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Course Purpose
This is an advanced course designed to build on basic knowledge students should have of social science research methods. In a society that values information derived from social science research, it is important for college graduates to be able to understand, evaluate, derive conclusions from, and plan and conduct social science research. This course is designed to enhance your understanding of social science research. It focuses on the logic and conduct of social science research. Specifically, we will focus on how to find and evaluate research, the primary methods and their uses, procedures and guidelines used to assure reliability and validity, research design, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of data, and the research report.

This is a laboratory course in which you will have the opportunity to apply research skills to accomplish a research project. You will participate in a group project in which you will design, conduct, and report a research study. This project is integrated into the class throughout the semester.

Course Objectives
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1) Read and understand the logic of social science research reports.
2) Design, conduct, and evaluate simple social science studies using the three main social science methods.
3) Understand, compute, and draw conclusions from basic descriptive and inferential statistics.
4) Articulate how social science research is used in society.

University Administrative Dates:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin</td>
<td>Monday, January 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to add without a permission code</td>
<td>Sunday, January 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to drop (delete) classes</td>
<td>Wed., January 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to add, elect CR/NC, or audit classes</td>
<td>Monday, January 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to withdraw from classes- opens new window</td>
<td>Friday, March 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to reverse CR/NC option</td>
<td>Friday, April 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes end</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading day</td>
<td>Thursday, April 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam period- opens new window</td>
<td>Fri-Thur, April 27-May 3</td>
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**University ADA Policy:**
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

**Required Reading:**

Seven required academic articles will be available through library reserve. The reserve desk provided the following link through which these articles are accessible http://search.library.utah.edu
A set of readings that will be identified and retrieved by you through work associated with the research project.

**Recommended Reading for students who need extra work to master SPSS:**

Palant, J. (2007). *SPSS Survival Manual* (Version 3). Open University Press. (This is an older version of this guide that should cost less than the most recent version)

**Equipment**
A calculator with scientific functions will be needed

**Course Policies**
Readings and assignments should be completed prior to the beginning of class on the day listed. Please come to class prepared. Documentation should be provided to the instructor for absences due to official university matters or illness.

Academic dishonesty is defined in the student code of behavior. It includes such behaviors as cheating on tests and including plagiarized material on assignments. It will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible as outlined in the student code.

Exams need to be taken only as scheduled. If there is an extreme, uncontrollable, and documented situation that requires a student to miss an exam, contact the instructor prior to the scheduled exam to request an exception to this policy.

Electronic gadgets such as cell phones and pagers are prohibited during all class sessions. Please turn these devices off prior to the beginning of class.

Late assignments will result in a reduction of 20% of possible points for each calendar day, or portion thereof, late.

Questions or disputes related to grades. Contact professor as soon as possible but no later than two weeks after a question arises regarding a grade on a particular assignment during the semester. (See student code)

**Assignments and Grading**

**Participation, Daily Assignments, and Quizzes 10 points**
This class depends on members to participate by understanding material, providing feedback to one another, participating in class exercises, raising questions, and conducting data collection and analysis in a timely way. Occasional short daily assignments will be expected as we work through the course material and the class project.
Article Analyses 30 points
(Each student will systematically analyze two social science research articles in depth).
See assignment sheet for added detail.
2 analyses, 15 points each

Social Science Article Analysis: (approx. 2000 words per analysis)

Research Purpose Document: 10 points
(Approx 500 words)
Each student group will submit a research purpose document including the research purpose, rationale, 3 research questions and/or hypotheses, a list of and definitions of variables, and a bibliography with at least 5 academic article citations in APA style.

Evaluative Criteria:
1. To what extent is a clear and important purpose that focuses on communication included?
2. To what extent is a strong rationale provided?
3. To what extent are the questions/hypotheses well stated?
4. How clear are the definitions provided, especially for the purpose of guiding operationalization?
5. Are the articles listed in the bibliography from academic sources, helpful for providing guidance for the proposed research, and listed in APA style?

