

Graduate Quantitative Methods
Sociology 702
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Fall 2021

Class Meetings:

Classroom:

Office Hours:

Office:

Phone:

Email:

Course Description:

This course provides graduate students with advanced training in quantitative sociological research methods. It is the first in a two-course methods/statistics sequence required in the Sociology graduate program. During the semester we will broadly cover various dimensions of quantitative social research: research design, conceptualization and measurement, survey research, secondary data analysis, content analysis, and social experiments. We will also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs and their application to various types of research questions. The main objectives of this course are twofold: to provide students with an opportunity to develop a mastery of the main skills needed to design and conduct quantitative social research and to help students become more informed consumers of sociological research, research reports, and research presented in the popular media and elsewhere.

Required Texts and Readings:

- SPSS 25 or 26 Software. Each student will need their own SPSS software, or you can use the Remote SPSS from OIT at UNLV.
- Alford, Robert R. 1998. *The Craft of Inquiry*. Oxford University Press, New York, New York.
- Additional required readings will be provided for each week.
- **(FREE, UNLV Library Access EBooks)**_Sampling. (2009). In Fowler, F. J. *Applied Social Research Methods: Survey research methods (4th ed.)* (pp. 18-47). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- **(FREE, UNLV Library Access EBooks)**_Menard, S. (2002). *Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences: Longitudinal research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications

Course Requirements:

Homework Assignments

There are 5 Homework assignments that will involve the reading, comprehension, analysis and/or written evaluation of various methodological issues. All assignments will be available on WebCampus. This will total 60% of your final grade.

- Homework #1: Conceptualization and Operationalization
- Homework #2: Sampling and Survey Design
- Homework #3: Census Data and SPSS Data Entry
- Homework #4: SPSS Data Assignment
- Homework #5: Quantitative Research Proposal

Article Summaries

You will be responsible for submitting summaries of the readings each week. There will be a Summary link in each module for you to upload your reading summary. The summaries should be succinctly synthesized and no more than 3 pages. This will total 20% of your final grade.

SPSS Lab Exercises

There will be several mini-assignments involving SPSS. These are considered Lab exercises, which we would normally be completing together in class. These exercises are worth 20% of your total grade.

Grading Scheme:

60%: Homework Assignments

20%: Article Summaries

20%: SPSS Exercises

Course Policies:

All course assignments will be completed and handed in on the assigned date. There will be no make-up exams and no exceptions to this policy. All course assignments are due on the assigned due date. The following deductions will be taken if your assignment is late:

- One day late, including the same day but after class, will be a 10-point deduction
- Two days late will be a 20-point deduction
- Three days late will be a 30-point deduction
- Four days late and beyond, no assignments will be accepted and the student receives no points

Final Grades:

Final grades will be based on the total points that you earn on all the course assignments and exams. The following table shows the course grading system and final letter grade.

- A: 100-93
- A minus: 92-90
- B plus: 89-87
- B: 86-83
- B minus: 82-80

My Grading Philosophy:

I do not grade on a “curve.” This is helpful for those who may be anxious about a particular course (especially a course required for one’s major). This way, you will always be able to keep track of how your current performance translates into a certain grade (and what it will take to achieve a certain grade). Thus, your grade is not determined by how well others do in the course. Your performance in this class determines your final grade.

Additional Information:

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the

expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright) is available at <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](https://www.unlv.edu/drc) (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a

permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars), <https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which states that “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy), <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries' Research Consultation](https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian) website, <https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also [ask the library staff](https://ask.library.unlv.edu/) questions via chat and text message at <https://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=8271&hl=) webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=8271&hl=>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a "Drop one" option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV's official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail

account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](https://www.unlv.edu/asc), <https://www.unlv.edu/asc>, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/), <https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3-301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

Diversity Statement

As an institution of higher learning, UNLV represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students, and is committed to aspiring to maintain a Campus environment that values that diversity. Accordingly, the University supports understanding and appreciation of all members of its community, regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or political affiliation. Please see [University Statements and Compliance](https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance), <https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance>.

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect and trust between the students and the instructor. Accordingly, the instructor asks that students be willing to listen to one another's points of view, acknowledging that there may be disagreements, keep discussion and comments on topic, and use first person, positive language when expressing their perspectives.

Course Schedule

All work listed should be completed **PRIOR** to the class for that day.

Week 1: Introductions; Quantitative Background; The Process of Research

(8/25)

- Welcome!
- Read Syllabus
- Complete the Introduction Assignment
- Explore the Modules

Week 2: Research Ethics; Research Politics

(9/1)

- WebCampus Readings
- Article Summary Discussion *Due Tuesday Before Class*

Week 3: Beginning Research; Conceptualization/Operationalization

(9/8)

- Readings: Alford Chapters 1, 2, and 3
- WebCampus readings
- Article Summary Discussion *Due Tuesday Before Class*
- Homework 1 assigned

Week 4: Sampling: Best Practices and Longitudinal Research Design

(9/15)

- Readings: Fowler Chapters 3 and 4; Menard Chapters, 1, 2, 3, and 4
- Fragile Families Sampling Design
- Article Summary Discussion *Due Tuesday Before Class*
- Homework 1 Du
- Homework 2 Assigned

Week 5: Survey Questionnaire Construction; Survey Distribution; Survey Analysis

(9/22)

Readings:

- Fowler Chapters 6 and 7; Alford pages 72-85
- The Science of Asking Questions
- Article Summary Discussion *Due Tuesday Before Class*

Week 6: Census Data; SPSS Introductions

(9/29)

Readings:

- Alford Pages 121-133
- SPSS Tutorial
- Article Summary Discussion *Due Tuesday Before Class*
- Homework #2 Due
- Homework #3 Assigned

Week 7: Data Entry, Data Cleaning, and Recoding Variables

(10/6)

- SPSS Guide – Readings TBA
- SPSS Exercise 1

Week 8: SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(10/13)

- Directions in WebCampus
- SPSS Exercise #1 Due
- Readings: WebCampus
- Homework #3 Due

Week 9: Tables, Indexes, and Scales

(10/20)

- Directions in WebCampus
- SPSS Exercise 2 assigned
- Readings: WebCampus
- Homework 4 assigned

Week 10: SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(10/27)

- Readings: WebCampus
- SPSS Exercise 2 Due
- SPSS Exercise 3 assigned

Week 11: SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(11/3)

- SPSS Exercise 3 Due

Week 12: SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(11/10)

Readings:

- WebCampus
- Homework 4 Due

Week 13: SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(11/17)

Readings:

- WebCampus
- Homework 5 Assigned

Week 14: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

(11/24)

- Thanksgiving Week Holiday. Work on Research Proposal.

Week 15 SPSS Quantitative Data Lab

(12/1)

- Proposal Presentations to Class
- Presentations Due

Week 16:

(12/8)

- Homework #5 Due by 5pm: Final Research Proposal