



**OTRP** online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

SOCSC 450  
3 Credit Hours  
TR 1:00-2:15  
Room: Davis 301  
Fall 2005

Instructor: Dr. Donna Stuber-McEwen  
Office: Davis Hall 314C  
Phone: 295-5663  
email: mcewen@friends.edu  
Office hours posted on door

## **Methods of Social Science Research SYLLABUS**

Required Texts: Smith, R. A., & Davis, S. F. (2003). *The psychologist as detective* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall; Perrin, R. (n.d.). *Pocket guide to APA Style*, Houghton Mifflin (unless you own the APA Manual); **SOCSC 450 Resource Notebook**.

Recommended for those Going to Graduate School: American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Catalog Description: Introduction to the use of the scientific method in social science research. Consideration given to formulation of problems, techniques or gathering data, presentation and interpretation of research (3 hours, Prerequisite: ENGL 102).

Course Description: This course is designed for upper level undergraduate students majoring in psychology, sociology, political science, or related fields. The course will provide an introduction to research methodology and a basic framework to critically evaluate social and behavioral science research. You will be exposed to and tested on the major concepts and methods for generating hypotheses and designing a multi-measure study. This course should enable you to evaluate more critically the claims of "experts" in the popular press as well as in the scientific literature. It will also be *incredibly beneficial* for the human services/psychology major "senior project."

Position in the Curriculum: Research Methods is a 3-hour core requirement in the Human Services/Psychology, Human Services/Sociology, and Political Science/History majors, as well as a requirement in the Criminal Justice degree, Behavioral track.

Course Outcomes: By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- ◆ *build a basic framework for understanding social and behavioral science research*
- ◆ *establish an appreciation for the benefits as well as the limitations of social and behavioral science research*
- ◆ *conceptualize more clearly a personal "world view" and its relationship to the scientific method*

Department Outcomes: This course supports the following Human Services/Psychology Department outcomes:

- *Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles, techniques, and applications, employed in the scientific method*
- *Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to apply the basic principles and techniques employed in the scientific method.*
- *Students will demonstrate an understanding of the major personality, developmental, and social psychological theories.*
- *Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to apply their understanding of the major personality, developmental, and social psychological theories to “real life” situations.*
- *Students will demonstrate an understanding of etiologies, interventions, and treatments associated with the full range of mental and emotional disturbances.*
- *Students will emerge from the major with realistic ideas about how to pursue careers in psychology and related fields and will distinguish types of academic experience and performance that will facilitate entry into the work force, post baccalaureate education, or both.*

**Education Outcomes:** This course also meets the following Standard for the secondary education teaching psychology endorsement:

- *The teacher of psychology will demonstrate and understanding of the use of major research methods in psychology, including design, data analysis, and interpretation.*

**Research Ethics:** Before designing your proposal, all students will be required to read and sign the policy for the ethical treatment of human subjects established by the American Psychological Association. Research ethics related to the use of human subjects can be found at: <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html> (Section 8). If you plan to conduct an animal study, you will be required to read and sign the policy for the ethical treatment of animals. A signature sheet will be distributed in class.

Before being allowed to collect data (Senior Seminar) you will be required to have your proposal approved by the Friends University Human Subjects Review Board. The form can be downloaded from Blackboard (select Course Documents). Non-psychology majors are also required to complete the form (exemption procedures will apply). The HSRB must approve your research proposal before any data collection takes place. Any questions or concerns made by the HSRB must also be addressed and resolved prior to data collection. You may not change the methodology of your study without my approval – the change may also require prior HSRB approval, as well.

**Evaluation:** Two exams are scheduled this semester (see schedule). Exams will be multiple choice and taken in groups of four people. (PLEASE NOTE: do not take the difficulty level of group tests for granted!) The test items will assess your comprehension and ability to apply the procedures, concepts, and principles presented during the course of instruction.

You are also required to submit a research proposal. This proposal provides the opportunity to learn and experience practical skills through the design of your own research project. Handouts to assist you with this project are included in the *Resource Booklet*. The project will be carried out in stages with specific due dates assigned (see schedule for due dates and point values). It is imperative that you submit papers at the required due date. Otherwise, **50% will be deducted** from the grade. **PLEASE NOTE:** the final proposal will not be accepted late. If you have a verifiable emergency, you, or your representative, **MUST** call as soon as possible, preferably before the class period. If you need to be absent for university business, you **MUST** submit the assignment before the scheduled due date. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Note: you are also

required to email each draft as a Word document on the specified dates. Failure to do so will result in 50% being deducted from the assigned grade. Your final project is to be turned in as a hard copy.

Your final grade will be based on the two 50-point exams, research proposal drafts, and final project. The grading scale is as follows:

90 – 100% = A    80 – 89% = B    70 – 79% = C    60 – 69% = D    0 – 59% = F

Policy for Exams: Attendance is required for all exams. No matter what the excuse, make-up exams will be administered on an individual basis (not in groups).

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Any student found cheating (as defined in class) on an exam will receive a “zero” for that exam. Additionally, the matter will be turned over to the Dean. Plagiarism will result in a “zero” and the matter also turned over to the Dean. There will be NO SECOND CHANCE. Please note: the university subscribes to turnitin.com, a web site that searches out plagiarized materials. Everyone’s drafts will be submitted to turnitin.com and checked for plagiarism.

