Sociology 398: Sociology Research Project (4 credits)
Winter Quarter 2022
Hybrid Class, In-Person Meeting Time: Mondays, 2:00-3:50pm
Location: FMH (formerly Neuberger Hall) Room 230

INSTRUCTOR
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Office Hours: Via Zoom (https://pdx.zoom.us/j/84888918488), phone, or email: 2:00pm-4:00pm on Wednesdays, or by appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is intended to provide applied research experience following successful completion of Social Research Methods (SOC 397). It is a required course for undergraduate sociology majors. The main purpose is to apply skills and knowledge from SOC 397 to an original research project.

COURSE GOALS
- ✓ Strengthen understanding of major concepts and methodologies in sociology
- ✓ Enhance data analysis skills using SPSS
- ✓ Critically evaluate quantitative sociological research
- ✓ Write a research paper
- ✓ Perform a research presentation

PREREQUISITES
Students must have taken and passed SOC 397 (Social Research Methods) with a C or better.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
No new textbooks are required. Use the textbooks, and your lecture/lab notes, from SOC 397.

COURSE WEBSITE
Check Canvas (https://canvas.pdx.edu) and your email on a regular basis for feedback on your research project and important announcements.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASS
Course Structure. This class will provide the structure for you to answer a research question of your choice using existing data and SPSS. You will have several weekly assignments leading up to your final paper. To help you complete these tasks, you will also be randomly assigned to small groups that you will work with all quarter.

Classes will meet in-person on Mondays; we will review notes/lecture during this class, followed by time for planning and working in groups: students will have time to ask questions and work as a group during the 2nd half of Monday classes. The "hybrid" nature of the class means we have fewer in-person meetings; instead of a scheduled 2nd class meeting each week, you will be expected to connect with your group to discuss the work you've done/what you've found, and to complete and submit the week's assignment.

- Students will work in groups of approximately 5-6 individuals for the entire quarter
- Group members should contribute equally (weekly peer evaluations will determine a portion of your final grade)
- Students should strive for effective communication and accommodation of all group members
- Make a plan at the beginning of each week and be aware of assigned tasks

All assignments and materials are available and should be submitted on Canvas. Course materials are organized in **learning modules**. While the syllabus provides an overview of the class, **the learning modules will contain the most up-to-date information and instructions for each week**. Please be sure to check the **Weekly Summary** in each learning module at the beginning of each week.

The course activities for this class, and their associated contribution to final grades, are:

1. **Research Paper Project**:

1-1.   **Initial Research Proposal** (5% of grade): During the first week, your group will choose a research topic that you will work on throughout the term. The initial research proposal should include a (tentative) title, the motivation of the study (one or two paragraphs), and the specific aims of the paper (one or two paragraphs). The initial research proposal should be 1-3 pages in length with double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins.

1-2.   **Literature Review with Identification of a Research Gap** (10% of grade): Using research search tools such as 'SocINDEX,' 'Web of Science,' and/or 'Sociological Abstracts,' search for previous studies that are closely related to your topic, summarize them, and identify a research gap. This assignment should build on a revised (based on our feedback) Initial Research Proposal, and should be 4-6 pages in length, including a minimum of 4 (or more) relevant articles in the references, with double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins.

1-3.   **Research Plan** (10% of grade): Research plans should describe the focus of the project. Building on your previous work, the research plan (no more than 10 pages, with double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins) should also include the research questions, hypotheses, and research design.

1-4.   **Identification of Variables** (10% of grade): From the codebook for the data set you plan to use, identify variables to best measure your dependent variable (DV), independent variables (IVs), and any mediating (intervening) variables (MVs). Plan to include at least a few sociodemographic control variables, such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, educational

attainment, employment status, income, marital status, or parental status, as needed.

1-5. **Data Description** (10% of grade): The data description should have two sections. In the *Data* section, describe the target population, sample recruitment strategy, data collection method, and the sample size. In the *Measures* section, summarize the variables used in the analysis and explain how they are coded (or recoded). The data description—by itself— should be about 2-5 pages, with double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins.

1-6. **Data Analysis #1** (10% of grade): This section will present: (1) univariate sample characteristics by providing central tendencies, dispersions, and distributions of the relevant variables, as well as a bivariate table (or figure) of two main variables (i.e., IV and DV) after cleaning the data and recoding variables as desired; and (2) interpretations of the results. For this assignment, there should be at least two tables for your descriptive analysis, and appropriate interpretation of your results in about one to two paragraphs.

