

SOCY 11 Research Methods **Fall Quarter 2022**

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:10–12:00 (10A) in 201 LSC (Life Sciences Center)

Professor Janice McCabe

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Office hours: TBD. If these times don't work, email me to set up an appointment. (My office hours are open, meaning that I don't take appointments; please stop in. I view office hours as a time for us to not only go over course material and larger course aims, but also an opportunity to talk about sociology, my research, your academic interests, how this course relates to larger issues, etc.)

Course Description:

Soc 11 is a required course for Sociology Majors. As such, it may be simply a requirement that you seek you check off or a course that you are dreading. In contrast, I believe that Research Methods is one of the most important courses you will take and that it can be one of the most interesting and most fun. I am excited about research methods and hope you will be too! In this course, you will learn about and get hands-on experience doing sociology.

This course is designed to provide students with the practical tools of doing social science research and the theoretical background for critiquing and designing research on social issues. We focus specifically on qualitative methods, engaging in a wide range of methods throughout the term—including interviewing, content analysis, and ethnographic observations—and enabling students to design a research project addressing specific and testable questions. Like Socy 10, this course focuses on developing the skills necessary to interpret, critique, and conduct social science research.

Course Goals and Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read, interpret, and critically evaluate social research.
2. Identify, explain, and apply the basic concepts of research, such as variables, operationalization, sampling, reliability, and validity.
3. Recognize the ethical issues involved in research, and practice ethical research standards.
4. Identify and explain the difference between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research and what types of research questions can be answered with each method.
5. Use theory and previous research to create research questions and hypotheses and to identify and analyze the appropriate method and variables needed for research questions.
6. Use a variety of research methods through hands-on experience.
7. Construct a coherent research proposal that includes an abstract, introduction, literature review, research questions, ethical considerations, and methodology.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

READINGS: The following book is required. It will be used throughout the term. In addition to purchasing your own copy, you can use the copy on reserve at our library:

Lareau, Annette. 2021. *Listening to People: A Practical Guide to Interviewing, Participant Observation, Data Analysis, and Writing It All Up*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 9780226806433 Paper (\$20) or 9780226806600 PDF (\$19.99)

Additional readings are posted on our course Canvas site. As you're completing the readings, pay special attention to the "methods" sections in articles.

Additional resources for Research Methods (others listed on Canvas, by topic/date):

- Khan, Shamus, and Dana R. Fisher. 2014. *The Practice of Research: How Social Scientists Answer Their Questions*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- American Sociological Association. 2022. *American Sociological Association Style Guide*. 7th edition. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- Babbie, Earl. *The Basics of Social Research*. Cengage. (any edition)
- Dixon, Jeffrey C., Royce A. Singleton, Jr., and Bruce C. Straits. *The Process of Social Research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (any edition)
- Weiss, Robert S. 1994. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: The Free Press. View (with Dartmouth login) online at: https://search.library.dartmouth.edu/permalink/01DCL_INST/16rgcn8/alma991033405056605706
- Smith-Lovin, Lynn and Cary Moskovitz. 2016. *Writing in Sociology: A Brief Guide*. New York: Oxford University Press.

PARTICIPATION: This is absolutely necessary if a seminar is to be successful. Participation will help you better process and understand the material we cover while also increasing our collective understanding. Active participation means showing up for class meeting when you're responsibly able (and, if not, watching the recording as soon as possible), completing readings and taking notes on them, asking questions, completing assignments, participating in discussion and discussion boards, and any other aspects of the class.

I recognize that we are facing unusual circumstances again this term. While I will provide options for asynchronous participation when you're not able to attend class, you may find yourself in a situation that makes it challenging to keep up with the course material or participate in any fashion. If such a situation arises, please reach out to me as soon as possible so we can find a solution. I'm willing to work with you to find an avenue for participation that works for your situation if you reach out. If you are already aware of circumstances that will affect your ability to participate in the course regularly or occasionally, please arrange a meeting with me at the start of the term so we can plan ahead.

