c.) Risks to Human Subjects (5 points)		
6.) Abstract	5	Nov 13
Total	100	
Final Research Project	100	Nov 20
Quizzes	100	#1 Sep 30 #2 Oct 30 #3 Nov 25
Class Participation		
1.) Attendance and Participation	23	
2.) Class presentation	10	
Total	33	
Total Points	333	

**GRADING/EVALUATION:**

The grading scale is as follows: 333-300= A; 299-266 = B; 265-232 = C; 231-198 = D; 197 or less = F.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is mandatory. All students are expected to be present for scheduled classes and assignments. However, if a serious medical or family emergency arises, causing a student to miss class, please notify me *prior* to the class. If I cannot be reached, leave a message with the Departmental Secretary (644-6416) or e-mail me explaining the circumstances. No make-ups will be permitted for class presentations.

Students who miss four or more classes will receive an F on for their final grade.

### **COURSE CONTENT:**

All weekly assignments, are posted in the "assignment" section of your blackboard course website.

### **ACADEMIC HONOR CODE:**

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in The Florida State University Bulletin and the Student Handbook. The Academic Honor System of The Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community.

Please see the following web site for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Code.

<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/codes/honor.html>

<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/>

### **The Plagiarized Paper: A Definition**

The Internet is changing the methods of obtaining plagiarized material. It is very easy for anyone to obtain papers written by others via the Internet and to extract wholesale sections of documents for insertion into his or her own papers. Hundreds of sites offer papers, research, writing, and editing. The ease with which such material is available over the Internet does not lessen the seriousness of claiming material from the Internet as your own.

**Your paper would be considered as "plagiarized" in part or entirely if you do any of the following:**

- Submit a paper that was written by someone other than you.
- Submit a paper in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references.
- Submit a paper in which you "cut and paste" or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and place the source in your list of references.

### **Deterring and Detecting Plagiarism: Turnitin.com**

To deter and detect "Internet plagiarism," FSU has acquired a [site-wide license to Turnitin.com](#). This service scans uploaded materials to see if

content has been copied from materials available on the Internet or from papers collected in its database.

**Students agree that by taking this course the required assignments they submit may be submitted to Turnitin.com for review.**

All submitted papers will become source documents in the Turnitin.com database and used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in papers submitted in the future. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of the use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com website.

### **Resources for Improving Your Writing and Research, and Avoiding Plagiarism**

As an intellectually honest student, you will avoid plagiarism through the ways that you think, learn, formulate, and express your ideas. By performing according to the standards of this university and this course, you will not only avoid failure and dismissal from the university - you will develop a mental structure that will make your future learning more compelling and productive.

Whether you are "new" or "experienced" in university-level research and writing processes, you should take some time to review the following resources. They include checklists, guidelines, examples, and explanations on how to research and write papers without risk of plagiarism. The last item on the list provides you with a link to FSU's Reading and Writing Center - another resource for all FSU students who wish to improve their research and writing skills.

- A checklist from Purdue University: [Writing Research Papers: A Step-by-Step Procedure](#)
- Guidelines and examples from the University of Alberta: [Handouts and Online Resources for Students](#)
- Practical steps and tips from the Internet Public Library: [IPL Teen Space: A+ Research and Writing](#)
- A multimedia interactive tutorial (requires Authorware plug-in) from the University of Dalhousie: [Information Literacy Tutorials](#)
- [Internet: Citing an Electronic Source](#) for APA, MLA, and other major style manuals, from the FSU Libraries
- Information on how FSU students at any stage of writing may receive tutoring, participate in group sessions, or enroll in courses or online classes to learn process-centered research and writing skills through [FSU's Reading and Writing Center](#)

Would you like clarification about the definitions and examples of plagiarism? Would you like other tips and resources? If so, review the following additional resources.

- A sample quiz to help students identify instances of plagiarism - [What is plagiarism at Indiana University?](#)
- [Examples of Plagiarism](#) from Princeton University
- [Turnitin.com Research Resources](#) for educators and students - definition, tips, guidelines, answers, and printable handouts for educators, and very useful for students

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.

## COURTESY IN THE CLASSROOM

Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. Therefore all students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous manner that is respectful of others. Repeated disruption of class will lead to penalties that reduce your final grade.

Class discussions of political issues can often stimulate strong feelings and heated debate. Because this is a college classroom, all discussions need to be scholarly. Scholarly comments are:

Respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement.

Related to the class and course material. Scholarly comments advance the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs.

Are delivered in normal tones and in a non-aggressive manner.

**Food and beverages are not allowed in the classroom.** If you bring them into class you will be asked to leave. This policy will be strictly enforced.

## 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 the

Student Disability Resource Center  
97 Woodward Avenue, South  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
[sdrc@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:sdrc@admin.fsu.edu)  
<http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

(This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.)

**SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY:**

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.