

Sociology 318: Sociological Research Methods
Fall 2019
University of Montana

Course Number: SOC 318
Day: Tuesdays and Thursdays
Time: 2-3:20 pm
Class Location: Liberal Arts 207

Professor: Jacobs (Jake) Hammond
Email: jacobs.hammond@mso.umt.edu
Office Location: Social Science 305
Office Hours: Wed and Friday 8:30-10:30 or by appointment (email to schedule, please put Soc 318 in the subject line)

Course Description

Of all the subjects available for thought and study, few are more interesting than the examination of society. By systematically studying society and its component parts, we have the opportunity to understand structures and processes that are instrumental in shaping who we are and what we experience in life. This course will introduce you to the basic research methods commonly employed by sociologists in order to study society scientifically.

Why study society scientifically? The main reason is to get a more “objective” view of society, one that can be “verified” by careful observation. We all have biases, vested interests, and deeply rooted values. While our unique, individual perspectives are important, they can also make it difficult for us to see clearly the world around us. A scientific approach is worth implementing because we can learn about features of social life that we did not see before. Hopefully, you will finish this course not only with new insights about the social world you inhabit, but with new skills that help you discern structures and processes that influence your life every day. This knowledge can, in turn, help you influence the world around you.

The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to an array of concepts and procedures that social scientists employ in conducting their research. In order to facilitate your understanding of the research process, you will be designing a research proposal to answer a social research question that is of interest to you. You should not expect to be able to undertake independent social research without further study. However, this course will provide you with the skills to assess the adequacy of a social research project and the validity of its results. This course will also provide you with the basic skills required to learn more about a specific methodological topic, should you desire to pursue further studies.

Required Text

Schutt, Russell. 2017. *Understanding the Social World: Research Methods for the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Moodle Help

You will need to use Moodle to track course activities, access course materials, take online quizzes, keep tabs on your grade, and submit papers. If you have difficulty accessing the Moodle page for this course or with any of these processes, please email: umonline-help@umontana.edu, or call: 406. 243.4999.

Electronic Devices Policy

Your cell phone must be silenced and stowed out of sight during class time. Laptop usage is allowed under some circumstances, but not others. Laptops may be used to take notes during lecture and during activities where I expressly give consent for you to use your laptop. However, laptops may not be used during discussions (i.e., with partner, small group or whole class), as usage in this context is disrespectful and detrimental to the interpersonal experience. Please note that using your laptop is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate and/or distracting use will result in you losing this privilege.

Course Assignments

The course will combine a variety of assignments to meet the expected learning outcomes for the class. Points possible and percentage of the final grade for each assignment are listed below, followed by an explanation of each assignment or assignment type. Periodically there will be opportunities for extra credit. These opportunities are not listed on the course calendar or announced in advance. In other words, you will need to attend class to learn about these opportunities.

Summary of Grade Percentage for Class Assignments

Non-Term Paper Assignments

Participation Logs	40 pts	20%
Quickwrites	20 pts	10%
Reading Quizzes	24 pts	12%

Term Paper Assignments

Designing a Social Research Question	4 pts	2%
Literature Review and Hypotheses	10 pts	5%
Identifying Variables	10 pts	5%
Sampling Methods	10 pts	5%
Preliminary Research Proposal	25 pts	12.5%
Research Proposal Presentation	10 pts	5%

Final Research Proposal	46 pts	23%
Sum	200pts	100%

Participation (20%)

Class participation is worth 20% of your final grade and is based primarily on 2 participation logs. One participation log is turned in at mid-term and covers participation over the first half of the course. The second is due at the end of the course and covers your participation during the second half of the semester. For each participation log, you will need to describe and reflect on eight in-class interactions where you engaged in discussion with at least one other student in response to a question posed in class. Each log is dated, and only one log can be completed per class session. In other words, you will need to be present and document your engagement during at least 16 class sessions in order to receive full credit. More detailed instructions on how to complete these logs will be posted on Moodle. Due dates for each log are listed on the course calendar. Please note that log grades can be adjusted up or down based on my observations of your in-class participation.

