

Fall 2014 SOCIOLOGY 200H1F L0201

THE LOGIC OF SOCIAL INQUIRY

Instructor: Mark D. Easton

Office Hours:

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Class Time: Wed. 12-2pm

Location: Room 397, 725 Spadina Avenue

Web Page: portal.utoronto.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces you to the research process used in social science, with a focus on the ways in which sociologists turn social issues, interests, theories and debates into social research. The first two classes begin with an overview of the nature of inquiry in the social sciences, while the remainder of the course is focussed on introducing you to the major steps, concepts, and decisions involved in social science research; from developing a research question, to research design, to data collection, analysis and reporting. You will learn about the major decisions researchers typically face at each stage in the research process, and how the choices they make (or don't make!) can affect the research outcome. The types of key decisions the course will look at include the development of viable research questions from theory; developing testable hypotheses from a research question; the choice of whether to use quantitative and/or qualitative methods to investigate the research question; choosing your study population; dealing with ethical issues; and the many research techniques available, including: survey research, field research, and unobtrusive techniques.

Prerequisites: SOC101Y or both SOC102H and SOC103H. Students lacking this prerequisite can be removed at any time without notice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To introduce and engage students with the theory and practice of doing both qualitative and quantitative sociological research.
- Developing skills in formulating researchable questions.
- Advancing independent thinking regarding the selection of appropriate research methods and techniques, data collection strategies, and analytical approaches in sociological research.
- Improving students' overall critical thinking skills surrounding the methodological strengths and weaknesses of sociological research.
- Getting students to demonstrate their understanding of the steps in the research process through completing assignments that apply the concepts and address the major issues covered in class.
- To enable students to be informed and critical consumers of the research they encounter within and beyond academic settings.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Course requirements include a test, two writing assignments, and a final exam. The test will include multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will include multiple choice questions, and an essay question. Assignment instructions will be made available on Blackboard.

Test (Oct 8)	25%
Assignment 1 (Due Oct 29)	20%
Assignment 2 (Due Nov 26)	25%
Final Exam (Dec 8-19)	30%

REQUIRED TEXT

Available at the U of T Bookstore in hard copy:

Fundamentals of Social Research, 3rd Canadian Edition by Earl Babbie & Lucia Benaquisto 2013

A substantially cheaper e-version of this text is also available from the publisher. Follow this link to purchase the ebook or selected chapters directly from the publisher:

<http://www.nelsonbrain.com/shop/isbn/9780176662479>

Note: This course uses the 3rd edition because The U of T Bookstore was unable to procure sufficient new and used copies of the 2nd edition. The 2nd edition is also more expensive. You may opt to use the 2nd edition of this text, but at your own peril. There may be substantial differences in the examples, wording, and page numbering of the two editions. This could be problematic for you at test and exam time because any test and exam materials based on the text will refer to the 3rd edition.

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept 10: First class for SOC 200H1F.

Sept 21: Last day to add or change an F Section Summer Term course.

Oct 8: Test 1

Oct 29: Assignment 1 is due

Nov 3: Last day to drop SOC200H1F without academic penalty

Nov 26: Assignment 2 is due. Last class for SOC 200H1F

Dec 2: Deadline to request Late Withdrawal (LWD) from F section code courses at College Registrar's Office.

Dec 8-19: Final exam period.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings	Notes
Week 1 Sept 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Overview of the research process • The nature of inquiry in the social sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pg 105: Figure 4-4 • Chapter 1 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of course themes, assignment and exam expectations, communication logistics • Provide some perspective on the organization of the succeeding course material by introducing how the research process is typically conceptualized (Figure 4-4) • What is social theory and social science, and what are its aims? Theory vs. philosophy & belief; seeing social relationships through variables & attributes; quantitative and qualitative data; 			

Week 2	Hey students can you	Chapter 2	• Popular social science paradigms. From theory
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Sept 17	sParadigm? – Asking research questions from different perspectives Research design	Chapter 4	to operationalization to observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive vs. deductive theory • Exploration, Description, Explanation – the three main purposes of research • Thinking about causation • Units of analysis
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Week 3 Sept 24	Conceptualizing and measuring what you want to study	Chapter 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts & constructs; nominal & operational definitions; indicators & dimensions • Levels of measurement and their implications • Constructing indexes and scales to measure concepts • Validity and reliability in measurement, and the constant tension between the two
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Week 4 Oct 1	Choosing the subjects for your study	Chapter 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Populations and sampling frames • Non-probability sampling • Probability sampling (and an introduction to some basic statistical concepts) • Popular probability sampling designs
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Week 5 Oct 8	Test 1		Lecture and textbook material from Weeks 1 to 4 inclusive.
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Week 6 Oct 15	Should you be doing this? The Black, White, and Grey areas of Research Ethics	Chapter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-lecture and introduction to the video
Documentary relevant to the ethics of doing research with human subjects:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Money and the Boy with no Penis (50min) - BBC Documentary (2004) 			

Week 7 Oct 22	Survey Research	Chapter 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is survey research and when is it appropriate? • Data collection through surveys – questionnaire design • The pros and cons of survey based data collection
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Week 8 Oct 29	Unobtrusive Research	Chapter 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is unobtrusive research and when is it appropriate? • Popular data collection techniques used in unobtrusive research The pros and cons of unobtrusive research techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 1 is due 			

Note: Monday November 3 is the last day to “drop” this course without penalty.

