SOC 300: Introduction to Sociological Research Methods
Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00-3:50pm
EPASW 2233 – CRN 31347 & 31346

Instructor: Jerome Hendricks
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm
Office: BSB 4170
Email: jhendr7@uic.edu

Teaching Assistant: Carolina Calvillo
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Office: BSB 4074
Email: ccalvi5@uic.edu

Course Description: How does *any* scientist produce scientific fact? How do we discern between "good" and "bad" science? In this course, we will deal with the general logic of scientific inquiry and develop design, measurement, and analysis techniques through contemporary methods of data collection. We will be exploring how social science is produced through lecture, discussion and hands-on work. We will cover both qualitative and quantitative methods in the social sciences. The University requires that in order to take this course, you must be at least sophomore standing, have taken SOC 201 (statistics), and have taken one other 200-level sociology course.

Course Aims and Outcomes: This course is an introduction to research methodology. Its main purpose is to survey the major research designs and techniques that are at the core of social science inquiry. Additionally, we will include practical components that will allow you to work with these techniques and apply concepts. Beyond basic terms and types, the course will prepare you to contribute in more advance social science research from both critical and practical perspectives. Because of the time frame and vast amount of information we need to unpack, special emphasis will be placed on self-organization. Do keep in mind that many discussion sessions and projects are designed to build on larger individual projects. In other words, those actively involved on a consistent basis will find in-class work will facilitate aspects of outside work.

Office Hours and Availability: I will be in my office Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm, available via chat (jerry.m.hendricks@gmail) or email on Fridays from 12-2 or by appointment if necessary. Carolina will hold office hours on Tuesday from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm and will also be available via email or by appointment if necessary. We will announce any changes to availability via email and class announcement with as much notice as possible. I rarely check my mailbox and I'm not giving you my phone number so if you can't come and see me, email is the best way to contact me (jhendr7@uic.edu). I will always do my best to respond to any questions, comments, or issues within 24 hours. HOWEVER, I may require more time for questions sent on weekends and I cannot guarantee a response to emails the night before class.

Please keep in mind; I have taken the time to include as much as possible in this syllabus so when questions come up, **look to this document as your first resource**.

Course Grading:
90-100%: A
80-89%: B
70-79%: C
60-69%: D
0-59%: F

The following system will account for the total grade you receive:

Assignments	Points	% of Grade
Attendance	70	12
In-Class Labs	200	33.5
Assignments		
Online Chapter Quizzes	90	15
1-Page Quantitative Proposal	25	4
Ethics Certification	15	2.5
Quantitative Final Project	100	16.5
Qualitative Final Project	100	16.5
Discretionary	15	2.5
Total	**600**	**100**

Required Text: The Bryman text should be available at the campus bookstore, but feel free to look for it at the library or online. Used copies are fine as long as it's at least the 3rd edition. Keep in mind, there are differences between the 3rd and 4th editions and if you choose to buy an older book, it will be YOUR responsibility to account for differences and missing chapters. The first chapter is available on the Blackboard site under the Course Documents section. If you will have a problem getting the textbooks by the second week of class, please come and talk with me as soon as possible.

Bryman, Allen. 2012. *Social Research Methods. 4th ed*. Oxford Unisversity Press.

Additional Materials: There will be additional readings outside of the text from time to time. These should all be posted on Blackboard now under the Course Documents section. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are having difficulty with any of the posted materials.

Changes to the Syllabus: We have a great deal of material to cover and not much time to do it. With this in mind, I certainly do not plan on changing the syllabus. Some of our in-class meetings may need to be adjusted from time to time but this will not alter your commitment for the day. If something out of the ordinary occurs or serious adjustments need to be made, I will take time to discuss it with you first and then post a new syllabus with calendar changes ASAP. Further, necessary information on lab work will be provided in advance so the activity should not come as a surprise to any of us. **I understand and respect that you need to plan your lives.** I consider this document a contract and do not take adjustment lightly so you will always receive advanced, emailed notice from me concerning the course.