Quickwrites (10%)

There will be a number of short, informal writing activities throughout the term, which I call Quickwrites. These writing assignments will usually take place during class and are not listed on the course calendar or announced in advance. These writing activities are meant to be low-stakes and to be written in a loose, free association manner. Their purpose is to help you to think and engage more deeply with course content. It is not necessary for you to demonstrate mastery of course material to get credit for these assignments, though submissions which indicate a lack of engagement with reading assignments will not receive credit. In general, these assignments are graded based on effort, thoughtfulness and the degree to which they demonstrate an earnest engagement in the course (both during class and in preparation for class). If you are absent on the day of a Quickwrite, you can still complete it for full credit. However, I will not accept these assignments via email. To receive credit, you need to submit a hard copy to me at the beginning of the next class meeting. Quickwrites cannot be turned in after the next class meeting. Writing prompts are posted on Moodle on the day they are assigned in class. If you miss class and want to know if you missed a Quickwrite, I suggest checking the new materials posted on Moodle or contacting a peer for more information. Please note, I will not respond to emails asking if you missed an in-class writing assignment, as doing so is not practical for me.

Reading Quizzes (12%)

Throughout the course, you will take online quizzes on assigned readings via the course Moodle site. There will be 12 of these quizzes, with each quiz being worth 1% of your course grade. Quizzes are brief and will be made up of multiple choice and/or true/false questions. These quizzes are not difficult, but they are time limited, allowing approximately 30 seconds per

question. Once the testing window has closed you will be able to open your quiz to check which question you got correct and view the correct answer for any questions you may have missed.

Research Proposal and Associated Assignments (58%)

Every student is expected to develop a research proposal throughout the semester with a final cumulative research proposal due at the end of the semester. The final proposal will require you to use your developing sociological research skills to analyze a social research question of your choosing. You will be utilizing peer-reviewed research articles and course material to discuss the selected social research question. There are several assignments throughout the semester that will build on one another to help promote a coherent final proposal. Each of these assignments is more thoroughly discussed in the *Assignment Guidelines* handout posted on Moodle. Please note that you will not actually be conducting any research. However, by the end of the semester, you will have a document similar to a research proposal for a grant application.

During the first half of the semester you will have several small assignments that will help you create your preliminary research proposal. The assignment topics include: (1) Designing a Social Research Question; (2) Literature Review and Hypothesis; (3) Identifying Variables; and (4) Selecting a Sampling Method.

The final research proposal itself will be a cumulative assignment, combining elements of the Preliminary Research Proposal with my feedback and in-class methods assignments to create a Final Research Proposal. You will also be presenting your final research proposal during the last week of class. This presentation will be informal, with most of your points coming from attending the other two days of presentations.

Timely Submission of Assignments

Due dates for each assignment and directions for submission are listed on the course calendar. Criteria for each assignment is posted on Moodle. Late assignments will receive a grade deduction. **One day late = 50% credit, two days late = no credit.** If you submitted the assignment late due to external factors beyond your control and you can substantiate this with evidence, you should complete the Appeal for Assignment Extension. Directions on how to complete this appeal are listed on pages 6-7 of this syllabus. Similarly, if you missed a quiz due to circumstances beyond your control, you should submit an Appeal for a Makeup Assessment.

Grade Questions

If you wish to have a graded assignment re-evaluated by me, you will need to complete the Grade Appeal process, which is explained on page 6. First, you must allow 24 hours to pass between the time the assignment is handed back (either in class or online) before contacting me or submitting your appeal. Once these 24 hours have passed, you must provide me with a written Grade Appeal. In order to be considered, the appeal must be typed, and must be written in formal language (see http://www.word-mart.com/html/formal_and_informal_writing.html). Your appeal letter must be edited, and must demonstrate appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation. This letter can be submitted either in person in hard copy or via email.

