

Research Methods in Labor Studies
37:575:401

Spring 2015
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15-3:35 PM
Labor Education Center, Room 115

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Office hours: By Appointment

Course Description

How can we transform our everyday observations into data? How can we turn questions about the world around us into answers? Fortunately, you don't have to be Harry Potter to perform that kind of magic. In this course, students will become research wizards, learning about and implementing the major methods that are pertinent to labor studies and to the social sciences more broadly.

The course is divided into three segments: "Before the Research," "Types of Research," and "Analysis and Reporting." Required readings are taken from Earl Babbie's *The Basics of Social Research (6th edition)*, accompanied by examples of published studies that make use of the research practices we discuss. Course assignments include two "practical" projects (small-scale research projects using tools we have discussed in class) and an in-class midterm exam. In addition, for the final course paper, each student will write a proposal for a research project that uses one or more of the methods discussed in class, and will present this proposal to the class at the end of the semester.

Required Text

Babbie, Earl. 2002. *The Basics of Social Research, Sixth Edition*. Wadsworth Group.

All other readings are available on Sakai, under the "Resources" tab in the "Readings" folder.

Assignments and Grading

Practical assignment #1 (2-4 pages): 10% of final grade

In-class midterm exam: 30% of final grade

Practical assignment #2 (2-4 pages): 10% of final grade

Final paper (research project proposal) (5-7 pages): 40% of final grade (5% preliminary paragraph, 35% completed paper)

Class participation and attendance: 10% of final grade

Lateness Policy

Barring extreme circumstances, late work will not be accepted.

Syllabus

“BEFORE THE RESEARCH”

Tuesday, January 20th (Course Introduction)

Administrative details and introduction to the course

In-class reading:

Miner, Horace. “Body Ritual among the Nacirema.” *American Anthropologist*. 58(3): 503-507.

Thursday, January 22nd (Framing the Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 1: “Human Inquiry and Science” (pp. 1-29)

Tuesday, January 27th (Framing the Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 2: “Paradigms, Theory, and Research” (pp. 30-60)

Thursday, January 29th (Framing the Research – Hypothesis Testing)

Required reading:

May, Ann Mari, Elizabeth A. Moorhouse, and Jennifer A. Bossard. 2010. “Representation of Women Faculty at Public Research Universities: Do Unions Matter?” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*: 699-718.

Tuesday, February 3rd (The Ethics of Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 3: “The Ethics and Politics of Social Research” (pp. 61-90)

*Thursday, February 5th (The Ethics of Research – What **Not** to Do)*

Topics for practical assignment #1 distributed in class

Required reading:

Selection from Humphreys, Laud. 1975. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Transaction Publishers.

Tuesday, February 10th (Designing the Research)

Required reading

Babbie Chapter 4: “Research Design” (pp. 91-126)

Thursday, February 12th (Designing the Research)

Required reading:

Selection from Granovetter, Mark. 1985. *Getting a Job*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 3-22.

Tuesday, February 17th (Designing the Research)

Practical assignment #1 due in class

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 5: “Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement” (pp. 127-161)

Thursday, February 19th (Designing the Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 6: “Indexes, Scales, and Typologies” (pp. 162-193)

Tuesday, February 24th (Designing the Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 7: “The Logic of Sampling” (pp. 194-236)

“TYPES OF RESEARCH”

Thursday, February 26th (Experimental Studies)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 8: “Experiments” (pp. 237-258)

Tuesday, March 3rd (Experimental Studies)

Required reading:

Read at least one of these:

Pager, Devah. 2003. “The Mark of a Criminal Record.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 108(5): 937-975.

Or

Bertrand, Marianne, and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2003. “Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal?: A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination.” National Bureau of Economic Research (40 pages).

Thursday, March 5th (Experimental Studies)

Today in class we will discuss the format of the midterm exam.

Required reading:

Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Benard, and In Paik. 2007. “Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?” *American Journal of Sociology* 112(5): 1297-1339.

Tuesday, March 10th ((Survey Research & Midterm Review)

Midterm review: Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and get clarifications on course material.

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 9: “Survey Research” (pp. 259-301)

Thursday, March 12th

Midterm Exam

Tuesday, March 17th

SPRING BREAK

Thursday, March 19th
SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 24th (Survey Research)

Topics for practical assignment #2 distributed in class

Carr, Deborah. “My Daughter Has a Career; I Just Raised Babies’: The Psychological Consequences of Women's Intergenerational Social Comparisons.” 2004. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 67(2): 132-154.

Thursday, March 26th (Qualitative Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 10: “Qualitative Field Research” (pp. 302-338)

Tuesday, March 31st (Qualitative Research)

Required reading:

Selections from Stone, Pamela. 2007. *Opting Out?: Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*. University of California Press.

Thursday, April 2nd (Qualitative Research)

Practical assignment #2 due in class

Bass, Brooke Conroy. 2014. “Preparing for Parenthood? Gender, Aspirations, and the Reproduction of Labor Market Inequality.” *Gender & Society*.

Tuesday, April 7th (Unobtrusive Research)

Today in class we will discuss the format of the final paper.

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 11: “Unobtrusive Research” (pp. 339-370)

Thursday, April 9th (Evaluation Research)

Required reading:

Babbie Chapter 12: “Evaluation Research” (pp. 371-401)

“ANALYSIS AND REPORTING”

Tuesday, April 14th (Using Library Resources)

One-paragraph description of final research proposal due in class.

Julie Moscinski, Director of the James B. Carey Library at Rutgers, will be our guest in class today.

Required reading:

Babbie Appendix A: “Using the Library” (pp. 490-497)

Skim <http://familyinequality.wordpress.com/>

Thursday, April 16th (Qualitative Analysis)

Required reading:

Babbie, Chapter 13, “Qualitative Data Analysis” (pp. 402-435)

Tuesday, April 21st (Quantitative Analysis)

Required reading:

Babbie, Chapter 14: "Quantitative Data Analysis" (pp. 437-461)

Also take a look at "Spurious Correlations": <http://www.tylervigen.com>

Thursday, April 23rd

Lecture, "How to Decipher a Quantitative Article"

AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS BEGIN

There is no required reading for this class session.

Tuesday, April 28th

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

There is no required reading for this class session.

Thursday, April 30th

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS and **Final Paper Due**

There is no required reading for this class session.