Assignment Descriptions

As I'm sure I will continue to point out over the term, we have very little time together. Therefore, I have designed a variety of assignments for in and out of the classroom. Some will be graded more heavily than others but ALL of them are important for your understanding and your grade. When assignments are to be uploaded to Blackboard they must be **typed, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, no more than one-inch margins, single-spaced** (just like this syllabus) **with your name, the assignment name, and the date present in the top, left-hand corner**. Most all written pieces are to be posted to Safe Assignment links because I want the work to be in your words rather than from outside sources. When uploading a file to Blackboard, please name the file in the following fashion:

LASTNAME_DATE_ASSIGNMENT.docx (ex. "Hendricks_013113_Ethics.docx")

A similar procedure should be used for emailing me as well. So, **in the subject line of an email**, I would like the following information:

SOC300: LASTNAME - ISSUE (ex. "SOC300: Hendricks - Question about Chapter 4")

Attendance (70 pts): Attending class is extremely important! How else can you discuss the readings and interact with your colleagues and me? Because of the interactive nature of most in-class work, I cannot allow an excused absence of any sort. I have made an exception for emergencies below but these should only be dire situations. There will be a sign-in sheet every day that will count toward attendance and WORK DONE IN CLASS CANNOT BE MADE UP. I understand that you have a life outside of our class. However, I urge you to make a commitment to the work for yourself and your colleagues. You can earn a total of 70 points by simply being in class.

Lab Exercises (20 pts each): There will be ten in-class lab assignments throughout the semester. These are designed to take a hands-on look at the issues from the text we are currently working with. Lab assignments should be easy and fun points but please keep in mind that these days CANNOT be made up. In other words, missing these days can result in a loss of almost thirty-four percent of your grade. All necessary information on these assignments will be provided in class prior to lab day.

Online Chapter Quizzes (5 pts each): At the end of many classes I will post an online quiz on blackboard for the next chapter due before the class it will be discussed (*). This is a basic, open book, five-question quiz on the assigned readings and will be VERY easy for those of you that make a commitment to stay caught up. The quiz will be available up to the beginning of the target class and cannot be made up once the discussion has taken place for that chapter.

One-Page Quantitative Proposal (25 pts): In preparation for the Quantitative Final Project, you will be required to post a proposal for research on Blackboard by 11pm, 02.15. This is a basic, one-page essay but must include two specific components. First, tell me what the focus topic of your project will be and include a few preliminary research questions. Second, discuss the approach/variables you might utilize to answer your questions. The approach employed in this

proposal may change a bit before completion of the Quantitative Final Project but I want to know what you initially think would be a sound strategy to answer your questions. Moreover, take the time to visit the SDA archive found at http://sda.berkeley.edu/archive.htm and check out the variables, see how the site works, and present a research project that will actually work!!! Components of this project will be discussed in some detail over the first unit of the course so I suggest you wait to finalize this brief assignment until after we've discussed the all of the issues. The section on writing a research proposal (pg 92) and the section on research strategy (pg 35) might be helpful here.

IRB Ethics training Certification (15 pts): This certification is required for all researchers prior to field work and once you complete the online course you will be certified for two years. I chose to include this certification as an assignment so you will be prepared for any possible research assistantship positions in the coming years. **PLEASE KEEP IN MIND**, the process does take some time so I suggest you get started as soon as possible to avoid having to sit down and do the entire module in one day. The link to the online course can be found in the Course Information section of Blackboard. After completing the online course (Group 2. HSP, Social / Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel., Basic Course) you will get a completion certificate. **Save this** to your computer or flash drive and upload a copy to Blackboard to complete the assignment (**due by 2pm, 02.05**). By posting the certificate to Blackboard, you will receive the points offered here regardless of how you score on the module. The important part is that you pass and are certified.

Quantitative Final Project (100 pts): Your final quantitative assignment will be to analyze the focus topic presented in your proposal through the Berkeley Survey Documentation and Analysis (SDA) archive found at http://sda.berkeley.edu/archive.htm. You will produce a series of crosstabs and respond to the questions found on the project worksheet posted in the assignments section of Blackboard. Responses should display your ability to interpret data and produce a formal analysis. To complete the project, a single document that includes both your responses and copies of important crosstabs should be **uploaded to Blackboard by 11pm, 03.08**.

