

**University of British Columbia**  
**Sociology 217-001**  
**Research Methods**

**Term 2:** January - April 2015

**Instructor:** Prof. Wendy D. Roth

**Class Time:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:20pm

**E-mail:** [wendy.roth@ubc.ca](mailto:wendy.roth@ubc.ca)

**Office:** ANSO 3115

**Class Location:** SWNG 221 (West Mall Swing  
Space Building, 2175 West Mall)

**Office phone:** 822-4845

**Office hours:** Mondays 3:00-4:00pm or  
by appointment

**iClicker Frequency:** AD

**Teaching Assistants:**

<b>Name:</b>	Leanne Huang	Tanvi Sirari	Paz Villar
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:Leanne.huang@alumni.ubc.ca">Leanne.huang@alumni.ubc.ca</a>	<a href="mailto:tanvi.dreamer@gmail.com">tanvi.dreamer@gmail.com</a>	<a href="mailto:pazestalejos@gmail.com">pazestalejos@gmail.com</a>
<b>Office:</b>	AnSo 108	Mercante*	Mercante*
<b>Office hours:</b>	Mondays 1:30-2:30pm Fridays 4:00-5:00pm	Thursdays 1:00-2:00pm Thursdays 3:30-4:30pm	Tuesdays 1:00-2:00pm Tuesdays 3:30-4:30pm
<b>Recommended for students with surnames:</b>	A-I	J-Q	R-Z
<b>Contact for questions on:</b>		iClickers	Connect website

\*Note: Mercante is the pizza restaurant and study area near our classroom. Its address is Ponderosa Commons, 6488 University Boulevard

**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to social science research methods. It is the duty of a sociologist to ask and answer questions about the social world, and this course is basic training. You will learn how to ask sociologically relevant questions and how to discover the answers to those questions ethically, logically, rigorously and systematically. In the first part of the course you will learn the major steps in designing a social research project, including how to ask sociological questions that derive from theories about the social world, how to develop logical and testable hypotheses, how to define and measure concepts, and how to identify an appropriate sample. In the second part of the course you will learn about different methods of collecting data. Throughout we will focus on how different methods are suited to answering different questions and how the methods we choose affect the answers we are able to see.

**Objectives:**

Students should finish the course with practical skills that they can apply to their academic and everyday lives. We will learn to evaluate social research we come across, develop tools for studying the social world ourselves, and learn how to actually do sociology research.

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- distinguish conventional from social scientific knowledge;

- locate, read, and evaluate sociological journal articles;
- formulate empirically testable sociological questions and hypotheses;
- identify key concepts in sociological theories, questions and hypotheses;
- describe, develop and evaluate measures of sociological concepts;
- describe, develop and evaluate sampling procedures for sociological research;
- describe different methods of collecting sociological data and evaluate their merits and limitations.

**Required Texts:**

Babbie, Earl and Luca Benaquisto. 2014. *Fundamentals of Social Research: 3rd Canadian edition*. Nelson Education.

This text is available at the UBC Bookstore and is on reserve in Koerner Library.

**Required Equipment:**

iClicker

iClickers can be purchased at the UBC Bookstore. They should be purchased and registered by Class 2 on January 8.

**ASSIGNMENT DETAILS AND EVALUATION:**

Evaluation for this course is based on the following:

Article Memo: 20%

Midterm Exam 1: 20%

Midterm Exam 2: 20%

Final Exam: 30%

Answers to iClicker questions: 10%

1. **Article Memo** – This memo (2 pages maximum) focuses on your ability to read a sociological article and understand central aspects of the research involved. Details about this assignment appear at the end of the syllabus.

This assignment must be uploaded to TurnItIn.com before the beginning of class on the due date (see details below). You must also bring a hard copy of the assignment with you to class. Late assignments will not be accepted without a letter of consideration from Arts Advising.

2. **Midterm Exams** – There will be two in-class midterm exams. Midterm 1 will cover material in the first 6 weeks of the class. Midterm 2 will cover material in weeks 7-10. The exams will consist primarily of multiple choice and True/False questions. There may also be some fill-in-the-blank and short-answer questions.

3. **Final Exam** – The final exam will be scheduled during the exam period (date to be announced). It will cover material from the entire course. The exam will include multiple choice, True/False questions, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions.
4. **Answers to iClicker questions** – At various times during lectures, multiple choice questions will be shown on the screen. You will be asked to answer the questions using your iClicker. Your participation in each question is worth 2 points, and getting the correct answer is worth another 2 points, for a total of 4 points per question.

### COURSE POLICIES

**iClicker Use:** Only you may use your iClicker. You may not under any circumstances give it to another student or ask someone else to answer for you. During lectures, we will check that iClickers are being used correctly by randomly selecting a student who has clicked in. If that student is not actually present, both s/he and the student who clicked in on her/his behalf will be penalized 25% of their entire mark for the course.