Your written appeal must respond to the following questions: 1) What assignment would you like to have re-evaluated? 2) Where do you feel an error was made in grading (i.e. if the assignment received multiple scores, which component of the assignment do you feel was not graded accurately). 3) Provide a summary of your original work. 3) What grade did you receive? 4) Explain why your work deserves a higher score and support your assertion with evidence. Evidence, in this case, is constituted by citing information from appropriate course materials which support your argument. When citing course materials, you must provide direct quotes with appropriate in-text citation. (see ASA citation guide at: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/c.php?g=230332&p=1528264>). Materials not assigned as part of the course will not be considered as evidence. 5) Finally, please explain what grade you believe your work deserves. Please be advised that reconsideration of an assignment grade may result in the original grade being lowered if additional flaws are found in the assignment during re-evaluation.

Email Policy

Despite the many advantages that email offers, it also presents certain pitfalls, particularly when used in professional contexts. Learning to use email in a professional manner is an important skill which will help prepare you for future endeavors. When you use email, please remember to write formally and clearly. Imagine that you are speaking directly to your recipient when you write an email and monitor the content and tone of your message accordingly. Messages with misspellings and incorrect grammar reflect poorly on the sender. If it is difficult for you to send formal messages from your phone, I suggest waiting to send the message from a computer.

Before sending an email, please make sure that your message meets the following criteria:

- 1) Include a greeting and a signature. This is a professional norm and a sign of respect that will serve you well at WSU and beyond.
- 2) Double-check that the question you are asking is not already answered on the syllabus, on assignment prompts, or on any other materials that have been distributed in class or via a course email.
- 3) Check with a classmate to see if they have an answer for your question before emailing me.
- 4) Evaluate whether the question you are asking is better saved for office hours. Typically, email is best suited for simple yes or no questions. Feedback for major assignments, clarification of prompts, and explanations for grading needs to happen in person.
- 5) Double check that your email does not contain misspellings or incorrect grammar.

I try to respond to emails in a reasonable amount of time (24-48 hours, except for over the weekend). However, I tend to only access email when I am in my office at work. In general, I check and respond to emails between 8 am and 3 pm Monday through Friday. I tend not to check email over the weekend. In addition, emailing me may also not be the best venue for all concerns you have. Remember, if you miss class, you should reach out to peers to find out what you missed or to get notes. Additionally, if you miss an assessment or due date, you must complete

the appeal process outlined later in this document and send me the appeal memo before I will render a decision on your case.

Late Assignments and Missed Assessments

Due dates for each assignment and directions for submission are listed on the course calendar. Criteria for each assignment is posted on Moodle or included in the syllabus. Late assignments will receive a grade deduction. **One day late = 50% credit, two days late = no credit.** That said, if you submitted the assignment late due to external factors beyond your control and you can substantiate this with evidence, you should complete the Appeal for Assignment Extension listed below. If you submit an appeal and that appeal is granted, you may receive either no or a lesser grade deduction for turning in an assignment late. Similarly, if you missed an assessment due to circumstances beyond your control, you can submit an Appeal for a Makeup Assessment, also listed below.

Appeal for Makeup Assessment or Assignment Extension

If you missed an assessment or need an extension on an assignment, you may submit a written appeal for a makeup or extension. In order to be considered, the appeal must be typed, and must be written in formal language (see: http://www.word-mart.com/html/formal_and_informal_writing.html). Your appeal letter must be edited, and must demonstrate appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation. This letter can be submitted either in person in hard copy or via email.

Your written appeal must respond to the following questions: 1) What assessment or assignment is your appeal in regard to? 2) Why did you miss the assessment, or why do you need an extension on an assignment? 3) At what point did you first become aware that you would likely miss the assessment or need an extension. Be specific. Identify a day, date and time. 4) Why do you feel you should be allowed to make up the missed assessment? If you are appealing for an extension on an assignment, how long of an extension are you asking for, and why do you feel like this extension should be granted? Explain in detail and support your argument with evidence. Evidence might be constituted by facts about circumstances beyond your control, a note from a doctor or employer, etc.

Grade Appeal

If you wish to have a graded assignment re-evaluated by me, you will need to complete the Grade Appeal process, which is detailed below. First, you must allow 24 hours to pass between the time the assignment is handed back (either in class or online) before contacting me or submitting your appeal. Once these 24 hours have passed, you must provide me with a written Grade Appeal. In order to be considered, the appeal must be typed, and must be written in formal language (see link above). Your appeal letter must be edited, and must demonstrate appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation. This letter can be submitted either in person in hard copy or via email.