Qualitative Final Project (100 pts): Your final qualitative assignment will be to produce a field journal including time spent in the field, jottings from the field, reflection memos, and outside research on the phenomenon you are analyzing. This project will start with Lab 6 and carry through the rest of the semester. It is not my aim to load you up with extra outside work so I have built in four work days starting in March to give you time to observe a public location, identify a gatekeeper or informant, and ask them a few questions about an issue. You will be asked to bring in local media sources and sociological theory to inform your analysis. All documents will be organized/scanned/copied into a single field journal that you will **post to Blackboard by 11pm, 05.03**. Specific directions and details will be provided at the beginning of the third unit.

Discretionary Points: I do not provide extra credit of any kind. However, I have added fifteen bonus points for those individuals that hand in everything on time, maintain perfect attendance and a high level of effort throughout the course. These points may not make much of a difference for some of you (it only comes out to about 2-3% percent) but if you find yourself on the border of one grade or another they could make a significant difference. Therefore, you are encouraged

to get involved in the course, stay organized, stop by my office hours, ask questions, and let me know how things are going.

Grade Issues: I understand that you may not always agree with grading. However, I often have a hard time understanding what it is students are upset about (beside the 'letter' or 'number'). In order to avoid the conflict that can arise from emotional responses to graded material, I insist we all abide by the following procedure concerning grade disputes. First, because of the quantity of grading Carolina and I may have at any given time we may not always be the best at providing feedback. So, please email me a feedback request and we will expand on any grade ASAP. Second, if you have a specific complaint please wait 24 hours after a grade is posted and submit it in written form. This written complaint will include your specific issue and provide examples from your work that show why you believe the grade is inappropriate. I will respond to this written complaint and we can schedule a time to discuss the matter if at this point the issue is still unresolved. This process may seem involved but please trust me that it allows for clear and appropriate discussion of disputed grades.

Late Assignments: The assignments for this class are pretty straight-forward. Due dates are provided in multiple sections of the syllabus and will be discussed in class; nothing should come as a surprise to anyone. In-class work will not be accepted after the designated due date. Because all assignments outside of class will be posted to Blackboard, you will need to contact me as soon as is possible if you are unable to meet the deadline requirement. If you are having technical difficulties, you should contact me **before** the deadline has passed. To be fair to your colleagues, I am not inclined to accept late work at all. If you have an emergency excuse, I will consider it on a case-by-case basis and possibly accept your assignment late at a severe penalty.

Academic Integrity and Honesty: I start all semesters with the belief that no one means to plagiarize. With this in mind, we will take time during the semester to talk about what constitutes plagiarism and cheating. Please read the Guidelines Regarding Academic Integrity section in the 2011-2013 Undergraduate Catalog (http://www.uic.edu/ucat/catalog/). If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to ask or email. If I determine that you have intentionally plagiarized on an assignment, you will receive no credit (a zero grade) for that assignment and a possible failing grade for the course as stipulated in university policy.

Cell Phones and Internet Usage: Please refrain from using your cell phones during class. It drives me nuts and as much as I try to ignore them, I'm compelled to stare at people who feel the need to text or take calls during class. ☺ Moreover, it's obvious when you are distracted by technology and it has the tendency to distract others. Similarly, laptops can be a great tool in class but please keep their use to note taking and documentation only. If you are expecting an important call or need to be reachable, let me know in advance and set your phone to vibrate.

Excused Absences: There are no excused absences. If anyone has an unavoidable emergency, I will judge them on a case-by-case basis. Further, I need to know as soon as possible and I will need some form of documentation (like an obituary, doctor's note, the receipt from your mechanic, or anything you can provide to document why you needed to be elsewhere). Generally, family trips are not an emergency absence out of fairness to your colleagues.

Students with Disabilities: Please let me know as soon as is possible if you require any assistance. Please visit the Office of Disability Services for documentation. The UIC Office of Disability Services, also referred to as the UIC Disability Resource Center, can be found at 1200 W. Harrison St. Room 1190 SSB (MC 321), (312) 413-2183 Voice/ (312) 413-0123 TTY.

Religious Observances: If you are observing a religious holiday, please notify me in advance and as soon as possible in order to arrange for an alternative assignment if necessary. The UIC policy on Observance of Religious Holidays is at http://www.uic.edu/depts/oae/policies.html (at the bottom of the page).

