



Sociology 2206 (530): Research Methods in Sociology
Summer Intersession 2019

Dr. Stephen Lin

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Class time/room:

Mondays 1:00pm - 4:00pm / BR-302

Office hours: by appointment (UH 353)

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the tools which scientists use to conduct research on society and produce knowledge – in other words, how to *be* sociologists. Many of the fundamental issues of research will be covered in this course, including the scientific method and research process, ethical dilemmas that may arise, and some of the procedures used to collect and analyze data, i.e., quantitative and qualitative approaches to social research. During the course, students will learn how to carry out a scientific investigation from the formulation of hypotheses, to the selection of an appropriate methodology, to the implementation of a study. Enhancing students' ability to critically examine sociological research is an important part of this course.

Antirequisites: Social Work 2206A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, or Political Science 3324F/G.

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

Course Objectives and Competencies

- Identify key aspects of qualitative and quantitative research and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Distinguish between poor and well-crafted research methods in sociology (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Design a realistic research project that incorporates key elements of the research process (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Thoughtfully analyze and evaluate published research from a methodological perspective (critical thinking level 2, problem solving level 2, communication level 3, inquiry and analysis level 3).

Required Text(s):

Neuman, L.W., & Robson, K. (2016). *Basics of Social Research* (4th Canadian ed.). Toronto: Pearson Canada.

Reading and Participation:

This course is required for the honours programme in sociology. As a result, it is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material. There are attendance and participation and grades, so failure to attend classes regularly will put you at a disadvantage. Much of the course is cumulative, so missing one class can cause problems for comprehending the material in the following classes.

Method of Evaluation

Test #1 (May 21).....	25%
Test #2 (May 30).....	25%
Group Research Proposal (June 3).....	35%
Class Attendance & Participation.....	15%

Evaluation Breakdown

Test #1 (Tuesday, May 21) – 25%

The test is worth 20% of your total grade and covers **chapter 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 & 9 and lecture materials (from May 13 to May 16)**. This exam consists of multiple-choice questions only.

Test #2 (Thursday, May 30) – 25%

This test is worth 20% of your total grade and covers **chapter 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and lecture materials (from May 21 to May 29)**. This exam consists of multiple-choice questions only.

Class Attendance & Participation – 15%

Students are expected to attend every class meeting having thoughtfully completed the readings and be prepared to participate actively in discussion. Your class participation will be evaluated based on both **frequency and quality** of your contribution.

Group Research Proposal (Monday, June 3 by 11:59pm) – 35%

At the end of this course, students will submit a group research proposal based on their own interest in a sociological or criminological topic. The requirement for this written assignment is listed as follows:

- Introduction & Research Rationale (1 page)
- Social Importance (1 page)
- Literature Review (2 pages)
- Research Design (2 pages)

Important Reminders

- Length: **6 pages** max., double spaced
- Late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless you provide legitimate reasons for late submission
- One submission per group via the OWL dropbox.

**Detailed instruction of this research project will be provided on in class and on OWL.

Course Schedule

1	May 13	Introduction to the Course Theory & Social Research	Ch. 1, 2
2	May 14	Designing a Research Study	Ch. 5
3	May 15	Conceptualization, Operationalization & Measurement	Ch. 6
4	May 16	Experiment & Survey Research / Survey Design	Ch. 8, 9
6	May 21	Test #1 Literature Review Workshop	Ch. 4
7	May 22	Sampling	Ch. 7
8	May 23	In-depth interview & Field Research	Ch. 12, 13
9	May 27	Nonreactive Quantitative Research & Secondary Data Analysis	Ch. 10
10	May 28	Ethics in Social Research Nonreactive Qualitative Research	Ch. 3, 14
11	May 29	Quantitative & Qualitative Data Analysis	Ch. 11, 15
12	May 30	Test #2 Final Paper Due on Monday, June 3 by 11:59pm	None

2018/19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES & REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:

<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg117.html>

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official dates <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg7.html>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory

(<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg130.html>)

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg112.html>).

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf and http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/finalgrades.pdf).

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/> .

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to

Mental_Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.