Fayetteville State University
College of Arts and Sciences—Department of Sociology
SOCI 590—Advanced Social Science Research
Spring 2014 Semester

I. Locator Information:
Instructor: Roger Klomegah, Ph.D.
Course # and Name: SOCI 590-D1—Advanced Social Science Research
Office Location: Science & Technology Bldg. Rm 425
Office hours: Mon, Wed & Fri 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m
Day and Time Class Meets: Online. January 11 – May 2
Total Contact Hours for Class: 48
Email Address: rklomegah@uncfsu.edu

Semester Credit Hours: 3.0
Office Phone: 910-672-2139
Primary means of communication are FSU email & Blackboard resources – Announcements and Messages

FSU Policy on Electronic Mail: Fayetteville State University provides to each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account (username@uncfsu.edu) that is easily accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries and requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail.

Rules and regulations governing the use of FSU email may be found at http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf

II. Course Description:
SOCI 590 is a study of social science research methodology. The course covers survey research, sampling, techniques, questionnaire construction, data analysis, computer applications, and proposal writing. Prerequisite: SOCI 503.

III. Disabled Student Services:
In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

IV. Textbook:

Additional Reading


V. COURSE GOALS and OBJECTIVES:
As social science practitioners, our findings and conclusions about the social world must be based on research—a systematic process by which we investigate and improve our understanding of the social world. In addition, research enables the practitioner to identify questions and the appropriate methods and designs to make observations and interpret the results.

SOCI 590, therefore, is an advanced study of the research process. We will systematically review and discuss all aspects of the research process. The course will introduce you to how the social scientist selects a research problem, designs studies, collects data, analyzes the data, interprets the results, and draws valid conclusions. Also, you will learn about the ethical responsibilities of the social science researcher.

In addition to gaining the theoretical knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to conduct social research, you will also gain practical knowledge on “how to do” research through class exercises and a research project. You will also gain hands-on experience and the skills necessary to integrate computer resources into social research by using SPSS for Windows software for your data analysis.

Student Learning Outcomes
After successfully completing this course, you should be able to:
1. Design a research project using both primary and secondary data by identifying a research problem, reviewing relevant literature, selecting variables, formulating hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting findings, and presenting results.
2. Use a statistical package such as SPSS to analyze research data.
3. Interpret statistics (SPSS) output and provide theoretical explanations for statistical patterns.
4. Evaluate information and data reported in the popular press and in scientific journals using critical thinking skills developed in the course.
5. Effectively communicate research findings, both in written and oral form, with the aid of PowerPoint.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of ethical requirements in social research as evidenced by successful completion of NIH’s online human subjects certificate course.

VI. Course Requirements:
The following are the minimum requirements of SOCI 590:
1. Complete all class assignments.
2. Read all assigned materials in the course textbook, recommended materials, and handouts.
3. Take two (2) comprehensive examinations.
5. Successfully complete a research project. A research proposal is required for your project. The research proposal must be approved before you continue with the actual research project.
   You must successfully complete all phases of the research project to receive a passing grade for the course. If you fail to successfully complete any one of the phases of the research project, you will not receive a passing grade for the course. The specific requirements for the project will be discussed and posted on Blackboard.

Evaluation Criteria
a. Assigned Grades
Adding your total points and dividing the sum by the total possible points for the course will determine the course grade (Total earned points/Total possible points) * 100 = Your Grade Score

**Course Grading Scale:**
- **A**=Superior (90-100);
- **B**=Good (80-89);
- **C**=Marginal—acceptable for graduate credit (73-79);
- **F**=Failure—any level of performance below **C**.

b. **Attendance Requirements**
Regular online participation is an indication of class attendance, which is a key factor to passing this course.

c. **Graded Assignments**
The course grade will be based on class assignments/exercises, two tests, a research proposal, an IRB report, and a final research paper. You will be tested on materials from class handouts, recommended reading materials, and the course textbook. Adding your total points and dividing the sum by the total possible points for the course will determine the course grade.

**Value of Each Assignment:** None of your tests, assignment scores, and score on final paper will be weighted in computing your final grade.

d. **Policy on Missed or Late Assignments**
If you miss a test without any prior notification, you will receive zero score on that particular test. You will be permitted to take a make-up test ONLY if you inform me at least a week before the scheduled date for the test. Any request for a make-up test must be accompanied by appropriate documentation. I expect you to adhere strictly to deadlines for class exercises and projects.

e. **Other: Academic Dishonesty**
Fayetteville State University’s policy on academic dishonesty will be enforced. Please refer to the Student Handbook.

VII. **Academic Support Resources:**
Writing Center (Location—Helen T. Chick Building -- 001B; 672-1033)

VIII. **Course Outline and Exam Schedule:**
This is a very flexible schedule. Adjustments will be made to accommodate how fast or slow students comprehend materials in each chapter.

**Unit 1—Foundation Issues in Social Research**

Introduction/overview; Human inquiry and social research; Doing sociological research; Ethical consideration; Theory and social research; Methodology; Literature review.

**Assignments for Unit 1**
1) Read chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 of Neuman
2) Additional Reading from UNC Chapel Hill Center
Source: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/
   a) Writing under specific fields – Sociology
   b) Citation, style, sentence level concerns – Plagiarism
   c) Specific writing assignments/contexts – Literature reviews
   d) Specific writing assignments/contexts – abstracts

3) Review articles:

4) General Social Survey (GSS) (2012) Data Sources:
   a) https://www.google.com/#q=gss+2010+data
   b) http://www.cengage.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M63&product_isbn_issn=9781133049791&chapter_number=0&resource_id=277&altname=GSS%20Datasets

Unit 2—Planning and Preparation

Strategies of research design; Qualitative and quantitative measurement; Qualitative and quantitative sampling.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirement
Complete NIH’s Protecting Human Research Participants course.

Assignments for Unit 2
1) Read chapters 6, 7 & 8 of Neuman.
2) Begin writing Phases I and II of research report.

Unit 3—Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

Experimental research; Survey research; Nonreactive research and secondary analysis; Retrieving a data set; Creating data file, SPSS data management; Running multivariate statistics and interpreting results; Creating tables and formatting SPSS results for publication.

Assignments for Unit 3
1) Read chapters 9, 10, 11 & 12 of Neuman
2) Read articles/book:


3) Complete Phases I and II and begin writing Phases III and IV.

**Unit 4—Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

Field research and focus group research; Historical-comparative research, Analysis of qualitative data

**Assignments for Unit 4**

1) Read chapters 13, 14 & 15 of Neuman

**Unit 5—Communicating with Others**

Writing the research report and the politics of social research. This is a continuous unit. The research project will be ongoing throughout the semester. Additional information, including guidelines for the proposal and the final paper, as well as the rubric for grading, will be posted on Blackboard.

**Assignments for Unit 5**

1) Read chapter 16 of Neuman
2) Read course handouts
3) Complete writing all phases of research project. Edit and submit for grading.

**Examinations**

Midterm Examination and Final Examination (Dates TBD)

**IX. Teaching Strategies**

Teaching techniques are in the form of

a) Class exercises, questions and answers, discussions, and short essays.

b) There will be virtual class meetings (via Adobe Connect) occasionally to discuss issues relating to the course.

It is extremely important that you read all assigned topics and supplementary materials thoroughly.

**X. Bibliography**