Drop Policies: If you need to drop this course, please read the full details at http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/registration/drop_policy_undergrad.html. You may drop the course at no penalty using Student Self-Service through the end of the second week of classes for the spring semester.

Calendar: Please use this calendar as a primary resource to stay on task and come to various sessions prepared. Readings listed for a given date will be the primary focus of that day and should be read prior to class. The last column is designed to be a final reminder of due dates and class activities so you know what to expect on a day to day basis. As I have mentioned earlier, I designed this syllabus to answer most all questions that arise. So, **before you email Carolina or me** about the class, **look to this document** and specifically, this calendar for your answer.

**Quizzes will be posted for these chapters*

Date		Topics	Readings	Of Note
01.15.13		Why are you in my class?	NA	Syllabus and Introduction
01.17.13	**Part 1: Introduction**	What is social research?	CH 1: The Nature and Process of Social Science Research*	Group Discussion Introduction: SDA
01.22.13		How to we approach the research of social groups?	CH 2: Social Research Strategies* Sprague, "Seeing through Science: Epistemologies" (BB)	LAB 1: Group Work - Sprague
01.24.13		Are there two camps in social sciences?	CH 3: Research Design* **SKIM** - CH 26: Breaking Down the quantitative/qualitative divide	
01.29.13		So how do we get started?	CH 4: Planning a Project and Formulating a Research Question*	LAB 2: Current Events and Good Social Research

01.31.13		How do we use past knowledge to inform current projects?	CH 5: Review the Literature*	LAB 3: Previous Literature
02.05.13		What does being ethical mean as a scientist?	CH 6: Ethics and Politics	Ethics Training due to Blackboard by 2PM
02.07.13	**Part 2: Quantitative Methods**	What does a quantitative approach entail?	CH 7: Quantitative Research*	
02.12.13		How do we pick informants in a responsible manner?	CH 8: Sampling*	In-Class Activity: SDA
02.14.13		How are surveys developed and executed?	CH 9: Structured Interview*	1-Page Quantitative Proposal due to Blackboard by 11pm, 02.15
02.19.13			Schaffer and Presser 2003 (BB) CH 11: Asking Questions*	LAB 4: Interview Questions
02.21.13		Can we standardize field experiences?	CH 12: Structured Observation*	Review: SDA
02.26.13		What other resources can be utilized in a standardized fashion?	CH 13: Content Analysis* **SKIM -** CH 14: Secondary Analysis	Last Chance for in-class questions about SDA!
02.28.13		How do we interpret our findings from these approaches?	CH 15: Quantitative Data Analysis*	LAB 5: Content Analysis
03.05.13	**Part 3: Qualitative Methods**	What does a qualitative approach entail?	CH 17: Qualitative Research*	
03.07.13			CH 18: Sampling in Qualitative Research*	LAB 6: Developing a Qualitative Research Strategy Quantitative Final Project due to Blackboard by 11pm, 03.08
03.12.13		How do we manage being the researcher	CH 19: Ethnography and Participant Observation*	

		"in the moment"?		
03.14.13			Sanders 1978 (BB) Emerson et al. 1995 (BB)	
03.19.13	Work Day – No Class		NA	
03.21.13			NA	LAB 7: Observation (finished before the start of class)
03.26.13	Spring Break – No Class			
03.28.13	Spring Break – No Class			
04.02.13			CH 20: Interviewing in Qualitative Research*	
04.04.13			CH 21: Focus Groups*	LAB 8: Group Work – Operating and Interviewing in the Field
04.09.13	Work Day – No Class		NA	
04.11.13		What other resources can inform field work?	CH 23: Documents as Sources of Data	LAB 9: Group Work – Documents
04.16.13	Work Day – No Class		NA	
04.18.13		How do we interpret our findings from these approaches?	CH 22: Language in Qualitative Research	
04.23.13			CH 24: Qualitative Data Analysis*	LAB 10: Group Work - Coding Qualitative Data
04.25.13	Work Day – No Class		NA	
04.30.13			CH 29: Writing up Social Research	Qualitative Final Project Workshop
05.02.13			NA	Qualitative Final Project Workshop Qualitative Final Project Due to Blackboard by 11pm, 05.03