

SOCI 381: Experimental and Mixed Methods

2016-2017 Winter Term 1 (3 Credits)

T/TH: 3:30 - 5:00 PM CHEM C126

University of British Columbia

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Office Hours: Thursday 1:30-2:30 or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This course builds on introductory social research methods principles to examine key considerations in the design and conduct of experimental and mixed methods in social research, and in some cases the combination of the two. Through lectures, in-class activities, readings and assignments you will be introduced to the concepts, approaches and procedures used to conduct social experiments and to integrate qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The course is designed to further develop your skills as conscientious scholars who can decipher and produce knowledge about the social world.

By the end of the course, I expect you to be able to:

- Understand the rationale for conducting experimental and mixed methods research;
- Understand the core characteristics of experimental and mixed methods research;
- Distinguish social experiments from other experiments, and mixed methods from multi-methods;
- Identify different types of research design within experimental and mixed methods research;
- Find, read and understand published research that uses these methods;
- Formulate sociologically relevant and empirically testable research questions and hypotheses well suited for experimental and mixed methods research; and
- Be able to develop experimental and mixed methods research projects that are ethical, logical, robust and systematic.

Throughout the course you will be asked to critically assess the information around you both inside and outside the classroom, and to understand the strengths, limitations and challenges of research produced from experimental and mixed methods designs.

Prerequisites

Six credits of SOCI 100, 102, 103 and SOCI 217

This course relies on key social concepts introduced in introductory sociology courses and the core social research methods foundation established in SOCI 217. It is therefore critical that you have successfully completed these courses prior to enrolling in SOCI 381.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The required text for the course is:

Creswell, J. (2015) *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Additional course readings will be made available on the course connect website or will be retrievable through the UBC Library website. Note that I may make changes to the readings throughout the term.

CLASS TIME AND LOCATION

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, CHEM C126. Classes commence on 8th of September and the final class will be held on the 1st of December.

COURSE EVALUATION

The assessment of this course will consist of several components: (1) In-class activities; (2) A mid-term exam on experimental methods covering the first half of the course; (3) A “final” exam on mixed methods covering the second half of the course; and (4) One large research proposal or two smaller research proposals. The breakdown of course marks allocated is as follows:

In-Class activities; smaller assignments	20%
Exam 1:	20%
Exam 2:	20%
Research Proposal(s)	40%
Total 100%	

In class activities and smaller assignments

Class participation will not be assessed by attendance, as it is expected that you will come to all classes. It is expected that everyone will come to class having engaged with the assigned readings PRIOR to class and will be prepared to discuss the materials during each class.

Throughout the term I will have you complete small homework assignments, in-class activities or answer iClicker questions, some of which will be evaluated as part of your final grade. Many of these will involve writing things with a pen(cil) and paper, please make sure you come to every class with paper and something to write with and something to write on.

If you are not present during classes with assessed participation you will not receive credit for these activities or be given an opportunity to do a make-up assessment, though legitimate extenuating circumstances will be accommodated. These activities are formative assessments to give you a sense of whether or not you understand the material and concepts, will provide foundations for your written research proposals and allow me to gage periodically who is (and is not) attending class.

Exam 1 (October 20th) and Exam 2 (TBD by the university during the exam period)

There will be two exams during the term. These exams will not be cumulative, i.e., Exam 1 will only cover material from the experimental methods portion of the class from the beginning of term to the **October 20th**. Exam 2 will cover the material from October 25th to **December 1st**. The exams will include questions that cover material from readings and in-class activities. Each of them will be worth twenty per cent of your final grade. Ample time will be provided to complete the exams, as they are designed to test knowledge and understanding, not speed.

Research Proposal(s)

A key component of your assessment will be development of **EITHER**:

- (1) Two shorter research proposals - one that involves an experimental study and one that involves a mixed methods study. Each of these will be worth 20% of your final grade; or
- (2) One longer research proposal that involves a mixed methods experimental study (i.e. that combines both experimental and mixed methods approaches). This proposal will be worth 40% of your final grade.

In each case, your research proposal must include: (1) an introduction that clearly motivates the project, (2) a theory/literature review section that operationalizes a sociological concept and develops at least one hypothesis, (3) a methods section that describes how your study will test

your hypothesis/hypotheses, (4) an analysis section that describes the analyses you will use, and (5) a conclusion that discusses the potential contributions of your proposed study. More information on the research proposals will be provided in class.

