

**SOC 201**  
**Social Science Research Methods**  
**Professor Becky Richards**  
*Spring 2008*  
**M,W,F 12:10 – 1:00 p.m.**  
**HS207**

**email: rebecca.richards@umontana.edu**  
*Mailbox: SS 339*

*Office: SS 319*  
Telephone: **243-4061**  
*Office Hours: 1:10 – 2:45 p.m. M, W*  
**or by appointment**

**Course Objectives:**

Sociology is a social science and therefore is characterized by systematic methods of understanding the groups in society, their interactions, and the relations between the various groups that make up a society. As a discipline, sociology depends on its methods to design research questions, collect data, analyze social facts, and offer reliable and valid interpretations of those facts in answering research questions. Since sociology is a complex discipline, the methods of sociology are various. The sociologist has a wide array of methods by which she or he can conduct research.

The goals of this course are to introduce you to the different concepts and processes of doing social research and to offer you practice in designing and conducting social research.

**\*\*Prerequisites\*\***

Sociology 110 (Principles of Sociology) is highly recommended.

**Expectations and Requirements:**

***Late Arrivals and Early Departure***

Both are disruptive to the class and should be minimized at all times. Let me know if you have circumstances that will cause you to come late or leave early. **I reserve the right to deduct points from your class attendance/participation (as described above) if I believe late arrivals and/or early departures have become a problem.** It is imperative that you be here on time and stay for the duration of the class.

***No cell phones should be left on in class!***

I reserve the right to deduct class attendance/participation points for cell phone abuse.

***University Reminder***

**All students must practice academic honesty.** Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

### *Course Grades on Cyberbear*

Your final course grade will be posted on Cyberbear and **will not be available before it is posted** there. Please do not e-mail me or call for your final grade.

### *Group Work vs. Individual Assignments*

This course **requires small in-class group work** followed by **individually** written out-of-class assignments. **In other words, you are required to a) participate in the small group discussion of the exercise and b) complete your own writeup/summary afterwards. Your written work will only be given credit when you complete the written assignment yourself.** In other words, you cannot submit one written assignment as a pair/group and receive credit.

### *Assignments and/or Exams by E-mail Attachment*

Unless you secure approval from me before a due date, **no credit will be given to any written work (assignments/exams etc.) submitted to me by e-mail attachment or late without prior approval (where prior is at least one day before the assignment is due).** You must turn in printed hardcopy on the due date to receive credit unless you have made prior arrangements with me.

### *Communicating*

I check e-mail regularly and I encourage you to use it (see e-mail address above). I also encourage you to see me during office hours. Observe the following:

- Your return address should be clearly your name
- Include a clearly relevant-to-the-course subject line, e.g., “Class attendance on March 1” or I may delete your message as junk mail spam.
- Avoid junk mail subject lines like “Hello” or “Hi”
- Be clear in e-mail and write complete sentences with punctuation, not all capital letters, and other conventions of clear writing.

If you can't make the assigned office hours, please make an appointment.

### *Required Texts*

Reading about social methods is challenging. You will need to plan on keeping up with the reading assignments. You may also need to read some assignments more than once and take notes on the material to understand the key points. The following is the required text:

**Bryman, Alan. 2004. *Social Research Methods (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*. Oxford University Press.**

You will also be expected to have read the assigned material prior to coming to class. We have one textbook and the reading assignments are organized so that you can reasonably complete the reading on the schedule as assigned.

Unfortunately, I do not have an extra textbook to put on reserve in the library. You will need to buy your own copy.

### *Course Requirements*

**Quizes**

There will be 8 quizzes worth 20 points each. **There are NO makeup or late quizzes unless you have contacted me PRIOR to the quiz (e-mail is best) AND made arrangements with me ahead of the scheduled quiz. Leaving a voice message without making arrangements with me directly is NOT prior approval but if you have a true emergency, let me know and be able to provide documentation afterwards (just note that this does not necessarily mean approval for a makeup).** You will lose full quiz points for every quiz you miss. Quizes will be given at the beginning of class and I reserve the rights not to give you the quiz if you come to class late.

