

*Professor:* Dr. Hamil-Luker (jluker@soc.duke.edu)  
*TA:* Miles Marsala (miles.marsala@duke.edu)  
*Class Time:* MW 3:05 – 4:20  
*Class Location:* Languages 211  
*Office Location:* 272 Sociology/Psychology Building  
*Office Hours:* W 1-2:30 & by appointment

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### COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course will equip you to become a critical consumer and producer of social research. You will read, write, and talk about research methods, as well as conduct your own research. Although writing, reading, and academic research can feel like isolated, individual acts, they are really social acts, on-going conversations with the people and world around us. The structure of this course facilitates scholarship as a collective process. We will read closely and grapple with challenging texts, integrate knowledge from various media, and communicate ideas verbally and on paper. Working in groups, we will challenge each other to develop research skills, improve our writing processes, and create effective presentations of research results. In supportive research workshops, you will learn how to use the tools social scientists' employ to understand and report on the social world.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of the semester, SOC 332 students should be able to:

- List and explain systematic steps social scientists take when studying the social world
- Describe benefits, limitations, and the rationale for using various methods for conducting social research
- Explain guidelines social scientists follow to ensure their research projects are ethical
- Locate social science studies that help answer carefully formulated research questions
- Interpret and evaluate recent social research findings within the context of prior research and through the lens of social theory
- Test hypotheses and support arguments with compelling empirical evidence
- Write an article-style sociological research paper composed of a literature review, methods section, quantitative and qualitative findings, discussion, and conclusion

### COURSE FORMAT:

This is a skills-based course where you will learn social research methods by **DOING** social research. Instead of listening to lectures, interactive classes will give you time to probe texts, work with others in hands-on activities, and improve your reading, writing, communication, and research skills. First, you will encounter new material on your own outside of class by reading texts and watching online videos. You will take online quizzes to clarify and assess your knowledge of the main ideas in the chapter. During class, you will build upon that foundational knowledge of research methods by performing steps in the research process. You will work in teams and individually to complete a mixed methods research project written in journal article format.

## SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

DATE	ASSIGNMENT	DESCRIPTION	% OF GRADE
Daily	Participation	Come to class on time and ready to contribute	5
Daily	Quizzes	Online assessments of text comprehension	20
Aug 28	Research question emailed to jluker@duke.edu		
Sept 4	Project 1	First draft of annotated bibliography	2
Sept 9		Edited draft posted to Sakai's Forum	10
Sept 16	Project 2	First draft of literature review	2
Sept 18		Edited draft of lit review posted to Sakai's Forum	10
Oct 9	Project 3	First draft of methods plan	2
Oct 14		Edited draft of methods posted to Sakai's Forum	10
Oct 30	Project 4	First draft of quantitative data analysis	2
Nov 4		Edited draft of findings posted to Sakai's Forum	10
Dec 2	Project 5	First draft of qualitative data analysis	2
Dec 4		Edited draft of findings posted to Sakai's Forum	10
Dec 11	Final Project	Synthesis of projects 1-5	15

## CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Your class participation grade is dependent upon attending class regularly and on time and practicing the concepts in the assigned reading through in-class group exercises. To accommodate illnesses, sporting events, and other absences, I will **drop your lowest three participation grades**. You can miss three classes for any reason without penalty. After missing 3 classes, your participation grade drops 5 points for each additional absence *regardless of reason*. Class participation is worth 5% of your final grade.