Neither choice has a minimum or maximum word count, but must be typed using a word processing program (e.g., Word, Pages), and:

- for option one (two shorter research proposals): each proposal must fit on **one** printed sheet of paper; or
- for option 2 (one longer research proposal) fit on **two** printed sides of paper.

References can be included on an additional sheet of paper.

Your assignments must be readable to someone with good but not perfect eyesight (i.e., me). I'd suggest typing up the paper, however long (e.g. 3-5 double spaced pages for the short proposals, 7-8 for long proposals), and when you are done, "stuff" it into one (short) or two (long) single-spaced page(s). Use a smaller font, narrower margins, and don't listen to your printer. It can print almost to the top and almost full width, it only has a problem printing within 1/2 inch of the bottom. Any quotes (which should be minimized) should be within the body of the text. If you can't fit it on the indicated page limit (one page for short assignments and 2 pages for longer assignments) and remain legible to the naked eye the paper is too long.

Use a title, and think of your assignment it as something that can be framed and hung on a wall. Points will be deducted for going over the designated page limit, as it is important to write concisely. More is not necessarily better. For example, if one example works, why use two?

SOCI 381 on UBC Connect

All students enrolled in the course will have access to the UBC Connect site for SOCI 381 (login at: <http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/> using your CWL login) where you will find course materials, readings that are unavailable through the UBC online resources, supplementary materials, spaces for course discussions, announcements and other course-related matters.

ALL WRITTEN COURSE MATERIALS will be submitted via the Connect website so please make sure that you are familiar with how to use Connect. Student resources for using connect can be found on the UBC website at <http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/student-resources/>.

If you encounter any issues in using UBC connect, please contact Arts ISIT support staff in Buchanan A105, at arts.helpdesk@ubc.ca, or at 604-827-2787. Please do not contact the course instructor unless the course Connect site is malfunctioning and requires attention.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

NOTE: Readings with an Asterisk are provided on the course website. All others are available from the university's electronic holdings via library.ubc.ca.

WEEK 1

8 September - Introduction to the course; What is a Social Experiment?

- No readings

WEEK 2

13 September – Why Social Experiments?

- Lovaglia, Michael. 2003. "From Summer Camps to Glass Ceilings: The Power of Experiments." *Contexts* 2:42-49.

15 September – Ethics in Social Experiments

- Chapin, F. Stuart. 1917. The Experimental Method and Sociology. *Scientific Monthly* 4(2):133-139. (Note: you do not need to read the whole article, only the pages listed)
- Optional Readings (in this order):
 - "LaCour, Michael and Green, David. 2014. "When contact changes minds: An experiment on transmission of support for gay equality." *Science* 346(6125): 1366-1369."
 - Broockman, David and Kalla, Joshua. 2016. "Durably reducing transphobia: A field experiment on door-to-door canvassing." *Science* 352 (6282): 220-224.
 - Paluck, Elizabeth Levy. 2016. "How to overcome prejudice." *Science*. 352(6282): 147.
 - Bohannon, John. 2016. "Ironic coda to fraudulent study of bias." *Science* 352(6282): 131-132.

WEEK 3

20 September – Foundations of social experiments (1)

- Thye, Shane R. 2007. "Logical and Philosophical Foundations of Experimental Research in the Social Sciences." In *Laboratory Experiments in the Social Sciences* (Eds. Murray Webster and Jane Sell). pp. 58-72. (UBC has an accessible online copy of this book)

22 September – Foundations of social experiments (2)

- Thye, Shane R. 2007. "Logical and Philosophical Foundations of Experimental Research in the Social Sciences." In Murray Webster and Jane Sell (Eds.) *Laboratory Experiments in the Social Sciences*. pp. 72-85.

WEEK 4

27 September - Experimental Design (1) – Laboratory Experiments

- Fehrler, Sebastian and Wojtek Przepiorka. 2013. "Charitable giving as a signal of trustworthiness: Disentangling the signaling benefits of altruistic acts." *Evolution and Human Behavior* 34:139-145.
- Optional Reading for the next two classes:
 - *Campbell, Donald and M. Jean Russo. 1998. "Threats to the Validity of Social Experiments and How They Can Be Controlled" In: Donald Campbell and M. Jean. *Social Experimentation*. pp. 73-106.

