



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Sociology

Sociology Department Home Page: <http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca>

Sociology 313.01 INTRODUCTORY SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS

• Fall 2017	• Tue/Thu: 11:00-12:15pm	• Lecture Hall — SA 121
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Instructor: Dr. Pallavi Banerjee
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Phone: (403) 220-6511

Office hours: Minimum 3 hours a week.

Here's a link to my calendar where you can book appointments with through the available time-slots: <https://drbanerjeeucalgary.youcanbook.me>

Teaching Assistant: Martine Dennie; **Email:** martine.dennie@ucalgary.ca

Labs: With Teaching Assistant - Location and Time: Tuesday, 3:30 p.m. – 5: 20 p.m. at MS 217

TA Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

How do we know what we know about the social world?

In this course, we will tackle this question together by examining how social scientists observe, analyze, and create knowledge about various social institution and phenomenon. We will introduce you to qualitative and quantitative research methods commonly used by social scientists, and will invite you to think critically about how different methods lead to different kinds of knowledge production. We will pay special attention to how sociological research methods have historically privileged some groups, while excluding, marginalizing, and disparaging others, and how methods today may be used to both challenge and reproduce social inequalities. The University requires that in order to take this course, you must be at least sophomore standing, have taken SOCI 201 or Sociology 201 or consent of the Department.

This course is structured around an active research component. You will be working in groups, and the success of your research project depends on collaborative teamwork, which is central to the maturity and richness of any research project. The research experience in this course will help you to develop practical skills of research design and grant proposal writing. While this may sound

daunting, we will be helping you with the development and writing of your grant proposal each step of the way.

COURSE/LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to provide you with as much hands-on experience with research methods commonly used by social scientists as possible. In this course, we will be:

- (1) learning about and practicing qualitative and quantitative methods,
- (2) exploring how science is produced and what ideas or conditions influence science,
- (3) critically thinking about existing scientific research methods, and
- (4) producing a research proposal. We will do this through a variety of hands-on activities, including designing studies, doing research, and examining scientific literature.
- (5) develop practical skills of research design and grant proposal writing through that.
- (6) We will be focusing on ethics of research, critical epistemologies and methodologies in this course, which are relevant to other fields as well. We will encourage you to apply the methodological tools you learn in this course to your own research interests, and to the knowledge claims you encounter in other courses and in your everyday lives.

COURSE MATERIALS

Readings are assigned from two sources:

- Alan Bryman, Edward Bell, and James J. Teevan. 2016. *Social Research Methods*, Fourth Canadian Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press. (Available at the Campus Bookstore)
- Seven online journal articles (links and pdfs provided on D2L). *Please note: You need to be logged in to U of C library for the links to work.*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING:

You will be responsible for *all* readings specified in the course outline, as well as *all* lecture materials (including films, guest speaker presentations etc.)

The course grade will be determined as follows:

In-class Activities.....	6%
Mid Term 1 (Oct 12).....	15 %
Mid Term 2 (Nov 7)	15 %
Final Exam (TBA)	15 %
Lab Exercises	10%
Grant proposal prep.....	4%
Research Grant Proposal	35 %

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 96.00-100	B+ = 80.00-84.99	C+ = 67.00-69.99	D+ = 54.00-58.99
A = 90.00-95.99	B = 75.00-79.99	C = 63.00-66.99	D = 50.00-53.99
A- = 85.00-89.99	B- = 70.00-74.99	C- = 59.00-62.99	F = 49.00 or less

Please note that ALL exams and assignments must be completed to obtain a passing grade in this course. Please note also that final grades are NOT negotiable. No grade will be increased beyond what a student has earned during the term, and in the class.