***Class Exercises and Out-of-Class Writeup Assignments***

There will be 9 exercise (both in-class and out-of-class) and summary “writeup” assignments that will be due at the beginning of the class indicated on the schedule below. Each writeup is worth 20 points. Exercise writeups are graded on completeness, composition (coherence), and accuracy. **There are NO substitute group exercise work or makeup or late writeup assignments unless you have contacted me PRIOR to the date each is scheduled (e-mail is best) AND made arrangements with me ahead of time. Leaving a voice message without making arrangements with me directly is NOT prior approval but if you have a true emergency, let me know and be able to provide documentation afterwards (just note that this does not necessarily mean approval for a makeup).** Exercise descriptions and writeup instructions will be handed out the day of the scheduled exercise. **If you miss class the day the exercise is held, you will automatically lose exercise writeup points for that particular exercise per the above.**

***Exam***

There is a final exam worth 140 points. The final exam is cumulative. Exam questions are both closed-ended and short-answer open ended. **There is NO EARLY OR LATE final exam unless a truly dire, documentable emergency occurs and I am notified of it before the exam and make prearrangements with you. The final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6 from 10:10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.**

**Course Requirements:**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 8 Quizes (20 points each)                               | 160 |
| 9 Exercise Summary Writeup Assignments (20 points each) | 180 |
| Final Exam (140 points)                                 | 140 |
| Total points  | 480 |

Your grade will be calculated on a straight percentage basis (100% base of 480 points possible).

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| 90% and above | =A |
| 80 to 89%     | =B |
| 70 to 79%     | =C |
| 60 to 69%     | =D |
| 59% and below | =F |

|   |               |   |               |   |
|---|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| <b>21 Jan</b>   | <b>22 Jan</b> | <b>23 Jan</b>   | <b>24 Jan</b> | <b>25 Jan</b>   |
| Martin Luther King Holiday  |               | Introduction to the Course<br>Ch 1: Social research strategies                    |               | Ch 1: Social research strategies  |
| <b>Week 2</b><br><b>28 Jan</b>  | <b>29 Jan</b> | <b>30 Jan</b>   | <b>31 Jan</b> | <b>1 Feb</b>  |
| Ch 1: Social research strategies  |               | <b>Quiz #1: Ch 1 (Social Research Strategies)</b>                                 |               | Ch 25: Ethics & Politics of Doing Social Research<br><b>Exercise #1: NIH Human Subjects Assignment (Out-of-class)</b> |
| <b>Week 3</b><br><b>4 Feb</b>   | <b>5 Feb</b>  | <b>6 Feb</b>  | <b>7 Feb</b>  | <b>8 Feb</b>  |
| <b>Exercise #1 Due</b><br>Ch 3: Nature of Quantitative Research               |               | Ch 3: Nature of Quantitative Research: Conceptualization and Measurement          |               | <b>Quiz #2: Ch 25 (Ethics &amp; Politics)</b>   |
| <b>Week 4</b><br><b>11 Feb</b>  | <b>12 Feb</b> | <b>13 Feb</b>   | <b>14 Feb</b> | <b>15 Feb</b>   |
| <b>Exercise #2: Quantitative Conceptualization and Measurement (in-class)</b> |               | <b>Exercise #2 Due</b><br>Ch 4: Sampling  |               | <b>Quiz #3: Ch 3 (Nature of Quantitative Research: Conceptualization and Measurement)</b>                             |
| <b>Week 5</b><br><b>18 Feb</b>  | <b>19 Feb</b> | <b>20 Feb</b>   | <b>21 Feb</b> | <b>22 Feb</b>   |
| President's Day Holiday   |               | Ch 4: Sampling  |               | Ch 4: Sampling  |
| <b>Week 6</b><br><b>25 Feb</b>  | <b>26 Feb</b> | <b>27 Feb</b>   | <b>28 Feb</b> | <b>29 Feb</b>   |
| <b>Exercise #3: Sampling (in-class)</b>                                       |               | <b>Exercise #3: Sampling (in-class)</b>   |               | <b>Exercise #3 Due</b><br>Ch 5: Survey research: Structured interviewing  |
| <b>Week 7</b><br><b>3 Mar</b>   | <b>4 Mar</b>  | <b>5 Mar</b>  | <b>6 Mar</b>  | <b>7 Mar</b>  |
| <b>Quiz #4: Ch 4 (Sampling)</b>   |               | Chs 6 and 7: Survey research: Self-completion questionnaires and asking questions |               | Chs 6 and 7: Survey research: Self-completion questionnaires and asking questions                                     |
| <b>Week 8</b><br><b>10 Mar</b>  | <b>11 Mar</b> | <b>12 Mar</b>   | <b>13 Mar</b> | <b>14 Mar</b>   |
| <b>Exercise #4: Survey Research (in-class)</b>                                |               | <b>Exercise #4: Survey Research (in-class)</b>                                    |               | <b>Exercise #4 Due</b><br>Ch 10: Secondary data and official statistics   |
| <b>Week 9</b>   |               |   |               |   |