Research Proposal: 20 points
(Approx 1500-2000 words)
Each student group will submit a research proposal. A research proposal includes the Introduction, Literature Review, and a very thorough Methods sections of the research report.

Evaluative Criteria:
1. To what extent does the proposal reflect a thorough understanding of course material?
2. To what extent does each section meet the expectations identified in course materials?
3. To what extent does the Methods section provide a clear, thorough, and detailed road map that could be followed by a naïve researcher? (Including clear and thorough sections on procedures, planned sample and sampling procedures, and measurement instruments)
4. To what extent is the proposal coherent?
5. To what extent is the proposal well-written and free of mechanical errors?

Final Research Report 30 points
Each group will submit a full research report (approx. 4000 words)

Evaluative Criteria:
1. To what extent is each section of the research report thorough?
2. To what extent does each section of the research report include the information that should be included?
3. To what extent does the results section include a clear and accurate report of at least three descriptive statistics and three inferential statistics used to answer research questions or hypotheses?
4. To what extent is the research report coherent?
5. To what extent is the research report well-written and free of mechanical errors?

**Statistical Homework, 40 points**

These assignments provide the opportunity for students to master each statistical analysis. 3 homework assignments, First assignment= 10 points, Second assignment=15 points, Third assignment=15 points

**Evaluative Criteria:**
1. Accuracy
2. Readability
3. Thoroughness

**Tests, 60 points**

Three objective tests will test extent to which the basic course material is mastered. Tests will test knowledge and understanding of assigned reading and material presented in-class through all activities including lectures, discussions, exercises, etc. 3 tests, 20 points each

Final grades will be calculated by adding total points accumulated from the daily work, tests, essays, and projects. Grades will be assigned based on total points.

180-200 = A
160 -179= B
140-159 = C
120-139 = D

**Course Calendar**

(Subject to Change)

**UNIT I  OVERVIEW AND MEASUREMENT**

January 10 Introduction to 5710

January 12 Introduction to Research
Chs. 1, 2

January 17 The Research Process, Formulating the Research Purpose
   Ch. 3
   Daily assignment due: Chi-square, t-test for independent samples

January 19 The Research Report
   Research project work
   Ch. 17


   Optional Research Article:

January 24 The Research Report (cont)
   Ch. 17, 4, 18

January 26 Research Purpose Due
   Ethics
   Ch. 5

January 31 Measurement
   Ch. 6
   Daily assignment due: Correlation, regression

February 2 Issues in Planning Research
   Ch. 7
   Research Project Planning

February 7 TEST 1
   Research Project Planning

February 9 Statistical Analysis—Anova

UNIT II CONDUCTING RESEARCH

February 14 Article Analysis #1 Due
   Survey Research
   Chapter 9

February 16  Experimentation, Qualitative Research
            Ch. 8
            Ch. 15 (ESPECIALLY pp. 284-297)


February 21  Content Analysis
            Chapter 13, pp. 243-254


February 23  Article Analysis #2 Due
            LAB

February 28  Project Planning

March 1     Project Proposal Due

March 6   LAB  Statistical Analysis
            Project Planning

March 8  Test #2

March 13  No Class, Spring Break

March 15  No Class, Spring Break

UNIT III STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

March 20  LAB Introduction to Descriptive Statistical Analysis
            Ch. 10, Ch. 17

March 22  Introduction to Inferential Statistical Analysis
            Inferential Statistics – Differences
            Ch. 11

March 27  LAB  Descriptive Statistics Chapter 10, 11 Chapter 17

March 29  Homework assignment #1 Due
            Inferential Statistics (cont) Relationships,
            Ch. 12
April 3 LAB

April 5  Homework Assignment #2 Due

April 10  LAB  Project Work

April 12 LAB

April 17  Project Draft Due:  LAB

April 19  Test #3

April 24 LAB Project Presentations
Final Project Due

Study Guide for Text

Chapter 1
Social Science Research
Empirical
Proprietary Research
The Research Process
Scholarly Research
Goals of Research
Relationship between Research and Theory
The scientific Approach
Characteristics of Science
Research Questions vs. hypotheses
Criteria for determining significance of a question