**Teaching Assistant Office Hours:** Each of the three Teaching Assistants for the class will hold weekly office hours. We ask that you visit the TA to whom you have been assigned based on the first letter of your surname. However, if you are unavailable at that TA's office hour time, you may visit the office hours of one of the other TAs.

**E-mail Addresses:** All e-mails to students will be sent out through the Faculty Service Centre. This uses whatever e-mail address you gave to the university. It is your responsibility to make sure that this address is current and that you actively check it or forward it to another account. You are responsible for checking this e-mail account every 24 hours, including the evening before class.

**Small Group Activity Contacts:** Several activities in class will be done in small groups. The groups will be organized a couple of weeks into the course. Once the groups are set up, please write down the contact information for your group members.

You are responsible for all material presented in class (including announcements). If you are unable to attend class, you should obtain notes from a group member (do not contact the teaching assistants to find out what you missed).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism occurs when one person presents as one's own the words or ideas of another. This includes quoting sources, paraphrasing, or summarizing source material without indicating through the use of proper citation methods that the specific material in question was quoted, paraphrased, or summarized from a given source. Plagiarism of any form, even unintentional, will not be tolerated.

Many students think they know all about plagiarism and are not in danger of committing it. Surprisingly, most of the students I have found committing plagiarism have said exactly this. For this reason, I recommend that every student take UBC's online tutorial in Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. This is available online at: <http://help.library.ubc.ca/planning-your-research/academic-integrity-plagiarism/>

**TurnItIn.com:** To deter and detect plagiarism, this course will make use of UBC's subscription to TurnItIn.com for the Article Memo. This is a service that checks textual material for originality. In addition to submitting a hard copy of the Article Memo in class, you will be required to upload written assignments to TurnItIn.com. By taking this course, you agree that your assignment may be subject to submission for textual similarity review by TurnItIn.com. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the TurnItIn.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the TurnItIn.com service are described on the TurnItIn.com website.

\* To access the course on TurnItIn.com, you will need this information – Class ID: 9193151; Class Name: **SOCI 217-001, Spring 2015**; Enrolment Password: **observed**

\* UBC asks that you do not use your real name in your TurnItIn.com account. However, to allow us to identify who you are, for this class you should create an account that consists of the first three letters of your last name followed by the first three letters of your first name (EX: RotWen).

**Use of Laptops, Electronic Devices:** It has become increasingly common for students to bring laptops to class. However, some students find it very distracting when their classmates are engaged in activities on their laptop that are not related to class. Research also shows that multitasking during lecture reduces memory of what is covered. Laptops should be used only for note-taking and activities related to class. Using laptops in an appropriate way is part of the general standards of consideration and respect that UBC students are expected to show to their professors and their fellow students. Students using laptops in inappropriate ways may be called on, asked to put their laptop away, or asked to leave class.

No other electronic devices will be allowed in class. All cellular phones must be turned off before the start of each class.

**Lateness and Extensions Policy:** The only written assignment that will be handed in for this class is the Article Memo. It must be submitted in two ways to receive full credit. It must be uploaded to TurnItIn.com before 2:00pm on the due date, and a hard copy must also be handed in at the end of class. Assignments which are handed in only in one of these ways and not the other will be penalized 5 points for every 24 hours they are late (out of 100), including weekends.

If neither the electronic or hard copy version of the Article Memo has been turned in by the end of class on the due date, the assignment will not be accepted without a letter of consideration from Arts Advising.

Doctor's notes must be taken to Arts Advising and a letter of consideration received. Doctor's notes without a letter of consideration from Arts Advising will not be accepted.

Similarly, extensions will not be granted without a letter of consideration from Arts Advising. This is to ensure that all students are evaluated equally and none are given advantages not offered to the rest of the class.

**Missed Exams:** Students who miss exams will be assigned a mark of 0. Students may, at the professor's discretion, have an absence excused with a letter of consideration/standing deferred from Arts Advising. One make-up test will be scheduled. Students who do not attend the scheduled make-up test will receive a mark of 0.

**Returned Assignments and Marks:** Aside from computational or other minor errors on our part, all marks assigned are final. We will not discuss assignments in the first 24 hours after they are returned so that students can spend that time considering the comments or going over the assignments themselves.

**Early Alert:** During the term, we will do our best to reach out and offer support if we are concerned about your academic performance or wellbeing. We also encourage you to come and speak with any of us if you need assistance. In addition, we may identify our concerns using Early Alert. The program allows academic, financial, or mental health concerns to be identified sooner and responded to in a more coordinated way. This provides you with the earliest possible connection to resources like academic advising, financial advising, counselling, or other resources and support to help you get back on track. The information is treated confidentially and is sent because we care about your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit [earlyalert.ubc.ca](http://earlyalert.ubc.ca).