29 September – Experimental Design (2) – Field Experiments

- Uggen, Christopher and Sarah K.S. 2014. “Productive Addicts and Harm Reduction: How Work Reduces Crime – But Not Drug Use”. *Social Problems* 61:105-130.

WEEK 5

4 October – Experimental Design (3) – Natural and Quasi-Experiments

- Goldin, Claudia and Cecilia Rouse. 2000. “Orchestrating impartiality: The impact of ‘blind’ auditions on female musicians.” *The American Economic Review* 90: 715-741.
- Optional Reading:
 - *Dunning, Thad. 2012 "Standard natural experiments" In: *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. 41-62.

6 October – Hypotheses, Operationalization and Manipulation

- *Cohen, Bernard P. 1989. “Ideas, Observations, and Knowledge Claims.” In: Bernard, P Cohen (Ed.) *Developing Sociological Knowledge: Theory and Method, 2nd edition*. Nelson-Hall: Chicago. pp.

WEEK 7

11 October – Data Collection

- *Orr, Larry. 1999. “Part 5: Implementation and Data Collection.” In: Department of Health & Human Services. *Social Experimentation: Evaluating Public Programs with Experimental Methods*. pp. 1-24.

13 October – Analyzing Experimental Results

- No readings

WEEK 8

18 October – Challenges in Social experiments and exam prep

- Hawe, Penelope, Therese Riley, Alexandra Gartrell, Karen Turner, Claudia Canales, Darlene Omstead. 2015. Comparison communities in a cluster randomised trial innovate in response to ‘being controlled’. *Social Science & Medicine* 133: 102-110.

20 October – Exam #1

WEEK 9

25 October – Introduction to Mixed Methods Research (MMR)

- Creswell, ch. 1 (pp. 1-9)
- Creswell, ch. 2 (pp. 10-21)

27 October – Core Characteristics of MMR

- Teddlie, Charles and Tashakkori, Abbas. 2012. “Common ‘Core’ Characteristics of Mixed Methods Research: A Review of Critical Issues and Call for Greater Convergence.” *American Behavioral Scientist*. 2012 56: 774-788

WEEK 10

1 November – Conceptualizing MMR

*1st Short Research proposal DUE

- Morgan, D. L. (2007). "Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods." *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 48-76.
- Optional reading:
 - Christ, Thomas. 2013. "The worldview matrix as a strategy when designing mixed methods research." *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*. 7(1): 110-118.

3 November – Why use MMR?

- *Plano Clark, Vicki and Ivankova, Nataliya. 2016. "Why use mixed methods research? Identifying rationales for mixing methods." In: *Mixed Methods Research: A Guide to the Field*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. pp.79-104.

WEEK 11

8 November – Mixed Methods Design (1)

- *Creswell, John W., Plano Clark, Vicki, Gutmann, Michelle, and Hanson, William. "Advanced Mixed Methods Research Designs." In: A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 209-240). Thousand Oaks: Sage. (*note: this is an important reading we will refer to for the next 2-3 lectures*)
- Creswell, ch. 4 (pp. 34-50)

10 November – Mixed Methods Design (2)

- If your birthday is in **January, February, March or April**, read:
 - Myers, Karen Kroman and John Oetzel. 2003. "Exploring the Dimensions of Organizational Assimilation: Creating and Validating a Measure." *Communication Quarterly*. 51(4):438-457.
- If your birthday is in **May, June, July or August**, read:
 - Barg, Frances, Rebecca Huss-Ashmore, Marsha Wittink, Genevra Murray, Hillary Bogner and Joseph Gallo. 2006. "A Mixed-Methods Approach to Understanding Loneliness and Depression in Older Adults." *Journal of Gerontology* 61B(6):S329-S339.
- If your birthday is in **September, October, November or December**, read:
 - Small, Will, M-J Milloy, Ryan McNeil, Lisa Maher and Thomas Kerr. 2016. Plasma HIV-1 RNA viral load rebound among people who inject drugs receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) in a Canadian setting: an ethno-epidemiological study. *AIDS Research and Therapy* 13:26.