Chapter 2
Inductive and deductive research models
Difference between topic and preliminary research questions
Conducting library search for scholarly information
Criteria used to determine when it is time to stop adjusting your preliminary research question
Reading Scholarly Articles and Books
The Role of Theory in Research
Steps 1 Through 4 in Theory Development

Chapter 3
Quantitative Research
A conceptual model for quantitative research
Role of each component of conceptual model
Looking for differences and relationships
Conceptual definition
Concept
Conceptual scheme
Variable
Operationalization (and operationalizing variables)
Construct
Directional hypotheses
Non-directional hypotheses
Criteria for assessing hypotheses
Null hypotheses
Independent and Dependent Variables
Intervening variables
Confounding variables
Reliability
Validity
Threats to reliability and validity

Chapter 17
Know the format of the research report and what should be included in each of the following sections:
Title
Abstract
Introduction/Problem Statement
Literature Review
Statement of research questions/hypotheses
Methods
Results
Discussion
References
APA style

Chapter 4
Inductive analysis
Model of qualitative research
Data in qualitative research

Chapter 18
Steps in determining what to write
Writing about the method
Presenting the data
Voice
Writing style
Criteria to evaluate writing
Description vs. Analysis in the written report
Chapter 6
Measurement
Three types of comparisons that are possible when variables are operationalized
Levels of measurement
Mutually exclusive, exhaustive, and equivalent criteria
Validity (especially content validity)
Reliability (internal, inter-coder, test-retest) (Within inter-coder reliability, unitizing reliability and categorizing reliability)
Relationship between validity and reliability
Cronbach’s alpha
Cohen’s kappa
Scott’s pi

Chapter 7
Population, sampling frame, sample
Generalizability
Replication (Three types of replication)
Probability sampling
Sampling error
Simple Random Sampling
Systematic Sampling
Stratified Random Sampling
Cluster Sampling
Non-probability sampling
Convenience sampling
Volunteer Sampling
Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Snowball Sampling
Network Sampling
Purposive Sampling
Quota Sampling
Probability
Probability level, significance level
Hypothesis testing
Type I and Type II Errors
Alpha level

Chapter 5
Ethical questions in planning research
Three ethical principles identified in the ‘Belmont Report
Institutional Review Board
Informed Consent
Use of Deception
Harm
Anonymity and Confidentiality
Debriefing
Plagiarism

Chapter 9
Purposes of survey research
Features of effective survey (p. 164)
Closed question
Open question
Pilot testing
Pretesting
Expert panel
Likert-type scale
Semantic differential scale
Social desirability response
Census vs. sample
Criteria for designing survey items
Use of existing questionnaires
Response rate

Chapter 15 pp. 268-284
Kinds of interviewing
The interview process—steps in planning interviews
The interview process—steps in conducting interviews
Transcribing the interview
Strengths and limitations of interview research
When to use focus groups
Focus group
Moderators’ procedures
Focus group outline
Focus group strengths and weaknesses
Narratives
Critical Incidents

Chapter 13
When content analysis is used
Content analysis
Manifest/latent content
Seven steps in content analysis
Selecting what to code
Developing content categories
Units of analysis
Training coders
Unitizing reliability
Coding reliability
Scott’s pi  
Cohen’s kappa  
Validity in content analysis  
Interpreting content analysis  
First-order linkages  

Chapter 8  
Purpose of experimentation  
True experimental designs  
Manipulation of independent variables  
Random assignment  
Control group, treatment group  
treatment  
Purpose of experimental research  
Differences between true experimental designs and quasi-experimental designs  
Manipulation check  
Experimental Designs: posttest only, pretest-posttest, factorial design  
Interaction effect, Main effect  

Chapter 10  
Descriptive statistics  
Calculation of descriptive statistics  
Inferential statistics  
Measures of central tendency  
Measures of dispersion  
Skewed distribution  
Data  
Normal curve  
SPSS  

