FCS 3200-090 Online
Research Methods in Family and Consumer Studies
Summer 2015
Web address: https://utah.instructure.com/

Instructor: Zhou Yu, Ph.D., Department of Family and Consumer Studies
Office location: Alfred Emery Building (AEB) 254 / Office # 801.585.0437 (rarely there) / Home #: 801.747.9525 (do not be shy) / Email: zhou.yu@utah.edu (the best way to reach me) / Office Hour by Appointment

Course Objectives: This four-unit course, which requires 33% more effort than a regular 3-unit course, exposes undergraduate students to the basic research methods employed in social science, particularly in the field of Family and Consumer Studies. Students will learn to step outside their own experience, look at the world from the perspective of social scientists, appreciate the importance of ethics in research, and gain experience in reading, analyzing, and utilizing research.

Course Description: Social science research is a pillar of our modern society and a key factor that makes the U.S. one of the most sophisticated countries in the world. The knowledge gained from science deeply influences all of our lives. If you watch evening news or exchange information around the water cooler, you will apply what you learn in this course. We are all consumers of scientific data and research. It is easy to be fooled by people citing “scientific research” if we don't understand what research actually means.

With modern technology, access to research is no longer a major hurdle. In this era of instantaneous information, however, we will have to become discerning consumers to make sense of the information. A basic understanding of the strength and the limitation of social science research is a key component of the educational endeavor.

Major Topics: 1. Basic research designs; 2. Ethics in social science research; 3. Measurement techniques; 4. Methods of data collection; and 5. Critique of research findings.

Class Participation is a critical component of the learning experience. Students are required to: 1. actively contribute to the course by checking the course website site at least THREE times a week, on at least TWO different days each week; 2. participate in online discussions and share with other class members their experiences on social science research (make at least ONE original post and FOUR comments per discussion topic); and 3. use library resources (both online and offline) to conduct research and to develop self-learning skills.

Requirement: There will be four Modules, which are Introduction to Social Scientific Inquiry, The Structuring of Inquiry, Modes of Observation, and Modes of Research. There will be 14 Quizzes (3 lowest will be dropped), 5 exams (the lowest one will be dropped; alternatively, you could skip one exam), 5 Assignments including TWO written assignments and THREE discussions (the lowest one will be dropped; alternatively, you could skip one assignment).

Important Notes: This summer course moves at a faster pace than a regular semester course. In order to be successful, you must devote a large amount of time and effort to the course. Online courses are NOT for every student. Be prepared to accept the instructor as a facilitator to the class instead of a director of class activities. To be successful in an online course you must: 1. be able to read college-level texts with good comprehension; 2. be well organized and self-disciplined; 3. be a proactive and independent learner; 4. be familiar and comfortable with the use of computers, e-mail, word processing programs, and the Internet.

If you must rely on lectures and classroom presentations as an important part of your learning (and many students do) then an online course may not be for you. We have an off-line version of this class. Please consider taking the off-line version instead. I'm looking forward to working with you during the semester. I hope you will have an enjoyable and enlightening course.

Please go to the “Orientation” section for more specific and up-to-date information.
Course Requirements:
You are expected to read one or two chapters of the textbook and a number of newspaper articles and research papers per week. The textbook is available for purchase online or at the university bookstore:


- Newspaper clips, research articles, and video clips will be posted online in Learning Modules at http://www.utah.edu as **required** materials.

Grading:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Quizzes (2% each. The lowest 3 scores will be dropped)</td>
<td>x10 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Exams (14% each. The lowest score will be dropped)</td>
<td>x4 56</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Written Assignments + 3 Online Discussions (5% each) the lowest score will be dropped</td>
<td>x4 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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Grade Scale (%):

- **94.0+ A (Excellent performance, superior achievement)**
- **90.0-93.9 A-**
- **85.5-89.9 B+**
- **79.0-85.4 B (Good performance, substantial achievement)**
- **75.5-78.9 B-**
- **72.0-75.4 C+**
- **64.5-71.9 C (Standard performance and achievement)**
- **62.0-64.4 C-**
- **59.5-61.9 D+**
- **55.0-59.4 D (Substandard performance, marginal achievement)**
- **52.5-54.9 D-**
- **52.4 and below E (Unsatisfactory performance and achievement)**

Things to Note:

1. **Final grades** may be curved slightly to adjust for the variations in the difficulty levels among exams and quizzes (grades will ONLY be curved upward). Second, you can use the class averages of the quizzes and exams as an indicator of your progress. If you are consistently on par with the class average and you have completed all the required work, you will do fine in this class. Third, you can add your scores up, drop the lowest ones (following the grading criteria above), compare the aggregate score with the grade scale available in the course syllabus, and figure out your performance. The tentative grade shown on CANVAS is for reference only.

2. **Quizzes**: There will be 13 quizzes during the semester. The top 10 of them will be recorded. All quizzes for each Learning Module MUST be completed by the due time. Except for the orientation quiz, you will have only ONE chance to take each quiz. You do not have to take all the quizzes. But you may NOT be able to review the quizzes that you have not completed. Many questions in the exams will come from the quizzes.
Exams: There will be a total of 5 exams—4 mid-terms (non-cumulative) and one final exam (comprehensive). The top 4 of them will be recorded. You will have a one week period after the end of each Learning Module to take the exam. The final will be available during the final exam week. You do not have to take all 5 exams. If you want to review your exam results, please come to my office at a pre-agreed time. Please double check the exam and quiz schedule for potential time conflict.