WEEK 12

15 November – Mixed Methods Design (3) - Merging Experimental and Mixed Methods

- *Drabble, Sarah J and O'thain Alicia. 2015. "Moving from Randomized Controlled Trials to Mixed Methods Intervention Evaluations." In: Sharlene Hesse-Biber and R. Burke Johnson. *The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp.406-425.

17 November – The Mechanics of Mixed Methods Research

- Creswell, ch. 7 (pp. 74-87)

WEEK 13

22 November – Analysing Data

- *Creswell, John and Plano Clark, Vicki. (2007). “Analyzing Data in Mixed Methods Research.” In: Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research. pp. 128-149

24 November – Evaluating Mixed Methods Research

- Creswell, ch. 9 (pp. 99-109)

WEEK 14

29 November – Controversies and Challenges in Mixed Methods Research

- None

1 December – Course Overview and Exam Prep.

- None

EXAMINATION PERIOD

5 December – Second short/long research proposal due

***Note that we may adjust the due date for the research paper if December 5th is too close to the final exam**

TBC – Final Exam

SUBMISSION OF COURSE MATERIALS

All written class materials (with the exception of in-class or small homework assignments) must be submitted ***ELECTRONICALLY on the UBC Connect website for the course, on turnitin.com and in hard copy by the deadline provided.*** Please ensure that your name, student number and course and the instructor are included on all submitted assignments.

Directions on submitting assignments on UBC Connect are located here:

<http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/student-resources/submit-assignments-how-to/>

Barring technical problems with the UBC Connect system (which have been known to happen occasionally in the past), trouble using the connect site will not be considered a justifiable reason for late submission. Please familiarize yourself with UBC Connect if you have not already done so and make sure that you are able to submit course materials. A “test” assignment has been set up on the Connect site for you to verify your ability to submit materials.

Turnitin.com

To deter and detect plagiarism, this course will make use of UBC’s subscription to TurnItIn.com for all written assignments. This is a service that checks textual material for originality. 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 are described on the TurnItIn.com website.

*** UBC asks that you do not use your real name in your TurnItIn.com account.** However, to allow me to identify you, 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 (e.g., RicLin).

To access the course on TurnItIn.com, you will need this information:

- Class ID: 13284143
- Class Name: SOCI 381 W2016
- Enrolment Password: EMMR@UBC

Late Assignments

No late assignments will be accepted without penalty. Extensions of the due date for the written assignments will be considered on a case-by-case basis **in advance of the deadline** and pending extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstance include documented medical issues, deaths of loved ones, unreasonable exam schedules, etc. In general, accommodations of this nature will require a letter from Arts Advising.

Quality of Written Work

Quality of writing will be evaluated and scored for all written work (e.g., grammar, style, clarity) and it is crucial that you proofread your work thoroughly. Good writing generally takes several revisions to produce, and it is often very helpful to ask friends or colleagues to proofread your work, which I strongly encourage you to do. Also, the inappropriate use of language (e.g., ageist, gendered, racist, homophobic, ableist or otherwise) is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

A fun set of tips to improve your writing can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/mqqaot>.

D: ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION AND POLICIES

1. **I am here to support you and your academic development.** If you are having a hard time understanding course content or have questions related to the materials we cover in class, please do not hesitate to come speak to me after class, during office hours or by appointment. I generally will not respond to substantive questions or engage in substantive debates over email but endeavour to make myself available to answer your questions or discuss content-related issues on an in-person basis.
2. **Missed classes.** Attendance will not be taken for the course because attendance at each class session is expected of all students. If you miss a class, please get the notes from a classmate. The powerpoint slides for each class will usually be made available, but these are intentionally not comprehensive of everything we cover in class. Your colleagues are exceptional resources and I STRONGLY encourage you to get the contact information of multiple classmates and to turn to your colleagues to discuss any issues you find unclear, confusing or would like to engage further with.