Chapter 11  
Inferential statistics  
Calculations of inferential statistics  
Assumptions and when to use (functions of) which statistics  
Four analytical steps in using inferential statistics  
Chi-square (one-dimensional chi-square, two-dimensional chi-square)  
t-test (independent sample t-test, paired comparison t-test)  
one-tailed vs. two-tailed t-test  
Analysis of variance (oneway ANOVA, repeated measures ANOVA, factorial ANOVA)  
Between-subjects design, within-subject design  
Descriptive statistics that are appropriately used with each inferential statistic  
Using SPSS to calculate statistics  
Interpreting and reporting results of statistical analyses  
Reading results in research reports  

Chapter 12
Basic assumptions for using correlation and regression statistics
When to use (functions of) correlation and regression statistics
Four analytical steps
Correlation (Pearson product moment, Spearman correlation coefficient)
Regression (linear, multiple)
Appropriate descriptive statistics for each inferential statistic
Using SPSS to calculate statistics
Interpreting and reporting statistical results

Article Analysis Assignments
This assignment is designed to facilitate understanding the research report. You will analyze an article by drawing on class lectures/discussions, handout, and the course text. You will identify and describe the components in each subsection of the article. Although the length of your analysis is not a grading criterion, I estimate that this analysis will be approximately 2000 - 2500 words. Thoroughness, rather than length is important to this assignment.

1. Read the assigned article.

2. Analyze the article, using the questions included here.
Title
   1. What was studied?
   2. What variables were studied?
   3. What population was studied?

Author(s)
   1. Who are the authors? Last names, first initials.

Abstract
   1. What was the main purpose and specific objectives of the study?
   2. How was the studied carried out?
   3. What were the results of the study?

Introduction/Problem Statement
   1. What problem is addressed in this study?
   2. Why is this problem important?
   3. How does the study address the problem?

Literature Review
   1. How are the variables conceptualized?
   2. What has past research reported?
   3. How is past research used to develop the present research objectives?
   4. What theory or theoretical framework is guiding this research?
5. What is the rationale for the current study

Hypotheses/Research Questions
1. What are the hypotheses? What are the research questions?
2. For each hypothesis and research question, how does it flow from the literature review?

Methods
1. Who are the participants in the study? How may? How are they described?
2. What sampling procedure was used?
3. How was the study conducted? What detailed procedures did the researchers use?
4. If the study is an experiment, what experimental design was used?
5. For each variable, how was the variable measured? How was the validity of each measure reported? How was the reliability of each measure reported? (For content analysis, report the categories, coding procedures, inter-coder reliability)
6. Was the study a survey, content analysis, or experiment?

Results
1. For each hypothesis and research question, what descriptive statistical data are provided? What is suggested by this data in terms of the answer to the hypothesis or research question?
2. For each hypothesis and research question, what inferential statistical test is used? What is the calculated statistic? Degrees of freedom, and significance level?
3. For each hypothesis and research question, state whether results support the hypothesis or not, or what is the answer to the research question (narrative).

Discussion
1. Summarize the results.
2. How are the results interpreted? What do they mean, given the main purpose, framework, rationale for the study?
3. What are the limitations of this study
4. What suggestions for future research do the authors offer?
5. What conclusions are drawn?

For the second article analysis, using the article cited here, in addition to analyzing the article (through addressing the above questions), evaluate the article.

1. Did the authors address an important issue that could be addressed from a social science perspective?

2. How well did the authors address the issue technically?
   2a. Was the research design adequate to address the problem? How could the design have been improved?
   2b. Were the measures well-chosen? How could each measure have been improved?
   2c. Were the descriptive and inferential statistics appropriate? How could the reporting of statistical analysis have been improved?

3. Were the conclusions appropriate? What was over-stated? Left out?

Evaluative criteria
1. How thorough is the analysis in addressing each question.
2. How accurate is the analysis?
3. How well does the analysis reflect and understanding of the material?
4. To what extent is the writing clear and free of mechanical errors?
5. To what extent is the overall analysis coherent?