Week 9	Quantitative data analysis	Chapter 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding, Data-Cleaning,
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Nov 5		Chapter 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Univariate Analysis – • Bivariate Analysis • The Logic of Multivariate Analysis
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Week 10 Nov 12	Quantitative data analysis continued	Chapter 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Elaboration Model
	Introduction to Social Statistics	Chapter 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of Association with Nominal/Ordinal Level Data • Measures of Association with Interval/Ratio Level Data • Inferential statistics • The principle of statistical significance
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Week 11 Nov 19	Qualitative Research (Field Research)	Chapter 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is field research and when is it appropriate? • Major field research frameworks: (e.g. grounded theory, extended case method) • Popular data collection techniques in field research • The pros and cons of field research
Week 12 Nov 26	Qualitative Research continued	Chapter 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative Interviewing Techniques
	Qualitative Data Analysis	Chapter 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The search for patterns and differences • Bringing order to the data: coding and memoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Class • Assignment 2 is due • The content and structure of the final exam will be discussed in the last class 			
<p>Note: An exact date for the pickup of Assignment 2 will be announced later in the term once the exam schedule for this class becomes known. However, the latest date Assignment 2 will be available for pickup is December 12 between 12:00 and 2:00pm in my office (Rm 225 at 725 Spadina). As per the course policy about submitting grade appeals for tests and assignments within one week of receipt, this date gives you exactly 1 week prior to the last day of the exam period (December 19) to submit a formal grade appeal.</p>			
Dec 8 – 19	Final Exam (exact date, time and location to be announced)		

COURSE POLICIES

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/> as soon as possible.

ATTENDANCE AND PREPARATION

Attendance is required. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class on a given day are responsible for obtaining from their classmates notes on all material covered, as well as information regarding any administrative announcements that may have been made. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings in advance of the class period for which they are assigned. Please note that there are two sections of SOC200 being offered this semester. These sections are not interchangeable: The lectures,

requirements, assignments, tests, and course policies differ. Therefore, it is important that you attend the section in which you are enrolled.

COURSE WEB SITE

The course website prepared on the Blackboard system is available at portal.utoronto.ca. The site will contain the course syllabus, all handouts, links of interest, and course announcements. Students are responsible for the content of all course materials. Discussion boards have been enabled on the course web site. All students are expected to behave respectfully towards their classmates and towards the professor and T.A.s.

EMAIL

When emailing your instructor or TAs, **you must use your utoronto.ca address**, as this is the only address we can be sure is yours. Please also be sure to include "SOC200" in the subject line. All students are responsible for checking their official utoronto.ca email addresses regularly, including the evening before class. While the instructor and TA's do their best to be available for students, a prompt reply cannot be guaranteed if your email comes within 24 hours of a test, assignment, or exam, or if your email is submitted over the weekend. If you have a question or need to meet with the instructor or T.A., please give reasonable time for them to respond.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Assignments are due in hard copy by the beginning of class on the specified due date, and a soft copy is also required to be submitted on the Turnitin.com website. Please note that this course is a major prerequisite for subsequent courses in Sociology. **Therefore, students are required to complete the two assignments, the test, and the final exam to achieve the maximum possible grade in the class. Students will receive a grade of 0 for any course requirement that is not completed by the end of the term.**

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to *Turnitin.com* for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the *Turnitin.com* reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the *Turnitin.com* service are described on the *Turnitin.com* web site.

Opting out from this requirement:

The University of Toronto allows students to opt out of the requirement to submit papers to Turnitin. If you choose not to submit your paper to Turnitin, you need to inform your TA 2 weeks prior to the due date. You will have to provide your TA with a document, submitted along with your essay, that includes: a) a statement explaining why you wish not to submit your paper to Turnitin.com, b) all the earlier drafts of your assignment, and c) annotations of your references (statement about their content and how they are relevant to your paper). In addition, you will be interviewed about your writing process.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

DO NOT email copies of your assignment to the professor or TAs. Assignments are due in hard copy by the beginning of class on the specified due date. The assignment will be considered late if the hard copy is not submitted on time at the beginning of class on the specified due date. Late hard copies will be penalized 5 percentage points per day (including weekends and holidays) if not handed in at the beginning of the class. Both early and late assignments should be submitted to the Sociology department at 725 Spadina Ave. Bring assignments to room 225, timestamp it, and drop it in the box for second year courses. Drop boxes are available from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding days on which the university is closed. **DO NOT put papers in the instructor's mailbox or slide them under the instructor's door.**

MISSED TESTS

Students who miss a test will be assigned a mark of 0. Students may, **at the discretion of the instructor**, have an absence excused with proper documentation. You must also submit an original University of Toronto Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form completed by a doctor who treated you **on or before the day of the test or assignment**. The Form is available on the University of Toronto's web site and may be completed by a Health Services physician or by your own physician: <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/> No other medical certification will be accepted. **Documentation must be presented within one week of the missed test or assignment. One make-up test will be scheduled. Students who do not attend the scheduled make-up test will receive a mark of 0.**

If a **personal or family crisis** prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). **The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope and be addressed to the instructor. Documentation must be presented within one week of the missed assignment.**

REQUESTS FOR RE-GRADING TESTS/ASSIGNMENTS

All requests for re-grading the term test or course assignment should be made to your TA **within one week of the date when the test/assignment was returned to the class**. A short memo that clearly states specific reasons to justify the request and backs up these reasons with evidence from your assignment must be submitted to your TA. No re-grading requests will be considered if the request is submitted more than one week after the test or assignment was returned to the class. This deadline applies to all students including those who missed the class when the test/assignment was returned and picked up his/her test/assignment at a later date. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up their tests/assignments on time in class.

USE OF WRITING CENTRES

All students are encouraged to use their available writing centres. Writing tutors help you to think through your ideas, develop a thesis, organize your paper, present your evidence effectively, argue logically, and express yourself more clearly and concisely. Proofreading and copyediting for spelling, grammar, or format are *not* within the primary scope of the writing labs' services.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work, having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any

questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>

If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.