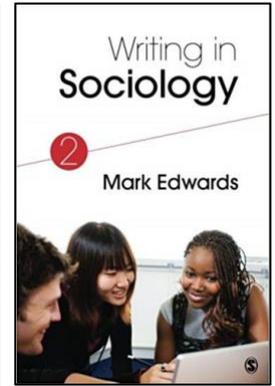
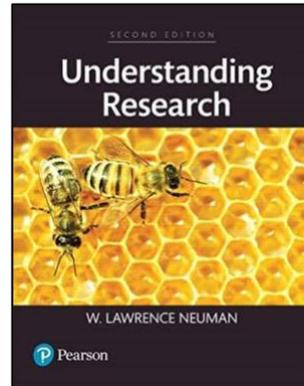
## WRITING AND RESEARCH WORKSHOPS:

Reading texts and watching online video lectures will give you foundational knowledge of key concepts and techniques in research methods. The goal of this course, however, is not simply to provide you the academic jargon social scientists use. Through in-class research and writing workshops, you will learn how to strategically investigate the social world and effectively communicate your empirical findings verbally and on paper. After clarifying and assessing your understanding of the main ideas in the chapter, we will spend class time performing steps in the research process. Throughout the research process, you will receive feedback from Dr. Hamil-Luker, our teaching assistant, and some of your fellow students suggesting improvements for subsequent drafts. You will incorporate useful recommendations into the next revision of your project. Instructions for providing useful feedback as well as other tools are available on the course website.



**TEXTS AND ON-LINE RESOURCES:**

Neuman’s (2017) *Understanding Research, 2nd Edition*, will be our guide through the semester. You can rent e-books from Amazon or Vital Source or check it out from reserve at Perkins Circulation Desk. We will read from Edward’s (2015) *Writing in Sociology* and Roy’s (2013) *Guide to Writing Sociology Papers*. Those chapters and other assigned texts are posted on Sakai under Readings. You will find research methods tutorials, detailed project instructions, writing guidelines, example projects, and more research support on the course Sakai website under Resources.



**QUIZZES:**

Instead of traditional exams, you will complete open book, on-line quizzes over each reading **BEFORE** class. This will encourage you to read and comprehend the texts that we will put into practice during our time together. Quizzes are posted on Sakai under “Tests & Quizzes.” Because the purpose of quizzes is to encourage you to read the chapter in preparation for class, **I will not accept make up quizzes.**

**PROJECTS:**

The goal of this course is to learn the steps of different social science research methods. Working individually and in groups, you will locate, evaluate, and synthesize empirical research in academic sources. You will create valid, reliable measures of variables and select appropriate samples. You will conduct observation research, experiments, in-depth interviews, and statistical analyses of large data sets. You will communicate your findings from each method clearly through text, tables, and graphs. You will analyze quantitative and qualitative data to answer a research question on one of the following topics:

Topic	Survey Data	Potential Interviewees
Race in the criminal justice system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National Corrections Reporting Program, 1991-2015</li> <li>➤ National Criminal Victimization Surveys, 1992-2014</li> </ul>	Former offenders, police, lawyers, probation officers, prison wardens, parolees, judges, arrestees
Gender disparities in families or work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ General Social Surveys, 1973-2016</li> <li>➤ Midlife in the United States, 2013-2014</li> </ul>	Working parents, newly married couples, employers, human resource personnel, unemployed
U.S. health inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National Health Interview Survey, 2016</li> <li>➤ National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2014</li> </ul>	Patients, doctors, nurses, chronically ill, therapists, hospice workers, health insurance agents
Politics and divided public opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ American National Election Study, 2016</li> <li>➤ General Social Surveys, 1973-2016</li> </ul>	Conservatives and progressives; Religious and non-religious; Upper, middle, and working class; immigrants and native born
Substance use among young adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Monitoring the Future Surveys, 2017</li> <li>➤ National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2014</li> </ul>	Current or former illegal substance users; treatment counselors; family members dealing with addiction

## PROJECTS:

Detailed instructions, examples, and grading guidelines for each project are posted on the course website under Resources. Before the five workshop days, you will post a rough draft of your project, which is worth 2% of your final grade. During class, you will work with instructors and peers to improve the draft. You will then post the edited draft to Sakai Forum. Each edited draft is worth 10% of your final grade. **For each day that you turn in a paper late, I will deduct 10 points from your grade.**

## FINAL PAPER:

The semester culminates with the synthesis of Projects 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 into a final paper. After receiving constructive criticism on each project, you will revise early drafts, tie projects smoothly together within a strong organizational framework, and add an introduction and conclusion. You will post an electronic copy of the final paper to Sakai. The final paper is worth 15% of your class average and will be graded for content and writing style. Detailed instructions and a grading rubric are posted on Sakai.