Your written appeal must respond to the following questions: 1) What assignment would you like to have re-evaluated? 2) Where do you feel an error was made in grading (i.e., if the

assignment received multiple scores, which component of the assignment do you feel was not graded accurately). 3) Provide a summary of your original work. 3) What grade did you receive? 4) Explain why your work deserves a higher score and support your assertion with evidence. Evidence, in this case, is constituted by citing information from appropriate course materials which support your argument. When citing course materials, you must provide direct quotes with appropriate in-text citation. (see ASA citation guide at: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/c.php?g=230332&p=1528264>). Materials not assigned as part of the course will not be considered as evidence. 5) Finally, please explain what grade you believe your work deserves.

Please note, that if the appeal pertains to an assignment that students are not allowed to take home (e.g., an assessment), you will need to make an appointment and check out your assessment from me. Once you have checked the assessment out, you have 48 hours to return the assessment with a completed grade appeal document. Failure to return the assessment within 48 hours, without extenuating circumstances, will result in a grade of 0 on the assessment. Please be advised that reconsideration of an assignment grade may result in the original grade being lowered if additional flaws are found in the assignment during re-evaluation.

Respect for Others

This course emphasizes student participation and discussion. At times student perspectives on topics may vary widely. Everyone in the course is expected to respect all class members. Discussions are not the same as debates and should not be treated as such. Please remember that the purpose of class discussion is to learn from each other and exploring a variety of perspectives helps us do that. If a hurtful or inappropriate comment is made, the instructor will handle it according to class, departmental, and university policy.

Bathroom Breaks

Please prepare yourself by using the bathroom before class. If you absolutely must use the bathroom during class, you do not need to ask for permission. However, try to be conscientious and not disrupt the class when coming and going. Using the restroom during class should occur infrequently. Repetitive activity of this kind may have a negative effect on the participation grade.

Office Hours

While I am always available during office hours, if you would like to meet with me, I would appreciate an email in advance letting me know when you will be stopping by and what topic you would like to discuss. This is proper etiquette for professional workplaces. Additional office hours may be arranged via email for a mutually available time if it is not possible for you to make my regularly scheduled hours. Please allow 24-hour advanced notice for office hour visits set up via email.

Academic Honesty

All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. A few examples of academic dishonesty are copying answers from another student during a quiz or providing false information to me, your instructor. Students who assist other students in academically dishonest acts are also in violation of the policy of academic honesty. All students must be aware of and carefully adhere to the provisions defining and prohibiting academic misconduct in the UM Student Conduct Code (see http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php). The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

Disability Services

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Discrimination and Harassment

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights enforces Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. All employees at The University of Montana are considered mandatory reporters, which requires them to report incidents of gender-based discrimination (e.g., sexual violence, sexual harassment, rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and/or stalking). In accordance with Title IX laws, students must be made aware of the following: If any employee of UM, including instructors and teaching assistants, learns of any potential gender-based discrimination, they are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator Alicia Arant (Alicia.arant@mso.umt.edu, 243-5617, University Hall - Room 006), immediately. Once an incident is reported to Title IX, the student will be contacted by the Title IX Coordinator for follow up. Students can also report directly to the Title IX coordinator in regards to any gender-based discrimination. Confidential Resource: The Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC) provides free and confidential support and brief counseling services for students who have experienced gender-based discrimination. SARC is located in Curry Health Center, Room 108, and their number is 243-4429. Students are also welcome to call their 24-hour support line (406) 243-6559. Speaking with a confidential resource does not disqualify students from making a formal report to the Title IX Coordinator if and when they are ready. In the confidential setting, students will be made aware of available resources and reporting options. An advocate is available for all students upon request through SARC.

BASIC NEEDS STATEMENT

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources:

Food Pantry Program

UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 9 to 2, on Fridays from 10-5. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the pantry's [website \(https://www.umt.edu/uc/food-pantry/default.php\)](https://www.umt.edu/uc/food-pantry/default.php) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).