You have made it through all the Course Policies. Congratulations. It's important that you understand these policies going into the course. Toward that end, your first assignment for the class is to email Prof. Roth a sentence saying what the course policy is on use of laptops and electronic devices by 1pm on Thurs. Jan. 8. Students who do this will receive 1 extra credit point.

### COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Date	Lecture Topic	Required Readings	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>			
Tues. Jan. 6	<i>Introduction to Class</i>	Read entire syllabus	
Thurs. Jan. 8	<i>Basics of Research</i>	Chapter 1	
<b>Week 2</b>			
Tues. Jan. 13	<i>What is Theory?</i>	Chapter 2	
Thurs. Jan. 15	<i>Ethics in Research</i>	Chapter 3	

<b>Week 3</b>			
Tues. Jan. 20	<i>Ethics in Research and Reading Research Articles</i>	Appendix A	
Thurs. Jan. 22	<i>Research Design</i>	Chapter 4	
<b>Week 4</b>			
Tues. Jan. 27	<i>Research Design</i>		
Thurs. Jan. 29	<i>Sampling</i>	Chapter 6	<b>Article Memo due</b>
<b>Week 5</b>			
Tues. Feb. 3	<i>Sampling</i>		
Thurs. Feb. 5	<i>Measurement</i>	Chapter 5	
<b>Week 6</b>			
Tues. Feb. 10	<i>Measurement</i>		
Thurs. Feb. 12	<b>Midterm Exam 1</b>		<b>Midterm Exam 1</b>
<b>MIDTERM BREAK</b>			
<b>Week 7</b>			
Tues. Feb. 24	<i>Experiments</i>	Chapter 7	
Thurs. Feb. 26	<i>Experiments</i>		
<b>Week 8</b>			
Tues. Mar. 3	<i>Surveys</i>	Chapter 8	
Thurs. Mar. 5	<i>Surveys</i>		
<b>Week 9</b>			
Tues. Mar. 10	<i>Quantitative Analysis</i>	Chapter 14	
Thurs. Mar. 12	<i>Reading Statistics</i>	Chapter 16	
<b>Week 10</b>			
Tues. Mar. 17	<i>Unobtrusive Research</i>	Chapter 9	
Thurs. Mar. 19	<b>Midterm Exam 2</b>		<b>Midterm Exam 2</b>
<b>Week 11</b>			
Tues. Mar. 24	<i>Qualitative Field Research</i>	Chapter 10	
Thurs. Mar. 26	<i>Qualitative Field Research</i>		
<b>Week 12</b>			
Tues. Mar. 31	<i>Qualitative Interviewing</i>	Chapter 11	
Thurs. Apr. 2	<i>Qualitative Analysis</i>	Chapter 13	
<b>Week 13</b>			
Tues. Apr. 7	<i>Catch up/Review</i>		
Thurs. Apr. 9	<i>Review</i>		

**Final Exam Date to Be Announced**

SOCI 217-001  
Article Memo  
Understanding Research Papers

This assignment should be no more than 2 pages single spaced. Grammar and spelling do count.

Part I: Find and read one of the following articles, assigned according to surname:

If your surname begins with A-I, read:

1. Cross, Jennifer E., Don Zimmerman, & Megan A. O'Grady. 2009. "Residence hall room type and alcohol use among college students living on campus." *Environment and Behavior* 41(4): 583-603.

If your last name begins with J-Z, read:

2. Stearns, Elizabeth, Claudia Buchmann, & Kara Bonneau. 2009. "Interracial friendships in the transition to college: Do birds of a feather flock together once they leave the nest?" *Sociology of Education* 82 (April): 173-195.

The articles are available from the UBC library website. Part of the assignment is for you to find the article yourself so you can familiarize yourself with using the library system to find sociology sources.

Part II: Answer the following questions (in no more than one page TOTAL). Do not quote or use the same wording as the article.

1. What are the research questions?
2. Does the article use nomothetic or idiographic explanation? Explain how it does this to show that you understand the concepts.
3. Does it use inductive or deductive reasoning? Explain how it does this to show that you understand the concepts.
4. What are the key dependent variables and independent variables? Explain the difference between an independent variable and a dependent variable.
5. What research method is used? Who or what are studied? What are the units of analysis?
6. What is the time dimension of the research design?
7. What are the main findings?

Part III: If you were doing a research paper on this topic, you would need more than one source for your literature review. Find two other sociology sources from the UBC library or google scholar that provide research on the same topic. For each one, provide the bibliographic citation (like those above) and a short paragraph explaining the research and what it finds. You can find this from skimming the paper (you don't need to read these articles closely). Explain in what ways the findings in each article are consistent or inconsistent with the original article you read.