

## **SOC 318 Sociological Research Methods**

Spring 2016

T, Th 12:40 – 2:00 p.m.

JRH 205

**INSTRUCTOR:** Scott Byington

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- **Mailbox:** SS 339
- **Office:** SS 319
- **Office Hours:** 11:30 - 12:30 T, Th or by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is about examining the world around us with scientific rigor. It is a call to re-evaluate our everyday methods of gathering information and drawing conclusions. It is also an invitation to begin using theory, causal modeling, and carefully collected information to arrive at more complete and better supported explanations of events. Throughout the semester, we will examine the logic of causality, measurement, and sampling, and talk about research ethics. We will also discuss different ways of collecting data, such as experiments, surveys, and observation. By the end of the semester, you should have a new perspective on what people "know" and many new intellectual tools for assessing information about the world.

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

1. Attend class and participate in classroom discussions.
2. Complete all reading assignments BEFORE the day they are listed on the course syllabus.
3. Complete all other assignments on time.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Chambliss, Daniel F., and Russell K. Schutt. 2015. *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation (Fifth Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

This course meets only 2 days a week for 15 weeks for a total of 30 days (minus holidays). Therefore, I expect you to attend all class sessions on time with no late arrivals or early departures. Make-ups for university approved absences can be arranged. Unforeseen emergencies will be dealt with on a case by case basis, but in general, you need to notify me *as soon as possible* ahead of any class(es) you may miss by e-mail so we can work out possible makeups.

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:**

Please refrain from talking, snoring, answering cell phones, loudly eating, or otherwise disrupting class. If you need to leave class early, please let me know before class begins. Note that we will be talking about some sensitive and potentially controversial issues this term. Please treat each other and each other's ideas respectfully. Keep in mind that the University of Montana forbids discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review on-line.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by discussing accommodations with me at the beginning of the course. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students who have a documented disability. (If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you

have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommason Center 154 or 406.243.2243.) “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Please notify me immediately following your first day in class (or shortly thereafter during office hours or by appointment) of any accommodations that you think you need for the course. Late notification may result in untimely delays in the requested accommodations. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Services for Students (DSS) in Lommason Center 154 (243-2243). If you have any questions, please contact me via e-mail, speak with me after class, or visit me during my office hour. Communication is key—modifications will not be made nor grades changed retroactively.

**GRADING:**

Your grade will be calculated on a straight percentage basis (**100% base of 340 points possible**). I will not give final letter grades with pluses or minuses: A (90%+); B (80%-89%); C (70%-79%); D (60%-69%); F (59% - below).

**ASSIGNMENTS (7 @ 20 points each)****READING JOURNALS (3 @ 50 points each)****ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (50 points)**

At any point, you can calculate your grade by adding the number of points to date, dividing by the total number of points possible to date, and obtaining your percentage grade to date. Please note this syllabus may be changed as needs arise.

**Course Schedule (subject to change)**

Note: Assigned readings should be done **before** the day scheduled below

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> T, Jan 26  Th, Jan 28	<b>Course overview</b>  <b>Theoretical Perspectives &amp; Orienting Strategies</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b> T, Feb 2  Th, Feb 4	<b>Science, Society &amp; Social Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 1.</li> <li>• Paulos. 1996. "Health Statistics May Be Bad for Our Mental Health."</li> </ul> <b>Processes &amp; Problems of Social Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 2</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b> T, Feb 9  Th, Feb 11	<b>Research Ethics</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 3</li> </ul> <b>Research Ethics</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 3</li> </ul> <b>DUE: Assignment #1, Research Ethics (20 points) : Proof of completion for Sections 1, 2, &amp; 6</b> <a href="http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/montana_round1/research_ethics.html">http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/montana_round1/research_ethics.html</a>
<b>Week 4</b> T, Feb 16  Th, Feb 18	<b>Conceptualization &amp; Measurement</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 4</li> </ul> <b>Conceptualization &amp; Measurement</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 4</li> </ul> <b>DUE: Reading Journal #1 (50 points)</b>
<b>Week 5</b> T, Feb 23  Th, Feb 25	<b>Sampling</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 5</li> </ul> <b>Sampling</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 5</li> </ul> <b>DUE: Assignment #2 (in-class), Logic of Sampling (20 points)</b>
<b>Week 6</b> T, Mar 1	<b>Causation &amp; Experimental Design</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 6</li> </ul>

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
Th, Mar 3	<b>Causation &amp; Experimental Design</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 6</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Assignment #3, Causal Diagrams (20 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 7</b> T, Mar 8  Th, Mar 10	<b>Survey Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 7</li> </ul> <b>Survey Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 7</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Assignment #4 (in-class), Survey Evaluation (20 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 8</b> T, Mar 15  Th, Mar 17	<b>Quantitative Data Analysis</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 8</li> </ul> <b>Quantitative Data Analysis</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 8</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Reading Journal #2 (50 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 9</b> T, Mar 22  Th, Mar 24	<b>Qualitative Research: Overview &amp; Ethnography</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 9</li> </ul> <b>Qualitative Research: Participant Observation</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 9</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b> T, Mar 29  Th, Mar 31	<b>Qualitative Research: Interviewing</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 9</li> <li></li> </ul> <b>Qualitative Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 9</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Assignment #5, Observation research (20 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 11</b> T, Apr 5 Th, Apr 7	<b>Spring Break!</b>
<b>Week 12</b> T, Apr 12	<b>Qualitative Data Analysis</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 10</li> </ul>

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
Th, Apr 14	<b>Qualitative Data Analysis</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 10</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Assignment #6 (in-class), Coding (20 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 13</b> T, Apr 19  Th, Apr 21	<b>Unobtrusive Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 11</li> </ul> <b>Unobtrusive Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 11</li> </ul>
<b>Week 14</b> T, Apr 26  Th, Apr 28	<b>Evaluation Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 12</li> </ul> <b>Evaluation Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 12</li> </ul>
<b>Week 15</b> T, May 3  Th, May 5	<b>Reviewing Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 13</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Assignment #7 (in-class), Catcalling "research" (20 points)</i></b>  <b>Reviewing Research</b> <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambliss &amp; Schutt. Ch. 13</li> </ul> <b><i>DUE: Reading Journal #3 (50 points)</i></b>
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>No final</b>