Sociology 3110 CI: Methods of Social Research
Fall 2005 TR 10:30-11:45 A.M. in Main 117
Instructor: Mike Toney (mtoney@hass.usu.edu) Office is Main 224K
Office Hours: TW 8:30-10:00 AM & by Appointment
Graduate Teaching Assistant: Carrie Saunders

Purpose of Course:
The major purpose of this course is to learn about research methods used by sociologists and other social scientists. Research includes the formulation of ideas about reality and the collection, processing and interpreting of information to test ideas or theories. I intend for the course of help you to better understand research done by others and to equip you with an ability to do some research. This is a Communication Intensive Course.

Reading Schedule:
Read by September 1, Chapter 1, Human Inquiry
Read by September 6, Chapter 2, Paradigms, Theory, and Research
Read by September 8, Chapter 3, The Ethics of Social Research
Read by September 13, Chapter 4, Research Design

Test One on September 22 on Chapters 1-4

Read by September 27, Chapters 5 & 6, "Conceptualization, . . Scales"
Read by October 4, Chapter 15, Reading and Writing Social Research
Read by October 6, Chapter 7, The Logic of Sampling

Test Two on October 18 on Chapters 5-7 & 15

Read by October 20, Chapter 8, Experiments
Two Page Draft of Paper Due on October 25
Read by October 27, Chapter 9, Survey Research
Read by November 10, Chapter 10, Qualitative-Field Research

Test Three on November 17 on Chapters 8-10
Course Paper is due on November 22

Read by November 29 Chapter 11, Unobtrusive Research
Read by December 6 Chapter 12, Evaluation Research
Class Administration Day is December 1 (Attendance Required)

Final Exam: Thursday- December 15 @ 9:30 AM - On Chapters 7, 11-12--- PLUS the final will include an individualized exam portion on chapters covered on any missed exam. Individualized exams are only for students who missed one of the first three tests. And, the final is not required of students who took the first three tests but may be taken as part of an attempt at grade improvement.
**Sociology Course Objectives:**
1. Communicate effectively
2. Think critically, analytically, and reason logically about social issues and/or social problems.
3. Understand and use sociological principles, concepts and theories to examine social behavior and issues.
4. Understand and evaluate the application of sociological methods to social behavior and issues.

**Requirements:**
You are required to participate in class meetings on a regular basis, write a first and second draft of a paper and take exams. You may earn up to 400 points. You may earn 300 points on Exams and 100 points on your paper. There will be 4 Exams and your lowest score will be dropped. You may choose not to take the final exam if you are satisfied with your grades on the first three tests. To take a make-up exam you must have an appropriate reason such as a documented illness, death in the family or similar documented emergency. In these cases I will be happy to work with you. You may earn 15 EXTRA CREDIT points for positive contributions to class discussions and in-class written activities throughout the term. Regular attendance is required to earn these and you must be present on “Class Administration Day” to earn any of the EXTRA CREDIT points. Class Administration Day is December 1. On that day I will return your papers, report grades that take any curving into account, and course evaluations will be administered.

**Grading Scale:**
- 372-400 points=A) 328-343 points=B) 280-303 points=C) 232-259 points=D)
- 356-371 points=A-) 312-327 points=B-) 272-279 points=C-) 0-231 points=F)
- 344-355 points=B+) 304-311 points=C+) 260-271 points=D+)

**Academic Dishonesty:**
Cheating will not be tolerated in this course. A single case of cheating can be the basis for a failing grade and/or dismal from the University. One form of cheating is plagiarism. Plagiarism includes knowingly “representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials” (Code of Policies and Procedures for Students, Article V, Section 3A.1). The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include “#1) warning or reprimand and #2) grade adjustment” (see: Article VI, Section 1A): Other penalties may also be imposed at the Dean’s discretion. These include probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, referral to psychological counseling, and other appropriate disciplinary actions.
**Students with Disabilities:**
The Americans with Disabilities act states: “Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program.” If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille.

**Helpful Resources:** The WEB page for your text will help you understand information presented in this class. The Tutorial Quiz that is provided on the CD-ROM that came with your text is also at: [http://www.wadsworth.com/sociology_d/](http://www.wadsworth.com/sociology_d/)
Find the link to our text Basics of Social Research. This will take you to LINKS to chapter-by–chapter information and exercises, including the Tutorial Quiz. Other resources on the WEB location and on the CD-ROM will help you learn and do well on the tests.

**Communication Intensive Designation by Utah State University:**
This means that students must be given opportunities to improve their oral and written communication skills. This course has been designated as one of these courses.

**To Improve Oral Communication Skills:** To help improve your oral communication abilities you must come to class with comments and questions. I will come with questions that you should be able to answer or discuss from reading the text. You should come with written questions that will stimulate discussion. From time to time I will ask you to pose your question(s) for the class and randomly collect them as part of the EXTRA CREDIT scheme. Your comments and questions should stimulate the involvement of students in the class rather than a dialogue between the professor and one or few students. Also, you will be asked to share information about the paper you will write for the course. Your participation in this process will be an important consideration in the allocation of the EXTRA CREDIT points.

**To Improve Written Communication Ability:** Writing a 5 page typed double-spaced course paper provides an opportunity to help improve your writing skills. Please use the information on the CD-ROM and/or the information in Chapter 15 to help organize and guide your paper. The first 2-page draft of the paper is due on October 25 and is worth 10 of the 100 paper points. The final draft is due on November 22 at the beginning of class and is worth 90 points. Both drafts must be submitted in hard typed copy. Since there is not enough time to do a “real study” you should write the paper as a proposal. Select a topic that interests you. In the paper you must specifically refer to how the material in our text relates to the information you are presenting (Reference as Babbie, 2005). You must also reference two scholarly articles or books written by social
scientists that you read about the topic. You may find a list of traditional journals and electronic journals by following links at: http://library.usu.edu/

We will discuss requirements for the paper at different points throughout the semester. Please feel free to ask questions about the paper.

**Use the following as a guide for references to books:**

**Use the following as a guide for references to journal articles:**

**Use the following as a guide for references to the Internet:**

Some problems to avoid when writing your paper are:
1. Do not use the pronoun “I” in your paper. Avoid making personal value judgments about the topic. We often have strong feelings about social issues and that is fine but do not write an essay about a problem. That is appropriate for some classes but not for a social research methods class.
2. Avoid using statements such as “I believe” … “I think” …“I feel” It is usually best to write research papers in the third person but not always.
3. Use prior research and scientific logic to guide you. Rather than basing your argument of “I believe” show how your study relates to past studies of your topic.

**Some Important Dates to Mark on Your Calendar:**

Test One on September 22

Test Two on October 18

Two Page Draft of Paper Due on October 25

Test Three on November 17

Five Page Paper Due on November 22

Administration Day on December 1

Final Exam on December 15 at 9:30 A.M.