LAB ASSIGNMENTS: Because this is a hands-on course, you will be engaged in "doing sociology" throughout the term. One way that you'll be doing this is through a series of lab assignments, some focusing on basic aspects of research design (e.g., measurement, sampling) and others trying out specific methods (e.g., interviewing, historical research). These assignments are an opportunity to practice and hone your research skills. **They will be graded as ✓, ✓+, or ✓-**. You will receive a ✓ if you follow the instructions, include all the required elements, and submit on time, even if some of your answers are incorrect. You will receive a ✓+ for outstanding work. You will receive a ✓- for work that is incomplete, late, or sloppy. Grading rubrics are included with the assignments to provide more detail about the expectations of each lab. Please ask if you have questions about my comments or expectations.

You may need additional resources to complete some of the labs; for example, you will need audio recorders to complete the interviews (an app on your phone or computer will work great;

when we're back on campus, you can check out a high-quality recorder from the Jones Media Lab), and transcription software will make transcribing the interview easier. Express scribe, which is free to download, will help with transcriptions.

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS: In addition to the lab assignments where you will get hands-on experience to practice your research skills, there will be other assignments to keep you engaged and connected with the material, which will count towards your participation grade.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: The culminating experience in this course is a research proposal on a topic of your choice. You will complete drafts of portions of this proposal through the lab assignments (i.e., the abstract is Lab #3, the literature review is Labs #4 and #6, and an outline is Lab #10). I will hand out more details about the research proposal, but here are the sections that it will include: Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Research Questions, Methods, Ethical Considerations, Significance, Timeline, Works Cited (References), and Appendixes (Your instruments, such as Interview Questions, Survey, or Coding Sheet). The research proposal will be graded as usual, on a 100-point scale, with a rubric provided.

This proposal may be for research that you intend to complete (for example, through a senior honor's thesis in the major or an independent study, such as Socy 80 or 90) or not. It is not necessary that you follow-up by actually doing the research. Carefully planning, thinking through, and documenting the design of the project are the focus of this assignment.

On Canvas, I have posted proposals from four students who took this class in previous terms. Two proposals earned As, one earned a B, and one earned a C. You'll notice many ways that they differ, including the detail with which they describe their methods. I've also posted two examples of outlines (Lab 10) that received As but are formatted differently. Reading these examples should be helpful as you write your own. Please note, however, that the assignments have shifted slightly since these students wrote their proposals; use the current term's assignment sheet and rubric as you write your proposal.

Final Course Grade

Percentage of Final Grade		Final Course Grade	
Lab Assignments	60%	A = 94.0-100	C+ = 77.0-79.99
Participation	10%	A- = 90.0-93.99	C = 74.0-76.99
Research Proposal	30%	B+ = 87.0-89.99	C- = 70.0-73.99
		B = 84.0-86.99	D = 60.0-69.99
		B- = 80.0-83.99	E < 60.0

A description of the quality of work necessary to receive a certain letter grade in the course is available [here](#).

Course Guidelines and Policies:

Consent to Record:

(1) Consent to recording of course meetings and office hours that are open to multiple students.

By enrolling in this course,

a) I affirm my understanding that the instructor may record meetings of this course and any associated meetings open to multiple students and the instructor, including but not limited to

scheduled and ad hoc office hours and other consultations, within any digital platform, including those used to offer remote instruction for this course.

b) I further affirm that the instructor owns the copyright to their instructional materials, of which these recordings constitute a part, and my distribution of any of these recordings in whole or in part to any person or entity other than other members of the class without prior written consent of the instructor may be subject to discipline by Dartmouth up to and including separation from Dartmouth.