Reading for the class:

Students will be expected to keep up with the assigned readings for each class period. The reading load is not excessive, but does require you to plan ahead to get it done. If you want to do well in this class, you must not only complete the readings, but take time to critically think about them before you come to class. ***NOTE*** *I reserve the right to add additional readings OR drop readings as they fit the progression of the course. Coming to class will be the best way to make sure you are up-to-date on such readings.*

You will be expected to take notes on readings prior to coming to class. These notes are designed to summarize key points and should include some of your own questions or analysis of the readings. I will regularly invite students to ask their own questions based on the readings or lectures. I regard lectures and discussions as a supplement to what you are reading. At times, the lectures will seek to clarify and crystallize some of the reading material. At other times, however, the lectures will add to or historicize what you are reading. *Attendance in class will likely be the single most important factor in your ability to do well in this course.*

Midterms and Final Exam:

In order to evaluate your knowledge of course material, three tests are assigned (two midterms and one final exam). These tests will NOT be cumulative. The midterms will be written during regular lecture time and the final exam will be scheduled for the exam period. The tests will involve a combination of multiple choice, true and false, and/or short answer questions. More specific information on the exact format of the tests will be provided later in the term.

Lab Exercises:

The labs are designed to give you practical experience with the various research methods discussed in class such as conducting interviews and fieldwork and analyzing media clips and images. While attendance will not be taken at labs, you will be expected to submit the results of your lab exercises (typically in the form of rough, handwritten notes) to your TA at the end of the lab. Results from the exercises will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Combined, all of the lab exercises constitute 10% of your grade. A detailed schedule of labs and lab exercises will be provided on D2L. Labs will also be used to prepare you for the research grant proposal paper assignment. The prep work for grant proposal paper assignment is valued at 10 % of your entire grade. This will also be graded on a regular scale.

In-class Activities:

These are in-class group activities that you will do every week. The goals of these activities are to help us interact with the methods on a more hands-on basis. It will also give you an opportunity to work with one another and brainstorm the method in question.

Team Research Grant proposal:

We will stage a mock grant competition as part of this course. In order to receive funding to do our research, sociologists must write proposals to be reviewed by grant committees, usually composed of experts in the field. These proposals explain what we hope to accomplish, why our research matters, and how we plan to carry it out. The grant committee then selects the strongest proposals for funding. Detailed instructions on the assignment will be provided on D2L.

You will work in teams of two to three people to complete a research proposal modeled on an actual grant competition. You will submit a written proposal on the last day of class but will work

throughout the semester to build up to it. Your professor and TA will select five best proposals that will be reviewed by an outside grant committee that will recommend two proposals for “funding” (prize TBD). We will announce the winners of the competition during finals week.

*Winning the competition will have **NO** bearing on your grade. Teams whose proposals are not selected for funding will have an equal opportunity to earn an “A,” provided all criteria are met as specified in the instructions on D2L.*

Because grant decisions are heavily swayed by the caliber of your research methods, this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate what you have learned about research methodology and knowledge production in the social sciences, and to consider how some of these principles might work in an actual research environment. This assignment will also familiarize you with the process of grant writing, which is an important skill in many professional settings.

You will be submitting the grant proposal on Dropbox in D2L NO LATER than Dec 8, 6:00 p.m.

Grant Proposal Prep Work

Due in labs and each assignment will be graded on a three-mark scale (Good; Satisfactory and Not Satisfactory). Your final grade for the prep work will be an average of what you receive on each of the assignments. If you miss any part of the prep work, you will not get points for any of the parts. It’s important that all members of the team show up in lab for the prep work. Please also NOTE that the mark you receive on these assignments have NO bearing on your mark for the final grant proposal. But, if you have an excellent final grant proposal and your prep work is not up to mark, you will still get full points for the prep work because you will have demonstrated improvement and growth.

Note: You can do as much or as little with the prep work. What we mean by this is that you can provide a well-thought out outline for each of the assignments or you can write the entire section in detail. The feedback you get on these assignments will help you shape the final grant proposal. You can use anything you write for the prep work in your grant proposal.

