



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to the study of research methods. The *University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar* describes this course as follows:

An introduction to quantitative and qualitative scientific methods of investigating social phenomena. The course will include introductions to the assumptions of scientific inquiry, the conceptualization of research problems, basic statistical analysis, and the use of a packaged computer program. Students may not hold credit for both SOC 2290 (077.229) and SOC 2291 (077.229).

Prerequisite: [a grade of "C" or better in SOC 1200 (077.120) or the former SOC 1201 (077.120)] or [a grade of "C" or better in both SOC 1211 (077.121) and SOC 1221 (077.122)].

This course introduces a set of concepts, principles, and procedures that comprise the scientific way of knowing about the social world. Applying a scientific perspective is an essentially *modern* enterprise. This course presents an opportunity for you to learn about the strengths and limitations of a method of knowing that extensively shapes our experience.

A quick perusal of your textbooks' table of contents demonstrates that this course leads you into a wide range of subject areas. Consequently, your intellectual abilities will be stretched. You might find some of the topics taxing or tedious; others you will find interesting and relevant. This is part of the liberating experience called education!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

- Identify scientific ways of knowledge production by differentiating it from other forms of human inquiry
- Recognise the general principals of research methods and their application in the collection of data for analysis
- Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative methodologies
- Recognize the importance of ethics in social science research

- › Become familiar with basic statistical methods and techniques for data analysis
- › Enhance your statistical literacy
- › Identify the difference between descriptive and inferential statistics, including what statistical techniques are used in each
- › Enhance your ability to undertake research and to become informed consumers of published research

COURSE MATERIALS

MANDATORY

Babbie, E. & Benaquisto, L. (2014). *Fundamentals of Social Research* (3rd ed.). Toronto: Nelson

Roberts, L.W., Edgerton, J., Peter, T., & Wilkinson, L.A. (2014). *Social Statistics: Navigating through the Maze*. (1st ed.). Toronto: Oxford.

Roberts, L. W.; Kampen, K., & Peter, T. (2009). *The Methods Coach: Learning through Practice*. Toronto: Oxford.

RECOMMEDED

Throughout the course, you will be required to learn and use IBM SPSS, which is available on University of Manitoba computers in its computer labs. If you are not working on, or close, to campus, it is strongly advised that you purchase the IBM SPSS software for students, which is available at the University of Manitoba bookstore. Some of the Babbie and Benaquisto textbooks will come bundled with IBM SPSS at a discounted cost.

SETTING UP YOUR COMPUTER

ADOBE ACROBAT

To view or print a document in PDF format, you need a PDF viewer (Adobe Acrobat). If you have not already done so, you can download the [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) for free.

NOTE: For printing, your printer driver needs to be configured for printing to a PostScript Level 1 printer.

Windows: Select "Level 1" in the PostScript options section of the Acrobat Exchange or Reader print dialog.

Macintosh: In the Chooser, select your printer driver. Then select your printer and click the Setup button. Follow any on-screen dialogs that may appear.

COURSE CONTENT

The course contains 21 units, which are based on 4 modules. The first term consists of 2 modules (13 units) and the second term is based on 2 modules (8 units). Each unit will be accompanied by detailed instructions identical to the kind that a lecturer gives in class.

An overview of the modules and their units are as follows:

Module 1: Design and measurement issues

- › Unit 01: Science as a way of knowing
- › Unit 02: Doing social research
- › Unit 03: Ethics in social research
- › Unit 04: Research design and causation
- › Unit 05: Conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement
- › Unit 06: Sampling in social research

Module 2: Data collection strategies

- › Unit 07: Experimental research
- › Unit 08: Survey research
- › Unit 09: Unobtrusive methods
- › Unit 10: Field research
- › Unit 11: Qualitative interviewing
- › Unit 12: Evaluation research
- › Unit 13: Qualitative data analysis

Module 3: Descriptive statistics

- › Unit 14: Introduction to social statistics

- › Unit 15: Univariate distributions and summary statistics
- › Unit 16: Univariate charts, graphs, and the normal curve
- › Unit 17: Bivariate relationships
- › Unit 18: Bivariate measures of association
- › Unit 19: Multivariate statistics

Module 4: Inferential statistics

- › Unit 20: Statistical inference
- › Unit 21: Significance testing

You are strongly encouraged to follow the suggested order, since each unit serves as the foundation for the following one. This is especially true for the second term, where many statistical applications are based on earlier material from both the first and second term.

Special Needs

We encourage students with disability-related special needs to participate in our programs. If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, or have a disability or illness which may affect your course of study, please discuss these issues with a counselor in one of the following Student Affairs offices as soon as possible:

- › **Student Accessibility Services**, 155 University Center, 474-6213 (voice), 474-9790
- › **Learning Assistance Center**, 201 Tier Building, 480-1481.
- › **Student Counselling and Career Centre**, 474 University Center, 474-8592.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Your levels of knowledge will be evaluated via the assignments, the online tests, and the final examination. The following **Marking Scheme** explains how marks will be distributed to calculate the *final grade*.