|  |  |  |               |  |
|--|--|--|---------------|--|
| <b>17 Mar</b>  | <b>18 Mar</b>  | <b>19 Mar</b>  | <b>20 Mar</b> | <b>21 Mar</b>  |
| Quiz #5: Chs 5, 6, and 7 (Survey Research)   |  | Ch 10: Secondary data and official statistics                    |               | Exercise #5: Secondary Data Analysis (in-class)  |
| <b>Week 10</b><br><b>24 Mar</b>  | <b>25 Mar</b>  | <b>26 Mar</b>  | <b>27 Mar</b> | <b>28 Mar</b>  |
| <i>Spring Break</i>  |  | <i>Spring Break</i>  |               | <i>Spring Break</i>  |
| <b>Week 11</b><br><b>31 Mar</b>  | <b>1 Apr</b>   | <b>2 Apr</b>   | <b>3 Apr</b>  | <b>4 Apr</b>   |
| Exercise #5 Due<br>Ch 2: Research design and the experiment  |  | Ch 2: Research design and the experiment                         |               | Exercise #6: The Experiment (in-class)   |
| <b>Week 12</b><br><b>7 Apr</b>   | <b>8 Apr</b>   | <b>9 Apr</b>   | <b>10 Apr</b> | <b>11 Apr</b>  |
| Exercise #6 Due<br>Ch 13: Nature of qualitative research   |  | Quiz #6: Chs 10 and 2 (Secondary Data Analysis & the Experiment) |               | Ch 14: Ethnography and participant observation   |
| <b>Week 13</b><br><b>14 Apr</b>  | <b>15 Apr</b>  | <b>16 Apr</b>  | <b>17 Apr</b> | <b>18 Apr</b>  |
| Exercise #7: Ethnography/field research (out-of-class)<br>No class (Exercise #7 time)                            |  | Exercise #7 Due<br>Ch 15: Interviewing in qualitative research   |               | Quiz #7: Chs 13 and 14 (Qualitative Research and Ethnography)                          |
| <b>Week 14</b><br><b>21 Apr</b>  | <b>22 Apr</b>  | <b>23 Apr</b>  | <b>24 Apr</b> | <b>25 Apr</b>  |
| Ch 19: Qualitative data analysis   |  | Exercise #8: Qualitative data analysis (in-class)                |               | Quiz #8: Chs 15 and 19 (Interviewing and Qualitative Data Analysis)<br>Exercise #8 Due |
| <b>Week 15</b><br><b>28 Apr</b>  | <b>29 Apr</b>  | <b>30 Apr</b>  | <b>1 May</b>  | <b>2 May</b>   |
| Ch 24: Writing up Social Research (out-of-class)<br>No-class (Exercise #9 time: Read the research before 30 Apr) |  | Exercise #9: Reading a research article (in-class critique)      |               | Exercise #9 Due<br>Final Exam Review   |
| <b>Week 16</b><br>5 May<br>Finals Week   | <b>6 May</b><br><i>Final Exam</i><br>10:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. | 7 May  | 8 May         | 9 May  |