

## Sociological Methods

### Course Description:

An examination of major methods of sociological research. Topics include theory construction and hypothesis testing, conceptualization and measurement, causation and research design, sampling, survey research, comparative and historical research, participant observation, and experimental research. We will make extensive use of the department's computer lab (102 Stubbs Hall) and will hold our classes there. We will analyze data from the General Social Survey using the SPSS statistical package. Finally, we will design, carry out, and analyze our own opinion survey in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area.

### Course Requirements:

The course will consist of lectures, discussion, computer exercises, and participation in the planning, carrying out, and analysis of an opinion survey.

1. Read the assignments in the texts: Russell Schutt, Investigating the Social World, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press), and Joseph Healey, John Boli, Earl Babbie, and Fred Halley, Exploring Social Issues, 1<sup>st</sup> edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1999, ISBN 0-7619-8600-6) (an edition is also available that includes a student version of SPSS).
2. Regular attendance at lectures. There may be several unannounced quizzes that account for up to 10% of the grade.
3. Completion of assigned exercises and participation in conducting the opinion survey; writing a final report on the survey.
4. A mid-term exam and a final exam.
5. Any other assignments to be announced in class and/or on the website.

Note: Various course materials will be available on my website: [www.fweil.com](http://www.fweil.com). There will be updates of assignments, listings of data sources, survey results, press clippings, and other useful materials.

Sociology 2211: Sociological Methods

Spring 2007

(**Note:** Details and updates will be given on the class website)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Computer Lab Exercises from Healey</b>	<b>Baton Rouge Survey</b>	<b>Lecture/Reading in Schutt</b>
1/15		Introduction to the course (1/17)	General introduction to the computer lab & web site
1/22	Using SPSS & datasets; ch. 1-3	Questionnaire development	Theory construction & hypothesis testing; ch. 1-3
1/29	Religiosity: ch. 4	Questionnaire development	Conceptualization and measurement; ch. 4
2/5	Attitudes toward abortion: ch. 5	Questionnaire development	Causation and research design; ch. 6
2/12	Crime: ch. 7	Questionnaire devel.	Sampling; ch. 5
2/19	<b>No class</b> (Mardi Gras)	<b>No class</b> (Mardi Gras)	Questionnaire devel.
2/26	Inequality and gender: ch. 9	Questionnaire devel.	Survey research; ch 8
3/5	Review for Mid-term exam; Questionnaire approval	<b>Mid-term exam</b>	Finalize Questionnaire
3/12	Inequality and race: ch. 10	Introduction to survey lab; practice interviews	Comparative and historical research; ch. 11
3/19	<b>Interviewing this week [tent.]</b> The Family: ch. 11	Data collection/discussion	Ethnography & Content Analysis; ch. 9, 13
3/26	<b>Interviewing this week [tent.]</b> Voting: ch. 12	Data collection/discussion	Experimental research; ch. 7
4/2	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
4/9	Data analysis	Data analysis	Discuss BR survey; ch. 12-14
4/16	Data analysis	Data Analysis	Discuss BR survey; ch. 12-14
4/23	Data Analysis	Data Analysis	Discuss BR survey; Data Analysis
4/30	Data Analysis	Discuss BR survey; Data Analysis	<b>Reports due</b>