Assignment 1: Short Research Proposal: Finding the Research Question and the Case—What is your research question, and why is it an important one? What is your empirical case, if you have one? Why is it a good case to answer your research question?

This is to be done in groups during lab time. Your TA will tell you what to do and we’ll be uploading a preparation guideline on D2L one week before the lab. This is a step that will guide you toward the completion of your research proposal for the grant competition.

You will do this during lab in Week 3.

Assignment 2: Article summaries: Each team member is required to find and summarize **at least** two academic articles or one book that is relevant to the topic of your grant proposal. You should ideally do more. The articles or book that you summarize must be written in the last 15 years, must be a scholarly source. Your TA will tell you what constitutes an academic source.

Your summary should identify the research question, the methodology, and the key findings of the article, as well as a couple of sentences about why the article is relevant to your group project. Your citation should be in ASA format, which you can find in the ASA style guide linked to our course D2L site and here: http://lib.trinity.edu/research/citing/ASA_Style_Citations_4.pdf

The summary is due in lab (deadline on D2L in lab assignment) and should be no more than one page in length. Please bring enough copies for everyone on your team. You will have lab time to read and discuss the summaries provided by all team members. You will then work together to weave these summaries into a short literature review, which is an important part of your grant proposal. You will do this during lab in Week 8.

Assignment 3: Research Methodology: You will be discussing in your groups, the best research methodology for your research proposal. Your discussion question is: what is the methodology that you will be using to answer your research questions? What is your epistemological approach to doing the research and why? You will then work in your groups to write up a step-by-step plan for how you will collect your data. Three four things that you must include in outlining your methodology are as follows:

- a. Describe the population you are interested in, and how you will derive a sample from this population. Provide a justification for who will be included in and excluded from your sample.
- b. Explain the specific method or methods you will use to collect data from your sample. (E.g., will you conduct interviews? Ethnography? Participant observations? Telephone surveys? When and where will you do this?)
- c. Describe your epistemological approach and why you'd use it.
- d. Briefly describe your plans for conducting exploratory interviews. (E.g., who will you be interviewing for your exploratory interview? When and where will you be interviewing them? Why have you chosen to interview this person?) Refer to your syllabus to see what an exploratory interview is before writing this description.

You should also discuss and outline why have you chosen this particular methodology for your research? (One way to think about this is to assess if Sprague would agree with your methodology or not, that is, whether you are using a critical feminist methodology or not. You may also draw on the work of other methodologists, introduced to you in this or other courses.)

Are there any challenges or limitations of using the methodology that you have chosen? If so, what are they? You may put the limitations in bullet points so that you can develop them further in your final grant proposal.

You will do this during lab in Week 11.

Assignment 4: Making the Budget and Timeline: You will also use one of the lab hours to work on the budget for the grant proposal and timeline for the research. Please see the grant proposal description on D2L to prepare for this activity. You will be working in groups to complete this assignment. See LAB Materials on D2L for further details on the assignment.

You will do this during lab in Week 13.

All of the prep work can be directly used and included in your final research grant proposals.

NOTE*: Nitpicking over marks and points is discouraged as this reflects the prioritization of the grade over learning. No late assignments/tests/papers are accepted without valid DOCUMENTED reasons.**

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

Attendance Policy

All students are expected to be present in every class. You won't be allowed to make-up for any in-class assignments including reading quizzes if you are absent. If you face any particular challenges that you believe will affect your commitment to this course, please make an appointment to meet with one or both of us at the earliest possible date. You may not be responsible for your circumstances, but you are responsible for letting me know when you need support. We are more likely to be able to assist you in dealing with your situation if we know about it early in the semester. I however cannot emphasize enough how important it is for you to attend class. **I cannot replicate class discussions for people who miss a class period! Also, make a friend to make-up for what you miss when you are absent from class.**

Grade Reappraisal

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to me explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. I will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a *re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.*

Reviewing of Exam and Assignment

Students will have **two weeks after the exams and assignments** have been marked and grades have been posted on D2L to review the exam. For instance, students cannot demand to review the first exam or analysis paper at the end of the term.