Discussions and assignments: There will be a total of 5 discussions and written assignments. The lowest score will be dropped. You will have one week to complete the discussion or assignment. For each discussion, you must complete your original post BEFORE Wednesday night and make 4 substantive comments before Sunday night.

A missed exam, quiz, discussion or assignment means NO credit: Please note that the lowest discussion/assignment score, the lowest 3 quiz, and one exam scores will be dropped. I understand that you sometimes may face exceptional situations in your life so you cannot take all the work in a timely manner. The dropping of the lowest score is to allow for these kinds of exceptional situations. Thus, please DO NOT ask me to extend the time for you to take quizzes and exams because exceptional situations are already taken into consideration with the course structure.

Please take quizzes and exams ahead of the deadline, since you may face technical difficulties in the last hours. Technical glitches in the last hours are not acceptable excuses for extending the deadline. CANVAS may be on scheduled maintenance each Sunday morning. You may NOT be able to access the course website all the time.

NO extra credit and no make-ups: There will be NO extra credits or make-ups. Extra credit assignments and make ups are intrinsically unfair unless all students are permitted to do them; then they become just one more requirement for all students to complete.

I DO provide accommodations for personal and family emergency. But you are responsible to inform the instructor of the emergency as soon as possible and provide the proof of the emergency NO later than one week after the due time of the task.

Disagreement about grades: If you disagree with the grading of a particular quiz or exam, you need to submit a written statement to me explaining why you think you deserve more or less points. I will then re-grade your quiz or exam.

The prospect of a poor course grade does not justify a request to receive an "Incomplete." An incomplete is reserved for the most extraordinary circumstances and only when a student has no more than the final exam to complete in a course.

Withdrawal: For information regarding withdrawal policy and related tuition and fees, please contact the Register’s Office (801-581-8969).

Schedule: The Instructor reserves the right to alter the course schedule and assignments....

CANVAS: This course will be fully online at CANVAS. You are “charged with notice” for any information posted on the course CANVAS site during the semester. That means I will assume you have received information posted to CANVAS and that you take responsibility for the consequences if you choose to not check the site regularly. If you are not already familiar with CANVAS, you can learn about it at: http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4212.

Course Schedule:

Orientation (Monday, 05/18 — Sunday, 05/24) Available — Due
Welcome to FCS 3200 and get yourself comfortable
- Discussion 1. Personal Portraits 05/18 — 05/24
- Orientation Quiz 05/18 — 05/24

Module A. Introduction to Social Scientific Inquiry (Monday, 05/25 — Sunday, 06/07)
Week 1. Chapt1. Human Inquiry and Science (Quiz 1)
Week 2. Chapt2. Paradigms, Theory, and Research (Quiz 2)

Week 3. Chapt3. The Ethics and Politics of Social Research (Quiz 3)
- Assignment 1. 05/25 — 05/31
- Quizzes 1, 2, and 3 05/18 — 06/07
- Exam 1 06/08 — 06/14

Module B. The Structuring of Inquiry (Monday, 06/08 — Sunday, 06/28)

Week 4. Chapt4. Research Design (Quiz 5)
- Chapt5. Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement (Quiz 6)

Week 5. Chapt6. Indexes, Scales, and Typologies (Quiz 7)

Week 6. Chapt7. The Logic of Sampling (Quiz 8)
- Discussion 2. 06/15 — 06/21
- Quizzes 4, 5, 6, and 7 05/18 — 06/28
- Exam 2 06/29 — 07/05

Module C. Modes of Observation (Monday, 06/29 — Sunday, 07/19)

Week 7. Chapt8. Experiments (Quiz 8)

Week 8. Chapt9. Survey Research (Quiz 9)

Week 9. Chapt10. Qualitative Field Research (Quiz 10)
- Assignment 2. 07/06 — 07/12
- Quizzes 8, 9, and 10 05/18 — 07/19
- Exam 3 07/20 — 07/26

Module D. Modes of Research (Monday, 07/20 — Sunday, 08/02)

Week 10. Chapt11. Unobtrusive Research (Quiz 11)

Week 11. Chapt12. Evaluation Research (Quiz 12)
- Chapt15. Reading and Writing Social Research / Using the Library (Quiz 13)
- Discussion 3. 07/27 — 08/02
- Quizzes 11, 12, and 13 05/18 — 08/02
- Exam 4 08/03 — 08/08
- Comprehensive Final Exam (Optional) 08/03 — 08/08
Other Important Information:

Disability Services. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Please refer the following links for university academic calendar, faculty responsibilities, and “Accommodations Policy” statement,

"Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience."

http://www.admin.utah.edu/fhb/
http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf

Faculty responsibilities. (www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-12-4.html)

“All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.”

Class schedule and academic calendar. You can find important deadlines in the following link.

http://www.sa.utah.edu/regist/calendar/datesDeadlines/deadlines.htm