

COLORADO WOMEN'S COLLEGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

COURSE NUMBER: SOCS 2400

COURSE TITLE: *Social Science Research Methods (Hybrid)*

Fall Quarter 2014: September 8th – November 16th, Mondays: 6-10pm

Class will be online September 29th and October 27th

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Amie Levesque, M.A., Ph.D. Candidate

Email: Amie.Levesque@du.edu

I will respond to email messages within 48 hours.

PREREQUISITES:

- **MATH 1160**
- **WRIT 1133**
- **ITS 1670**

Students are responsible for completing course prerequisites before registering for a class. Students may be removed from a course for which they have not fulfilled the prerequisite course work.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course, we will explore the ways in which social scientists propose, execute, and evaluate social research. We will begin with an overview of the purpose of and historical contexts of social scientific research, and then move into a survey of the characteristics of comprehensive, ethical, and comprehensive research practices. We will critically analyze several sociological studies representing a diversity of methodologies, as well as anecdotal experiences of researchers themselves. The course will culminate with an individual research proposal grounded within a sound methodological framework.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Identify historical contexts in which social scientific research emerged
- Identify and define the process of social scientific research
- Define and apply key terms in the practice of social research
- Identify appropriate research strategies to particular research questions
- Think critically about research studies, applying key methodological concepts in discussion, and identifying methodological issues in research
- Create a thorough research proposal, incorporating and elaborating on all relevant steps to complete the research project

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Women's College fully endorses the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research—is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course. Additionally, I will report the student to the university, and follow all university protocol for that report.

As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures

(www.du.edu/honorcode).

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

1. **REQUIRED: (1 Book for purchase, and E-Reserves on our course website on Blackboard)**

Locke, Lawrence, Waneen Wyrick Spirduso, and Stephen J. Silverman. 2013.
Proposals that Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals.
Sixth Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND PERCENTAGE OF YOUR FINAL GRADE

1. Class participation in class and online: 10%
2. Attendance: 10%
3. Exam: 20%
4. Literature Review Draft: 10%
5. Research Methods Section Draft: 10%
6. Final Project/Research Proposal: 40%

Percentage	Grade
95-100	A
90-94	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F

DUE DATE POLICIES

All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the date they are due. Any paper submitted after class on the date it is due is considered late. Students have the option of submitting the assignment the following week, but there will be a 30% penalty on the assignment. After 1 week, an assignment not submitted will earn a "0". No make-ups will be offered for the in-class exam, and no late final projects will be accepted.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. Active participation in class and online discussions is also required and will be a determiner in a student's final grade. An absence, for any reason, will result in forfeiting points for in-class student presentations. These may not be made up in another class session. If an emergency arises, it is the student's responsibility to contact her instructor.

A grade of incomplete will not be granted under any circumstances.

<http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletepolicy.html>

TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to create and maintain an optimal learning environment in the classroom, students should use technology appropriately. I expect that students will only use laptops and related electronics (iPads, tablets, etc.) as a way of taking notes—not for emailing and checking social networking sites. Also, texting is not allowed in class.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact the instructor to discuss their needs. Failure to notify the instructor immediately may hinder the college's ability to accommodate accordingly. Students with learning disabilities should also contact the University Disability Services Program at <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/>. University Disability Services houses the Learning Effectiveness Program (LEP) and the Disability Services Program (DSP).

OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students wishing to observe a religious holiday not celebrated on the academic calendar may do so provided advanced written notice is given the instructor during the first two weeks of the quarter. With advanced written notice, the absence will be considered an excused absence. For additional information, contact DU's Center for Religious Services (<http://www.du.edu/crs/>).

A NOTE ON STUDY HABITS AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

At the University of Denver, we require 2 hours of study for each hour in the classroom PER WEEK. Therefore, as this is a 4 credit course, you are expected to read/write/search/study for 8 hours per week IN ADDITION to attending class. I recognize that this is a significant and challenging time commitment, but we are committed to academic excellence, and this cannot be achieved simply by attending classes and skimming the readings alone. Reading course materials requires taking notes, engaging with the author's arguments, summarizing what you've read, usually on paper, and participating in the classroom discussions about the literature you read. Writing is a process, and successful writing requires a comprehensive outline and often times, several rounds of proofreading and edits. As this is a research methods class, you are required to review the literature on a topic of your choice. The research project calls for an extensive amount of time and dedication to searching several data bases and reviewing literature to find that which is appropriate for your research topic. Studying does not mean that you take classroom notes and then only go back to them the night before the final exam. Possessing strong study habits means that you review your classroom and reading notes at least once a week for about an hour. It means that you write down your questions and bring them to our classroom for discussion and clarification. Just as you expect me, as your instructor, to come to class prepared and to engage with you in the learning process, I expect that you will come to class prepared and ready to engage with our classroom materials and discussions.