Assessment Activities	%
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Online Quizzes	16
<i>Methods Coach</i> Assignment	18
SPSS Assignment	16
December Exam	25
Final Exam	25

Assignments

Important - Missed Assignment: Any student who misses an assignment must provide a doctor's note (or appropriate equivalent). **This will be strictly enforced.** No student will be allowed to write the assignment, or hand it in late, without a doctor's note (or some form of written documentation). In the case of a late test or exam, any student who does not inform me (by phone/voice mail or email) **prior** to the due date **will not** be allowed to write a make-up test/exam. This also will be strictly enforced.

Students are required to complete all assessment activities, with the exception of the 6 online tests, which are based on the best 2 out of 3 tests from the first term and the best 2 out of 3 tests from the second term (each calculated quiz is worth 4%). It is still highly recommended that you complete each test so that the instructor can calculate your best scores for your final grade.

METHODS COACH ASSIGNMENT

The *Methods Coach* textbook is designed to act as a self-study lab, with the goal of providing you with an opportunity to apply many of the concepts and material you have learned in the assigned readings. The assignment consists of two parts: Part 1 is based on the completion of labs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 12; while Part 2 is based on the completion of labs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Each part has its own due date, and each part will be worth 9% of your final grade (18% total). Further instructions for completing both parts of the assignment can be found on the course website.

SPSS ASSIGNMENT

The goal of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to formulate and conduct a research analysis project on an actual data set. The assignment will involve you to utilize a variety of ideas and skills developed throughout the course and applying them in a comprehensive way. You can download the data set and supplementary material from the course website.

ONLINE TESTS

Six multiple choice/true or false online tests will be available on the website. You will have 1 hour to complete tests 1, 2, & 3 and you will

have 1 hour 20 minutes to complete tests 4, 5, & 6. The tests will consist of roughly 40 multiple choice questions and 20 true or false questions. As mentioned, the best 2 out of 3 tests from the first term (tests 1, 2, & 3) and the best 2 out of 3 tests from the second term (tests 4, 5, & 6) will be calculated as part of your final grade. Since a large portion of the second term is based on mathematical calculations of statistics, many of the multiple choice or true/false questions from the second term tests will require you to conduct hand calculations prior to being able to correctly answering the question. The *Understanding Social Statistics* textbook has lots of extra practice questions, with answer keys at the back of the book.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

There are two examinations: the first is during the December period; and the second during the April examination period. Both examinations will be scheduled during the regular final examination period by the Registrar's Office. The exact date, time, examination room, and seating arrangement will be specified in due course. The December examination will consist of multiple choice (n=80) and true or false (n=20) questions, lasting the total of 3 hours. You will need to bring pencils and student I.D. to the December examination. The April examination will consist of multiple choice questions (n=100). You will be given the statistical formulas for the exam as well as relevant appendices from the *Understanding Social Statistics* textbook. For the April examination, you will also need to bring a calculator (your smart phone or cell phone will not be allowed as a calculator), in addition to pencils and your student I.D.

Important Note: The December and April final exams will be conducted at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus or at an alternate location off-campus. **All students must declare an exam location.** The Registrar's Office is responsible for scheduling the final exams. Once finalized, the exam date and time information will be posted on the University of Manitoba Exam site.

Students with legitimate reasons may apply to the Dean of their faculty for an examination deferral. Students without a deferral, and who do not write the final examination, will be given a grade of **F NP**. The proposed date/time for **SOC 2290 Deferred Examination** is TBA. If you have a University class or laboratory scheduled for this time, see the course coordinator, to make alternate arrangements for the deferred examination.

EXTRA PRACTICE MATERIAL

In addition to the six online tests and final examinations, you will have the opportunity to test your competence regarding your mastery of the material in each unit. In the first term, there are two resources available: crossword puzzles and online quizzes based on readings from the Babbie and Benquisto textbook. The self-practice quizzes can be found at the textbook's premium website: www.nelsonbrain.com or through the textbook's regular website: www.nelson.com/babbie3ce. Additional resources are available on both these websites. The primary textbook, Roberts, Edgerton, Peter, & Wilkinson, in the second term is designed for you to practice your skills at the end of each chapter. Supplementary practice quizzes can also be found on the course website.

The following is a very important point! The self-practice quizzes are similar to the content that will be found on the relevant online tests and final examinations. While these online practice quizzes do not count towards your final grade, I can tell you from many years experience that

students who include the practice material as part of their study preparations do significantly better in the course. Of course, the assignments based on the Methods Coach textbook and the second term SPSS assignment will also help you in developing a high level of competency in research methods and statistics.

Grading Scale

A+: 90.0 - 100%	C+: 66.0 – 69.9%
A: 80.0 - 89.9%	C: 60.0 – 65.9%
B+: 76.0 - 79.9%	D: 50.0 – 59.9%
B: 70.0 - 75.9%	F: 0 - 49.9%

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

When in doubt about any practice, ask your professor or instructor. The Student Advocacy Office, 519 University Centre, 474-7423, is a resource available to students dealing with Academic Integrity matters.”

DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (DE) STUDENT RESOURCES

In your course website there are links for the following:

- › Contact Distance and Online Education
- › Distance and Online Education Student Handbook
- › Distance and Online Education Website

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Tracey Peter, Ph.D.

CONTENT SPECIALIST:

Sociology Department
Faculty of Arts
The University of Manitoba

Tracey earned her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Manitoba in 2005. She teaches a wide range of methodology and statistics courses in the department – at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Her primary research focus uses both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate various issues of inequality among young people.

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The University of Manitoba, Distance and Online Education