(2) Requirement of consent to one-on-one recordings

By enrolling in this course, I hereby affirm that I will not make a recording in any medium of any one-on-one meeting with the instructor or another member of the class or group of members of the class without obtaining the prior written consent of all those participating, and I understand that if I violate this prohibition, I will be subject to discipline by Dartmouth up to and including separation from Dartmouth, as well as any other civil or criminal penalties under applicable law. I understand that an exception to this consent applies to accommodations approved by SAS for a student's disability, and that one or more students in a class may record class lectures, discussions, lab sessions, and review sessions and take pictures of essential information, and/or be provided class notes for personal study use only.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Honor Principle: Assignments will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in the Dartmouth Organization, Regulations and Courses. I encourage you to discuss ideas from class with your classmates. However, unless otherwise noted, assignments should be completed independently, and all work turned in should be your own. If your topic for the research proposal is one that you're exploring in another class, independent study, or other academic work, you must let me and the other professor(s) know. Your work in assignments and the research proposal should include citations to ideas and direct quotes from course readings as well as outside sources. If you have questions about what is permissible, I urge you to consult the academic honor principle (<https://students.dartmouth.edu/judicial-affairs/policy/academic-honor-principle>), the statement on sources and citations (<http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>), and talk with me.

Religious Holidays: Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me ASAP to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Accommodations: Students desiring academic accommodations, modifications, or auxiliary aids should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) at Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu or 603-646-9900. Once you've established your accommodations with SAS, we should arrange a private meeting early in the term to discuss how I can best support you in the course.

Undocumented Students Ally: As a documented individual and member of the Dartmouth community, I recognize my privilege and will devote myself to helping and supporting students of diverse racial/ethnic and immigrant backgrounds as well as the undocumented community on campus. I have attended the UndocuAlly Training conducted by CoFIRED and have been listed as an ally along with other professors and staff in the directory of their [website](#). I am committed to serving

students who experience immigration challenges, and I hope to create a safe space and environment in the classroom. Please feel free to reach out to me, CoFIRED, or consult the resources listed below if you would like to talk, need help/support, or require any immigration-related accommodations.

Resources

[Admissions and Financial Aid Information](#)

[Office of Visa and Immigration Services](#)

[Counseling and Human Development](#)

[Office of Pluralism and Leadership \(OPAL\)](#)

[BIAS REPORT: Report any prejudice-biased incidents of bias](#)

[Financial Support: Immigrant Community Support Fund \(ICSF\)](#)

Campus Resources: I recognize that the academic environment at Dartmouth is challenging, that our terms are intensive, and that classes are not the only demanding aspect of your life. Many of you may be facing greater challenges than usual given the changes to your living and learning environment, public health concerns, and a host of other factors (e.g., housing or food insecurity, new or changing caregiving responsibilities, accessibility and visa concerns, access to health and mental health support, and so on).

There are a number of campus resources available to support your needs. For concerns about health and wellness, you may reach out to the [Dartmouth Health Service](#) (603-646-9400), [Counseling Services](#) (603-646-9442), and the [Student Wellness Center](#). For academic needs, you may contact your undergraduate dean (603-646-2243), [Student Accessibility Services](#) (603-646-9900), and the [Academic Skills Center](#) (603-646-2014). Students with concerns related to campus employment may connect with the [Student Employment Office](#) (603-646-3641). Those with visa-related concerns may reach out to the [Office of Visa and Immigration Services](#) (603-646-3474). I encourage you to take advantage of these resources, to take care of yourself throughout the term, and to speak with me if you need support in the class.

Please note that faculty and staff are required by law to report certain matters to relevant parties on campus, including disclosures of sexual or gender-based harassment, sexual assault, relationship and interpersonal violence, and stalking. You can find more information about confidential versus non-confidential resources and support options [here](#).

Letters of Recommendation: I get many requests for letters and I have a handout describing the materials I need at least two weeks prior to your deadline. If you expect to need a letter from me after the term ends, please let me know while you're still in the class so that I can have more detailed notes to write a stronger letter on your behalf. I enjoy writing letters for students who have stood out in some way, and I take writing these letters quite seriously.