ASUM Renter Center

The Renter Center has compiled a list of resources for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity [here: http://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/renter-center/default.php](http://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/renter-center/default.php) and [here: https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog](https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog). Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

TRiO Student Support Services

TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students, or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring. Students can check their eligibility for TRiO services online [here: http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php#Eligibility](http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php#Eligibility). If you are comfortable, please come see members of the teaching team. We will do our best to help connect you with additional resources.

Grade Scale

Students' final grades will be a percentage (0 to 100%) of the total 200 points possible on the course assignments. I will use the following grading scale to convert the percentage of points earned to a final letter grade:

Letter Grade Percent

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D+	68-69
D	63-67
D-	60-62
F	59 or below

COURSE SCHEDULE

I reserve the right to alter this schedule if necessary to meet learning objectives, in the event of class cancellations or for other reasons. All changes will be announced in advance.

All assignments should be completed prior to class on the date specified.

Week #1:

Tues, Aug 27: Introductions

Thurs, Aug 29:

Read: This syllabus!

Read: "The Body Ritual of the Nacirema" (posted on Moodle)

Due: Syllabus Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30 pm)

Week #2:

Tues, Sep 3: Science, Society and Social Research

Read: Ch 1 in Schutt

Thurs, Sep 5: The Process and Problems of Social Research

Read: Ch 2 in Schutt

Due: Ch 2 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Week #3:

Tues, Sep 10: Research Ethics

Read: Ch 3 in Schutt

Due: Ch 3 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Sep 12: Research Ethics

Read: TBD

Due: Designing a Social Research Question Assignment (Reference: Ch 2). Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #4:

Tues, Sep 17: Conceptualization and Measurement

Read: Ch 4 in Schutt

Due: Ch 4 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Sep 19: Conceptualization and Measurement

Read: TBD

Week #5:

Tues, Sep 24: Sampling and Generalizability

Read: Ch 5 in Schutt

Due: Ch 5 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Sep 26: Sampling and Generalizability

Read: TBD

Due: Literature Review and Hypothesis Assignment (Reference: Ch 2). Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #6:

Tues, Oct 1: Causation and Experimental Design

Read: Ch 6 in Schutt

Due: Ch 6 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Oct 3: Causation and Experimental Design

Read: TBD

Due: Identifying Variables Assignment. Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #7:

Tues, Oct 8: Survey Research

Read: Ch 7 in Schutt

Due: Ch 7 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Oct 10: Survey Research

Read: TBD

Due: Selecting a Sampling Method Assignment. Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #8:

Tues, Oct 15: Qualitative Methods

Read: Ch 8 in Schutt

Due: Ch 8 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Oct 17: Qualitative Methods

Read: TBD

Due: First-Half Participation Log (due via Moodle by 10 pm on Sunday, Oct 20)

Week #9:

Tues, Oct 22: Unobtrusive Methods

Read: Ch 9 in Schutt

Due: Ch 9 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Oct 24: Unobtrusive Methods

Read: TBD

Due: Preliminary Research Proposal Assignment. Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #10:

Tues, Oct 29: Evaluation and Mixed-Methods Research

Read: Ch 10 in Schutt

Due: Ch 10 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Oct 31: Evaluation and Mixed-Methods Research

Read: TBD

Week #11:

Tues, Nov 5: Quantitative Data Analysis

Read: Ch 11 in Schutt

Due: Ch 11 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Nov 7: Quantitative Data Analysis

Read: TBD

Week #12:

Tues, Nov 12: Qualitative Data Analysis

Read: Ch 12 in Schutt

Due: Ch 12 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Nov 14: Qualitative Data Analysis

Read: TBD

Week #13:

Tues, Nov 19: Summarizing and Reporting Research

Read: Ch 13 in Schutt

Due: Ch 13 Reading Quiz (due via Moodle by 1:30pm)

Thurs, Nov 21: Summarizing and Reporting Research

Due: Final Research Proposal Assignment. Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.

Week #14:

Tues, Nov 26: **Research Proposal Presentations**

Thurs, Nov 28: Thanksgiving Break

Week #15:

Tues, Dec 3: **Research Proposal Presentations**

Thurs, Dec 5: **Research Proposal Presentations**

Due: Second-Half Participation Log. Submit via Moodle by 10 pm.