1-7. **Data Analysis #2** (10% of grade): This section will work on developing and presenting analyses conducted to answer research questions and confirm or reject hypotheses. Expected work will include: (1) results of regression analyses to address the research question(s); and (2) interpretations of the results. For this assignment, there should be at least one table for your regression results, and interpretation of your results in about two paragraphs.

1-8. **Paper Presentation** (10% of grade): You will present your group research project to the rest of the class. The presentation will give groups a chance to share their research interests, to provide/receive comments, and to refine the ideas and analysis prior to submitting a final draft of the paper. The paper presentation should be no longer than 10-12 minutes and constructed using PowerPoint or similar software (about 10-20 slides).

1-9. **Final Paper** (10% of grade): The final project paper should be at least 15 pages but should not exceed 30 pages in length, with double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. It should incorporate all the required sections from previous weeks as well as the suggested revisions and edits made based on feedback provided throughout the term. In addition, a discussion/conclusion section should be added at the end of the document that summarizes the findings and discusses the implications of those findings. Tables should be embedded in text. Follow ASA style guidelines.

2. **Nine Peer Evaluations** (10% of grade): Students are expected to turn in evaluations after group activities throughout the term. Because research projects are team projects, peer evaluations will show what specific contributions you and your team members have made, as well as what you have learned while working on the activities.

3. **Reflections on Group Presentations** (5% of grade): Students are expected to ask questions and are required to turn in reflections on all the other groups' project presentations. As part of these reflections, you will answer specific questions I provide.

FINAL GRADES ARE DETERMINED BY THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:
   1. Research Project (all group members will receive the same grade):

1-1. Initial Research Proposal	5%
1-2. Literature Review with a Research Gap	10%
1-3. Research Plan	10%
1-4. Identification of Variables	10%
1-5. Data Description	10%
1-6. Data Analysis #1	10%
1-7. Data Analysis #2	10%
1-8. Paper Presentation	10%
1-9. Final Paper	10%
2. Nine Evaluations (individual grade)	10%
3. Reflections on Group Presentations (individual grade)	5%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

A 92 - 100%	B+ 88 – 89%	C+ 78 – 79%	D+ 68 – 69%	F ≤ 59%
A- 90 - 91%	B 82 – 87%	C 72 – 77%	D 62 – 67%	
	B- 80 – 81%	C- 70 – 71%	D- 60 – 61%	

COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Group Ground Rules: Because much of your work in this class will be performed in groups, it is vital that you keep your group updated on anything that will prevent you from doing your share of the group's work and/or anything that will make you miss a meeting with your group. This does *not* mean that you need to share private information with your peers; I just ask that you be honest about when you will be available, and when you will not be able to do your share of the group tasks. If you're unable to do your share of the group's work in one week, you should "make it up" to the group by tackling a larger share of the group work in subsequent weeks.
- All students should do their part to accomplish each of the weekly group activities successfully.
- All students should strive for efficient communication and accommodation of all team members.

Writing Tips: All assignments for this course should use double-spacing, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. Please follow ASA style guidelines when you cite references in your assignments. Here are resources that will help with your written assignments:
- Quick Tips for ASA Style: https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_Style.pdf
- Plagiarism Resources: https://www.slideshare.net/peter1t/an-introduction-to-plagiarism
- How to Avoid Plagiarism: https://guides.library.pdx.edu/c.php?g=271259&p=2613696

Sharing of Class Material: Sharing class material (syllabi, recordings, PowerPoint slides, or any other material from this course) without the instructor's express permission is not permitted.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: Students who violate PSU rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failing the course and/or dismissal from the university. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of PSU, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For more information on PSU policies and definitions of academic misconduct, see: https://www.pdx.edu/dean-student-life/academic-misconduct.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities: PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please discuss with me.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations.

During the pandemic, DRC is performing all essential functions of the work of the DRC remotely, including initial appointments and meetings. Call 503-725-4150, email drc@pdx.edu or visit the virtual front desk via Zoom Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The DRC is currently open for in-person visits 2pm-5pm Monday-Friday. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, and they are monitoring voice mail and email messages closely and will respond as soon as possible.
  ▪ If you already have accommodations through DRC, please contact Professor Thompson to make sure she has received the faculty notification letter and to ensure that all accommodations are being provided.