Class Schedule and Readings:

Readings that are not from Lareau are available online at our Canvas site. Optional readings for each topic are also listed on Canvas.

Date	Topic	Readings to complete before our class session	Assignments
9/13	Introduction	Course syllabus Jennifer Lee & Janice McCabe, “Who Speaks and Who Listens...”	
9/15	Research Design	SSRC, “The Art of Writing Proposals” Lareau, Chapters 1, 2 and 3	
9/20	Measurement and Causality	Khan & Fisher, Introduction Malcolm Gladwell, “The Order of Things”	
9/22	Sampling	Earl Babbie, Chp 7 excerpt, “The Logic of Sampling” Re-read: Khan & Fisher, p.14-18 Mario Small, “How Many Cases Do I Need?”	
9/27	Topics to Questions	Re-read: Khan & Fisher, p.3-4 & 11-14 Andrew Abbott, <i>Digital Paper</i> , p.64-71	Lab 1, Measurement DUE
9/29	Research Ethics	Re-read Lareau, p.38-42 ASA, “Code of Ethics” Marc Perry, “Conflict Over Sociologist’s Narrative...” Alice Goffman’s Ted Talk, “How we’re priming some kids for college—and others for prison”	Lab 2, Sampling DUE
10/4	Human Subjects Research and CPHS certification	“Belmont Report” Alton Chew & Diesh Visva Gunasekeran, “Social Media Big Data: The Good, The Bad...” Casey Ross, “Google Partners with Major...” Watch the recorded CPHS presentation (40 min)No <i>During Class:</i> CPHS Q&A by Kelly Tanguay, Human Research Analyst	Lab 3, Abstracts- Part1 DUE
10/6	Reviewing the Literature	John Creswell, “Chp 8: Developing a Literature Map” Re-read Lareau, p.15-17 Re-read Lee & McCabe, p.34-38 <i>During class:</i> Amy Witzel, Sociology Subject Librarian	Lab 3, Abstracts- Part 2 DUE
10/11	Surveys	Khan & Fisher, Chapter 2 (p.50-70) Emily Oster, “COVID-19 School Data Hub”	Lab 3, Abstracts- Part 3 DUE

10/13	Experiments	Khan & Fisher, Chapter 1 (p.24-49)	Lab 4, Lit Review DUE
10/18	Interviews	Lareau, Chapters 4 and 5	Lab 5, Surveys DUE
10/20	Focus Groups	David Morgan, "Focus Groups as Qualitative Research"	Lab 4, Lit Review-Part 2 DUE
10/25 Meet in Rauner	Historical Research	Khan & Fisher, Introduction to Chapter 7 (p.147- 149) <i>Class Held in Rauner Library: Activity with Peter Carini, College Archivist, Dartmouth College</i>	Lab 7, Interviews DUE
10/27	Content Analysis	Janice McCabe, "Who are the Experts? Medicalization in Teen Magazine Advice Columns"	Lab 6, Lit Review DUE
11/1	Ethnography	Lareau, Chapters 6 and 7	Lab 8, Historical DUE
11/3	Social Networks	Khan & Fisher, Chapter 3 (p.71-89) Bernice Pescosolido, "The Sociology of Social Networks"	
11/8	Mixed Methods	Khan & Fisher, Chapter 9 (p.188-211) Mario Small, "How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study"	Lab 9, Ethnography DUE
11/10	Analysis of Qualitative Research	Lareau Chapters 8 and 9 David Morgan, re-read p.64-71	Lab 10, Outline- Part 1 DUE
11/15	Concluding Thoughts	Lareau, Chapter 10 Re-read: SSRC, "The Art of Writing Proposals" Re-read: Jennifer Lee & Janice McCabe, "Who Speaks and Who Listens..."	Lab 10, Outline- Part 2 DUE
11/20	Final Proposal Due – Sunday, November 20, 3:00pm EST		