### Struggling with course work?

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers free services to all Duke undergrads. Services include learning consultations, peer tutoring, study groups, ADHD/LD coaching, and more. Contact the ARC at [theARC@duke.edu](mailto:theARC@duke.edu) or call 919-684-5917.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I expect you to act in accordance with Duke's Community Standard. Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to cheating (intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise) and plagiarism (knowingly representing the words of another as one's own in any academic exercise). I will report violations of the Duke Community Standard to the Office of Student Conduct. During class, only use your electronic devices for class-related activities.

## GRADING SCALE:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Definition</i>
A+	97-100	Exceptional work	C+	77-79.9	Satisfactory work
A	94-96.9		C	74-76.9	
A-	90-93.9		C-	70-73.9	
B+	87-89.9	Superior work	D	60-69.9	Low passing work
B	84-86.9		F	0-59.9	Failing work
B-	80-83.9				

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:

### I. Foundations for Social Research

**Aug 26** Introduction to the course

Edwards 3  
Neuman 2

- Aug 28 Identifying a sociological research question and sources**  
 Edwards 2  
 Roy 1 and 4  
 Research question due by 11:59 p.m. Email to [jluker@soc.duke.edu](mailto:jluker@soc.duke.edu)
- Sept 2 Overview of social science research methods**  
 Neuman 1
- Sept 4 Workshop on annotated bibliographies**  
 Post draft of annotated bibliography to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.
- Sept 9 POST EDITED PROJECT 1 TO SAKAI FORUMS BY 11:59 P.M.**
- Sept 11 Writing a mixed methods research project**  
 Edwards 7  
 Roy 5
- Sept 16 Workshop on literature reviews**  
 Post draft of literature review to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.
- Sept 18 POST EDITED PROJECT 2 TO SAKAI FORUMS BY 11:59 P.M.**

<b>II. Planning and Design</b>
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- Sept 23 Conducting ethical social research**  
 Neuman 3
- Sept 25 Links between theory and methods**  
 Flick, Uwe. (2015). *Introducing Research Methodology*. Chapter 2.
- Sept 30 Theory, logic, and types of sampling**  
 Neuman 4
- Oct 2 Measuring social life**  
 Neuman 5
- Oct 7 No class for Fall Break**
- Oct 9 Workshop on methods plan**  
 Post draft of methods plan to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.
- Oct 14 POST EDITED PROJECT 3 TO SAKAI FORUMS BY 11:59 P.M.**

### III. Working with Data

**Oct 16 Unobtrusive research methods**

Neuman 8

**Oct 21 Surveys**

Neuman 6

**Oct 23 Statistical data analysis**

Neuman 9

**Oct 28 Presenting quantitative findings**

Few, Stephen. (2010). *Telling Compelling Stories with Numbers*.

**Oct 30 Workshop on quantitative data analysis**

Post draft of quantitative findings to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.

**Nov 4 POST EDITED PROJECT 4 TO SAKAI FORUMS BY 11:59 P.M.**

**Nov 6 Field research**

Neuman 10

**Nov 11 In-depth interviews**

Brinkman 4  
Galletta 2

**Nov 13 Research workshop on in-depth interviews**

Post draft of interview guide to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.

**Nov 18 Qualitative data analysis**

Schutt, Russell K. (2015). *Investigating the Social World*. Chapter 11.

**Nov 20 Historical-comparative research**

Neuman 11

**Nov 25 Experiments**

Neuman 7

**Nov 27 No class for Thanksgiving**

**Dec 2 Research workshop on qualitative analysis**

Post draft of qualitative findings to Sakai Forum by 3 p.m.

**Dec 4 POST EDITED PROJECT 5 TO SAKAI DROP BOX BY 11:59 P.M.**

**Dec 11 POST FINAL PAPER TO SAKAI DROP BOX BY NOON**