Technology Use

To minimize disruption in the classroom, all cell phones; tablets and other electronic devices must be turned OFF during class unless otherwise instructed. You may use your cell phones when I ask you to register attendance and/or reading quizzes through the TopHat learning tool. Laptops are permitted in the classroom BUT ONLY to take notes and to connect with TopHat. Research has shown that laptops bring down your own and your classmates performances and grades (I have posted the research on this on D2L under "Useful Links"). **(Permission to use LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES may be withdrawn if they are used for anything else other than class purposes).**

Email

Students can contact me over email ONLY to make appointments or in case of an **emergency**. Please put your course number and section (Soci 471.03) in your email's subject line, **and include a proper salutation**, your full name, student ID, and a **proper closing** in the body of your email. *All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored.* All other emails will be answered within one to two business day. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams, know that I **do not** discuss marks over email – any questions regarding marks needs to be addressed face-to-face. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline will not be answered. *Also, please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment. Please do not use e-mail as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss.* **Questions about the course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in person during my office hours.**

Here's an interesting article about email courtesy. Please read to know how to write professional emails. : <https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-being-annoying-af-cf64ae0e4087#.1mzg7xuiq>

Handing in Papers, Assignments

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. **Protection of Privacy:** The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

Ethics Research

Students are advised that any research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

Deferrals

When possible, please provide advance notice if you are unable to write an exam or complete/turn-in assignments on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the health issue rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements, misreading the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

Deferred Final Exam Form: Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar’s Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It’s available at:

https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

Student Representation

The 2017-18 Students’ Union VP Academic is Tina Miller (suvpaca@ucalgary.ca).

For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student’s Union, please visit this link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/>

You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/contact>

Emergency Evacuations

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom, please proceed to the assembly point at **Social Science - Food Court**. Please check these assembly point locations for all of your classes at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Safewalk

The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation

The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

TENTATIVE COURSE TOPICS AND READINGS

The following is a tentative schedule of topics for class discussion, the accompanying readings, and the test and assignment schedule. This schedule may be changed if unforeseen circumstances arise, or if topics emerge that seem to warrant more attention. Book chapters will be uploaded as Pdf in D2L. Links to journal articles are also provided on D2L.

Week 1 (Sept 12 - 14): Introduction to the course

Lecture I: Introduction to the Course

Lecture II: Theory and Research Readings and introduction to Epistemology

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 1: General Research Orientations

Week 2 (Sep 19– 21): Epistemology: How we know what we know

Lecture I: How we know what we know

- Reading: Pdf 1: Seeing Through Science: Epistemologies by Joey Sprague, Chapter 2 in *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers*

Lecture II: Whose methods, whose knowledge and Research Design

- Reading: Reading: Textbook, Chapter 2: Research Designs
- Reading (Optional) - Link 1: Connell, Raewyn 2015. 'Meeting at the edge of fear: Theory on a world scale,' *Feminist Theory*. 16:149-66

Discuss grant proposal and form research groups

Week 3 (Sept 26 – 28): Designing Research

Lecture I: Research Designs Readings:

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 15: Breaking Down the Qualitative/Quantitative Divide

Lecture II: Ethics, Access, and Politics Readings:

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 3 – Research Ethics

Assignment 1# Research Proposal Prep Assignment: Due in Lab – Do not miss lab

Week 4 (Oct 3 – 5): Quantitative Methods I

Lecture I: Quantitative Research

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 4: The Nature of Quantitative Research

Lecture II. Survey Research

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 5: Survey Research: Structured Interviewing and Questionnaires

Week 5 (Oct 10 – 12): Thanksgiving and Midterm Week

Oct 10: Thanksgiving Extended Break and Study Day

Oct 12: **In-class exam: Mid Term 1**

Week 6 (Oct 17 – 19): Quantitative Methods II and Introduction to Qualitative Research I

Lecture I: Art of Quantitative Research

- Reading: Pdf2/Link2: Joudrey, A., and Wallace, J.E. (2009). Leisure as a Coping Resource: A Test of the Job Demand-Control-Support Model. *Human Relations*, 62:195-217.