Title IX Reporting Obligations: Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or the student code of conduct, I must share the information with my supervisor or the University's Title IX

Coordinator or the Office of Affirmative Action. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus on D2L.

Student Support Services: Services to help you thrive in this class and at PSU more generally, including information about the writing center, financial services, and technology support can be found here: https://www.pdx.edu/student-life/support-services.

Classroom Requirements for All Students and Faculty Due to Covid-19: The University has established rules and policies to make the return to the classroom as safe as possible. It is required for everyone to follow all the Return to Campus rules and policies. To participate in this class, PSU requires students to comply with the following.

Masks Required at all Times in Classroom
- Wear a mask or face covering indoors at all times. Your mask or face covering must be properly worn (fully covering nose and mouth and tight fitting). Mesh masks, face shields, or face covering that incorporates a valve designed to facilitate easy exhalation are not acceptable. **Because a mask must be worn in the classroom, there should be no eating or drinking in the classroom.** If you have a medical condition or a disability that prevents you from wearing a mask or cloth face covering, you must obtain an accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to be exempt from this requirement.
- CDC, State, and County guidance does not limit class size for in-person instruction or require physical distancing.

Vaccination
- Be vaccinated against COVID-19 and complete the COVID-19 vaccination attestation form. Those students with medical or nonmedical exemptions or who will not be on campus at all must complete the process described on "COVID-19 Vaccine Exemption Request Form" to establish those exemptions.

Health Check, Illness, Exposure or Positive Test for COVID-19
- Complete the required self-check for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to campus each day.
- If you are feeling sick or have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to campus. Call SHAC to discuss your symptoms and situation (503.725.2800). They will advise you on testing, quarantine, and when you can return to campus.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, report your result to SHAC and do not come to campus. SHAC will advise you on quarantine, notification of close contacts and when you can return to campus.
- Please notify me should you need to miss a class period for any of these reasons so that we can discuss strategies to support your learning during this time.
- If I become ill or need to quarantine during the term, either I or the department chair will notify you via PSU email about my absence and how course instruction will continue.

Failure to Comply with Any of these Rules

As the instructor of this course, the University has given me the authority to require your compliance with these policies. If you do not comply with these requirements, I may ask you to leave the classroom or I may need to cancel the class session entirely. In addition, failure to comply with these requirements may result in a referral to the Office of the Dean of Student Life to consider charges under PSU's Code of Conduct. A student found to have violated a university rule (or rules) through the due process of student conduct might face disciplinary and educational sanctions (or consequences). For a complete list of sanctions, see Section 14 of the Student Code of Conduct & Responsibility

Guidance May Change

Please note that the University rules, policies, and guidance may change at any time at the direction of the CDC, State, or County requirements. Please review the University's main COVID-19 Response webpage and look for emails from the University on these topics.

Course Schedule (subject to change with reasonable notice)

week	day	date	activities[1,2]
Week 1	Mon	1/3	Course introduction, group formation, decide on a research topic
	Sat	1/8	Initial research proposal & Evaluation #1 due
Week 2	Mon	1/10	Literature review & finding a research gap
	Sat	1/15	Literature review/research gap & Evaluation #2 due
Week 3	Mon	1/17	**(No class meeting on 1/17 due to MLK Day)**
	Sat	1/22	Research plan & Evaluation #3 due
Week 4	Mon	1/24	Identification of variables
	Sat	1/29	Identification of variables & Evaluation #4 due
Week 5	Mon	1/31	Data description
	Sat	2/5	Data description & Evaluation #5 due
Week 6	Mon	2/7	Data analysis #1 (univariate/bivariate)
	Sat	2/12	Data analysis #1 & Evaluation #6 due
Week 7	Mon	2/14	Data analysis #2 (multivariate)
	Sat	2/19	Data analysis #2 & Evaluation #7 due
Week 8	Mon	1/21	Finalize data analysis/Refine Tables & Figures
	Sat	2/26	
Week 9	Mon	2/28	Paper presentations
	Sat	3/5	Paper presentations & Evaluation #8 due
Week 10	Mon	3/7	Final paper
	Sat	3/12	Reflections on group presentations due
Finals Week	Mon	3/14	Final paper & Evaluation #9 due

[1] Deadlines for all assignments are 11:59pm on the designated day.

[2] All group assignments (including the final paper) will be submitted through your group assignment folders, while evaluations and reflections on presentations will be submitted via individual assignment folders.