No ethical college instructor gives out grades. Grades are earned. In order to earn an A, your work and effort must be EXCEPTIONAL. Your writing must have almost no grammatical or typographical errors. Your writing and discussion participation must be exceptionally thoughtful and exceptionally well-developed. You must not have any absences beyond the rare emergency (that you communicate to me). Your work must always be submitted on time. To earn a B, your work must be "VERY GOOD" or "ABOVE AVERAGE". Your writing must have minimal

grammatical and typographical errors. You must be prepared for and engaged in every class. Your work must always be submitted on time. To earn a C, your work and effort must be AVERAGE. Your writing is not entirely developed, and you participate minimally. You may have some absences. A “D” means that you did the minimum amount of work to pass just class. Your writing is incomplete, and you almost never participate. Nor are you prepared to discuss the readings in class. An “F” grade is earned when the student’s work and efforts are incomplete, and not to the high standards that college academia requires.

This class requires your greatest efforts, and will challenge you as a college level course should. Your effort and your resulting grade is your responsibility. My goal for each of you is that you will leave this course meeting its challenges and proud of the rewards you’ve earned as a result of engaging in those challenges.

COLORADO WOMEN’S COLLEGE STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

CWC has a core commitment to fostering a diverse learning community that is inclusive and respectful. Our diversity is reflected by differences in race, culture, age, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and myriad other social identities and life experiences. The goal of inclusiveness, in a diverse community, encourages and appreciates expressions of different ideas, opinions, and beliefs, so that conversations and interactions that could potentially be divisive turn instead into opportunities for intellectual and personal enrichment.

A dedication to inclusiveness requires respecting what others say, their right to say it, and the thoughtful consideration of others' communication. Both speaking up AND listening are valuable tools for furthering thoughtful, enlightening dialogue. Respecting one another's individual differences is critical in transforming a collection of diverse individuals into an inclusive, collaborative and excellent learning community. Our core commitment shapes our core expectation for behavior inside and outside of the classroom.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: All readings/assignments due on the day/date under which they are listed.

Session One (Monday, September 8th): Course Introduction: Research Strategies, The Literature Review, and The Social Research Question

Session Two (Monday, September 15th): Research Workshop: **Class will meet in the library for a research workshop and student research session at 6:00 in the Anderson Academic Commons room 275 (computer lab on the Evans Ave. side of the library on the main floor).**

- **Reading Due**

Proposals that Work: Chapter 1 and “Finding your question” (pgs 44-50) and “Reviewing the Literature” (pages 63-76)

- **Research Topic Due**

Session Three (Monday, September 22nd): Research Ethics

- **Reading Due:**

- *Proposals that Work:* chapter 2

- C.J. Pascoe: Appendix: “What if a Guy Hits on You?” (E-Reserves)

- Patricia Adler: “Researching Dealers and Smugglers” (E-Reserves)
- American Sociological Association: Code of Ethics (PDF link on Blackboard)
- Laud Humphries: “Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places” and “Methods: The Sociologist as Voyeur (E-Reserves)

Session Four (Monday, September 29th): Reviewing Research Proposals: **Course Materials are ONLINE this week. No regular class meeting**

- **Reading Due:**
 - *Proposals that Work*: Chapter 7 and Part III: Proposals 1, 2 & 3
- **Post at least one response to each of my discussion questions by 10pm on Thursday, and at least two responses per question to your classmates by 10pm on Saturday night.**

Session Five (Monday, October 6th): Conceptualization, Measurement, and Sampling

- **Reading Due (On E-Reserves)**
 - Jana Jasinski, et al.: Chapters 1, 2, Appendix A and Appendix B in *Hard Lives, Mean Streets: Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women*
 - Katherine Newman: Chapter 3 and Appendix B and C in *Rampage: The Social Roots of School Shootings*.

Session Six (Monday, October 13th): Research Design, Causation

- **Literature Review Draft Due online (Blackboard) on Friday, October 17th by 10pm**

Session Seven (Monday, October 20th): Qualitative Studies

- **Reading Due:**
 - *Proposals that Work: Chapters 5 & 6*
 - Nancy Scheper-Huges: From *Death Without Weeping*: Chapters: Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 8 (on DU library website as an E-Book)
 - William Corsaro: Chapter 3: Studying Children and Childhood in *The Sociology of Childhood* (E-Reserves)
 - Jay MacLeod: Appendix “On the Making of *Ain’t No Making It*” (E-Reserves)

Session Eight (Monday, October 27th), Online Class Meeting: Quantitative Studies and Content Analysis

- **Reading Due: (On E-Reserves)**
 - Larry Lyon: Chapters 10, 11, and 14 in *The Community in Urban Society*
 - Mark Regnerus: “How Different are the Adult Children of Parents Who Have Same-Sex Relationships?”
 - Jack Levin and James Spates: “Hippie Values: An Analysis of the Underground Press” and “Through the Looking Glass of Time: Personal Reflections on Researching the Hip Counterculture”
- **Draft of Research Methods section due by 10pm on Blackboard on Sunday, November 2nd**
- **Post at least one response to each of my discussion questions by 10pm on Thursday, and at least two responses per question to your classmates by 10pm on Saturday night.**

Session Nine (Monday, November 3rd):

- **Film: *Sidewalk***
- **Review for Exam**

Session Ten (Monday, November 10th): The Final Class!

- **Final Exam**

*******Final Project—Research Proposal due to Amie on Blackboard by 10pm on Sunday, November 16th. No late papers will be accepted.**