Lecture II: What is Qualitative Research

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 9: The Nature of Qualitative Research

Week 8 (Oct 24 - 26): Qualitative Research II

Lecture I: Ethnography

- Reading: Textbook, Chapter 10: Ethnography and Participant Observation

Lecture II: Case Studies and Ethnography and Insider/Outsider Perspective in Qualitative Research

- Reading: Link 3: Ray Ranita: 2015. Exchange and Intimacy in the Inner City: Rethinking Kinship Ties of the Urban Poor in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (3).
And
- Reading: Pdf 3: Davis Georgiann, 2015. Introduction: “You’re in the Monkey Cage with Me” in *Contesting Intersex: The Dubious Diagnosis*. NYU Press.

Note on how to read the articles for Lecture II (Link 3 and Pdf 5):

- Read the abstract
- Read the Methods Sections
- Skim the findings
- Read the conclusion

Assignment 2: Research Proposal Prep Assignment: Article Summaries Due in Lab – Do not miss lab

Week 9 (Oct 31 – Nov 2): Qualitative Interviewing AND Unobtrusive Methods

Lecture I: Qualitative Interviews

Readings:

- Textbook, Chapter 11: Interviewing in Qualitative Research
- Pdf 4: Pallavi Banerjee. “Only the snobs go to the mosque”: Muslim Immigrant Bangladeshi Women and the Politics of Gender, Class and Religion

Note on how to read the article Pdf 4:

- Read the abstract
- Read the Methods Sections
- Skim the findings
- Read the conclusion

Lecture II: Conducting Research and Writing Research

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 17: Writing up Social Research
- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 18: Conducting a Research Project

(Skim both readings)

Lecture II: *Nov 2- Guest Lecture: Writing Coach/Expert from Student Success Center (Attendance Mandatory)*

Week 10 (Nov 7 – 9): Midterm Week

Nov 7: In-class exam: Mid Term 2

Nov 9: Early Reading Week Break to Work on Assignment 3.

Week 11 (Nov 14 – 16): Other Data Sources and Sampling

Lecture I: Unobtrusive Sources of Data / *Historical Comparative Methods*

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 8: Other Sources of Data

Lecture II: Quantitative Sampling

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 12: Sampling

Assignment 3: Research Proposal Prep Assignment: Research Methods - Due in Lab – Do not miss lab

Week 12 (Nov 21 – 23): Sampling (contd.) and Data Analysis

Lecture I: Qualitative Sampling

- Readings: Link 4. Mario Small (2009) “How Many Cases Do I Need?” On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field Based Research.” *Ethnography* 10(1): 5-38.

Lecture II: Quantitative Data Analysis

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 13: Quantitative Data Analysis

Expert Guest Speaker: TBA

Week 13 (Nov 28 –30) Conducting and Writing Up Research

Lecture I: Qualitative Data Analysis

- Readings: Textbook, Chapter 14: Qualitative Data Analysis

Lecture II: Analyzing Research and Writing

- Reading: Link 5 - Choo, Hae Yeon. 2016. "In the Shadow of Working Men: Gendered Labor and Migrant Rights in South Korea." *Qualitative Sociology* 29(4): 353-373.

Assignment 4: Research Proposal Prep Assignment: Budget and Timeline- Due in Lab – Do not miss lab

Week 14 (Dec 5 – 7): Reflection and Wrap-Up

Dec 5: Reading Reflection day and analysis

Dec7: Exam Review and Wrap Up

Research Grant Proposal Due in Dropbox: December 8 by 6:00 p.m. – NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

REGISTRAR SCHEDULE FINAL EXAM: DATE TBA