With the exception of religious observances, I will not excuse class absences. Please DO NOT send me emails about why you are missing a class unless you feel it is critical that I am aware (note that your sister's wedding, while exciting, is not critical for me to be aware of). Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other personal or professional commitments cannot assume that they will be accommodated. I am sympathetic to illness and do not think it is a good use of your or our medical personnel's time to require you to go fetch a note from a doctor if you are ill. However, if you miss a key component of the course (e.g. an exam) I will require a letter from Arts Advising in order for you to make up the missed assessment. If you are experiencing circumstances that will require that you be away from class for a period of time and would like to discuss this with me, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

3. **Respect.** The highest standards of respect will be upheld inside the SOCI 381 classroom. This includes respect for each other, respect for me, respect for you by me, and respect for those outside the classroom.
4. **Laptop and handheld device use.** I do not want to see or hear cell phones, cameras, or other electronic equipment in the classroom. I consider common courtesy related to laptop and handheld device use to be a key component of respect for your colleagues and the classroom environment. While I understand that common practice for many students involves the use of laptops for the purposes of taking notes, the use of laptops and handheld devices can be distracting for other students. While laptops will be allowed in the classroom, please refrain from using laptops for purposes unrelated to the class. Please also refrain from using your handheld devices during class time entirely and remember to put these devices on silent mode and store them out of sight prior to the start of class. If you choose to use electronic equipment for purposes other than those related to class activities, I will ask you to leave.
5. **Academic Honesty.** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes lying, cheating and plagiarism. I strongly recommend students retain copies of drafts and final versions of all assignments. All students should be familiar with UBC's policies on academic honesty and academic misconduct, which can be found on the university website here:
<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,286,0,0>
<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

6. **Plagiarism.** Students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism, that plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct, and that such misconduct is subject to penalty. Please review the Student Discipline section of the 2015-2016 UBC Academic Calendar <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>, which includes the following:

“Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments.”

7. **Grading Guidelines** - The UBC guidelines for grading and reporting grades attempt to ensure that all students are assessed fairly in relation to other students in the same class, students in other sections of the same course and students in other courses. The guidelines for grading practices are as follows:

Percent	Grade	Level	Grading Criteria
90-100	A+	exceptional	Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
85-89	A		
80-84	A-		
76-79	B+	competent	Competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
72-75	B		
68-71	B-		
64-67	C+	adequate	Adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour.
60-63	C		
55-59	C-		
50-54	D		
00-49	F	inadequate	Inadequate performance: little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

8. **Marking Rubrics.** For all assessed work I will make use of marking rubrics to outline the grading criteria for each assignment. In some cases these will be distributed in advance of

the due dates and will be posted on the course connect website (attached to the assignment in question). These are designed to help make clear the expectations around the content and quality of your written work.

9. **Review of grades.** If you disagree with a mark you have been assigned in this course, you may contact me to discuss this further. Please keep in mind that I base my grades on your performance in the course and not your previous track record, and that I make every effort to be clear about performance expectations for the course (See “Marking Rubrics” above). If following our discussion you remain dissatisfied you may apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Please refer to the UBC calendar for additional information.
10. **Disability.** The University accommodates those individuals living with disability or ongoing medical conditions that may affect their academic success. I strongly encourage students living with disability or ongoing medical conditions to register with Access & Diversity and to access the university resources around academic accommodation found here: <http://students.ubc.ca/success/student-supports/academic-accommodations>.
11. **Academic Concession.** UBC strives to support students in their academic pursuits, including circumstances that may require academic concession. Students are invited to familiarize themselves with the university documentation around academic concession, which includes information on policies in place to enable students and members of faculty and staff to observe the holy days of their religions. Further information on the academic concession can be found here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,48,0,0>.

If you encounter medical, emotional or personal problems that affect your attendance or academic performance, please contact the Faculty of Arts Academic Advising Office, located in Buchanan D111, phone 822-4028, <http://students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/contact-us/> as soon as possible. **I will not incorporate leniency for late assignments or missed exams without a letter from the Arts Advising Office.** There is a wide range of university resources available to support individuals who face challenges inside and outside the classroom. If you are in need of help and unsure of what resources are available to you, please come and see me and I will be happy to connect you with available resources.

12. **Early Alert.** During the term, I will do my best to reach out and offer support if I am concerned about your academic performance or wellbeing. I also encourage you to come and speak with me if you need assistance.

In addition, I may identify my 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 I care about your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit earlyalert.ubc.ca.

13. **Feedback.** I aim to make this class engaging, challenging and informative. I value any feedback you have for me to improve the class throughout the term, and will solicit your feedback with anonymous mid-term feedback forms at the mid-point of the course in addition to regular course evaluations at the end of term.