

Sociology 202 - Research Principals and Practices
Department of Sociology, St. Francis Xavier University

Professor: Dr. Norine Verberg

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Until further notice, I will use Teams/phone for office hours

Class times: X4/X5

Tuesdays, 11:15-12:30

Fridays, 12:45-2:00

Student office hours

Tuesdays, 3:30-5:00

Thursdays, 1:30-5:00

Fridays, 2:15-3:15

or by appointment

Course Description

This course addresses how various philosophic assumptions shape the aims and practices of research in Sociology. It provides students with empirical research design principles and an introduction to methods of collecting and recording data, assessing reliability and validity, and conducting data analysis. Different research strategies are introduced and ethical implications of research will be discussed. 3 credits

Required Reading

Textbook: Loseke, Donileen. 2017. *Methodological Thinking: Basic Principles of Social Research Design*, 2th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Journal articles: Studies posted on Moodle will be used for class exercises and as preparation for the exams and assignment. Print them and bring them to all classes.

Evaluation

❖ Participation	25%	This include Moodle homework submissions
❖ Midterm	20%	Tuesday, October 19
❖ Assignments	30%	Tuesday, November 30 at 11:15 pm
❖ Final exam	25%	TBA (all chapter)

Class Attendance and Participation

You are encouraged to participate in class by asking questions and contributing to class discussion. Class attendance will be taken; multiple unexplained class absences will be reported to the Dean. Missing many classes is likely to impact your performance on the exams and the assignment. If you miss class, you are responsible to find out what you missed (e.g., lectures, announcements, etc.). Expect to be tested on the text and material done as 'homework' and taken up in class.

Office Hours and Communication

You are encouraged to see me during office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. If you contact me by email, please write SOCI202 in the subject line. In the message, please include a proper salutation and sign with your name and student ID number (you can set this up in Outlook).

Drop date: Students may drop a course, online in Banner, on or before November 3, 2021.

The Tramble Rooms – Centre for Accessible Learning

If you are registered at the Tramble Rooms: Centre for Accessible Learning, please contact me with any instruction. http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy spelled out in the university calendar. <http://www.stfx.ca/services/registrar/academic-integrity-document.pdf> The specific issue of plagiarism will be discussed when the assignment is introduced.

Course Organization

You will complete several *small* homework assignments (posted to Moodle) to apply what is taught in this course. This will be explained further in class. The homework is designed to prepare you for the exams and the assignment.

Schedule of Readings and Topics*

Date	Chapter**	Topic
September 7/10	1	<i>Introduction</i> ; Why study social research, and where to start
September 14/17	1 - 2	Methodological thinking; Data, concepts, and theory
September 21/24	2 - 3	Logic of relationships between data and concepts/theory
Sept. 28/Oct. 1	3 - 4	Appropriate/ethical/practical research questions
October 5/8	4	What is literature? A literature review as a process
October 12/15	4 -5	How to do library research; Defining measurement
<i>Oct. 19/ Oct. 22</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Midterm (Ch. 1-4 & Moodle); Assignment introduction</i>
October 26/29	5	Operationalization in quantitative & qualitative research
November 2/4	5 - 6	Evaluating measurement; Complexity of gathering data
<i>November 9/12</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>No classes: Fall term break</i>
November 16/19	6 -7	Data generation methods; Population & samples
November 23/26	7 - 8	Using probability and nonprobability sampling
<i>Nov. 30/Dec. 2/7</i>	<i>7 - 8</i>	<i>Ass'n due: Characteristics of high-quality research design</i>

* Please complete the reading prior to the class they are covered.

** See Moodle for other assigned readings and homework.

At the end of this course, you will have grounding in the following research areas:

- How different philosophic approaches understand the social world inform research
- How research is related to theory development
- Quantitative, qualitative, and critical approaches to research design
- Strategies for describing qualitative or quantitative data and drawing inference
- Qualitative and quantitative approaches to measurement and sampling
- Standards and principals established for ethical practices in research
- Strategies for recognizing and avoiding research bias
- How to critique peer-reviewed research (journal articles)