Attendance: Five points per unexcused absence will be deducted from your final total points.

Blackboard: If you lose your syllabus, you can go to Blackboard and download another copy. Course forms, including the HSRB application, are also placed on Blackboard. Important announcements will be sent by email.

Miscellaneous: **1)** It is recommended that you look over each chapter prior to class. Then, after each chapter is covered in class, thoroughly re-read the chapter. Since this is an upper division course, you are expected to have a higher level of sophistication, motivation, and appreciation for the importance of the course material. **2)** Attendance, preparation, and participation are essential. If writing (especially scholarly writing) is difficult, the Writing Center can help at no cost to you. **3)** If you must miss a regular class meeting, it is YOUR responsibility to catch up on reading and get notes from a classmate. Then, if you have questions about the material, don’t hesitate to ask for help.

All the rumors about the difficulty level of this class are true. Please ask if you are having trouble with the material. Don’t wait until the hour before an exam, or day before an assignment is due to ask for help. Your professor does not bite too hard.

Extra credit and professional develop points will be announced in class as they become available. Points will not be calculated into your mid-term grade.

For more information about courses offered by the Division of Social and Behavioral Science, and to comment about this or other courses offered by the division call or write:

Social and Behavioral Science Division  
Friends University  
2100 University  
Wichita, Kansas 67213  
(316) 295-5567 or 800-794-6945 ext 5567

or email the division chair, Bill Allan, at [ballan@friends.edu](mailto:ballan@friends.edu)

Finally: Once your research proposal is approved, you may **NOT** alter your methodology before data collection without my consent – even if you collect data prior to the start of Senior Seminar. No exceptions.

Class Schedule and Assignments: (subject to change)

Aug 25	Introduction to course and project
Aug 30	Ch. 1
Sept 1	Ch. 1
Sept 6	Details of final project; Ch. 2
Sept 8	Ch. 3
Sept 13	Ch. 4
Sept 15	Ch. 4; Assignment 1 due (all groups)
Sept 20	APA writing workshop: text
Sept 22	APA writing workshop: references
Sept 27	Ch. 5
Sept 29	Ch. 5
Oct 4	bring typed references collected to date (all groups) peer review
Oct 6	Ch. 6; Assignment #2 due (group A)
Oct 11	Ch. 6 & 7; Assignment #2 due (group B)
Oct 13	Ch. 7; Rationale/Purpose Workshop, Assignment #2 (group C)
Oct 18	Mid-term exam (chapter 1-7)
Oct 20	Go over test, Method & Appendices Workshop
Oct 25	Ch. 8, Assignment #3 due (group A)
Oct 27	Ch. 8; Assignment #3 due (group B)
Nov 1	Ch. 8 (BTB LAB 2); Assignment #3 (group C)
Nov 3	No class – work day for PERK presenters
Nov 8	Ch. 9, cont'; Assignment #4 due (group A)
Nov 10	Ch. 10, Assignment #4 due (group B)
Nov 15	HSRB app workshop
Nov 17	Ch. 11
Nov 22	Ch. 12; Assignment #5 (All Groups)
Nov 24	No class - Thanksgiving
Nov 29	Ch. 13
Dec 1	Ch. 14; Peer review – bring final draft from start to finish; Qs & As; wrap-up
Dec 6	No class, work day

Dec 8  
Dec 14

Final proposals & HSRB due, Qs & As for final  
Final Exam, 1:00 PM Chapter 8-14

Project Due Dates (subject to change):

#	Assignment Description	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	<u>Group C</u>
1	Problem Recognition: Submit one or more project ideas for approval (5 pts.)	9/15	9/15	9/15
1a	Reference page (to date – peer review)	10/4	10/4	10/4
2	Review of the Literature (1 <sup>st</sup> draft); includes references collected-to-date and working title page (20 pts.)	10/6	10/11	10/13
3	Revisions to date, purpose statement, rationale, hypothesis, revised reference list (25 pts)	10/25	10/27	11/1
4	Revisions to date, Method: in detail, describe sampling, materials, and data collection procedures (25 pts)	11/8	11/10	11/15
5	Appendices only: informed consent document, surveys, demographic questionnaire, time and cost estimates, materials, etc (15 pts.)	11/22	11/22	11/22
5a	Peer review (5 pts)	12/1	12/1	12/1
6	Final Proposal: title page through appendices (100 pts.), HSRB app (5 pts)	12/8	12/8	12/8

Important Notes: Each draft (except assignment #5) must include all revisions to date, which includes the Title Page, References, and any revisions from the previous draft.

All drafts require title page, references, and revisions to date. Documents MUST be emailed as single Word documents, except Appendices. DO NOT STAPLE HSRB form to your final project.

HSRB must be typed. Do not staple the HSRB application to your final proposal.

Please note: it is to your advantage to begin work on assignment #5 early in the semester. You may bring in your Appendices at any time during the semester for help.

Finally: once your research proposal is approved by the HSRB committee, you may **NOT** alter your methodology before data collection without my consent – even if you collect data prior to the start of Senior Seminar. No exceptions.