

## SYLLABUS

**Lecture Time and Location:** 10:15 AM–11:30 AM; 1911 Building Room #111

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**Office Hours:** M 10:00 AM–12:00 PM and by appointment. Please make appointments using the link on Moodle.

**Preferred Mode of Contact:** Please email me first. I rarely check phone messages. Expected turnaround time for email is 1 business day. I rarely check email on weekends or holidays.

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**Office Hours:** M 11:00 AM–12:00 PM and by appointment. Please email me to make an appointment.

**Preferred Mode of Contact:** Email.

This course meets the general education program requirement (**3 credit hours**).

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North Carolina State University  
Social Research Methods; Spring 2018  
Sociology 300-002

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## 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

“Basic methods of social research, research design, sampling, data collection, measurement, and analysis; the relationship between theory and research. Laboratory exercises on computer applications.”

Studying social research methods is essential for understanding how we know what we know about the social world. This course will introduce you to how researchers:

- Create valid and reliable knowledge about the social world;
- Define and measure concepts;
- Evaluate different research approaches;
- Identify reliable patterns and establish causal explanations;
- Recognize methodological errors and dubious conclusions;
- Evaluate competing explanations for a given phenomenon; and
- Assess the ethical implications of research.

The primary goal of the course is to teach you how to frame social research questions and answer them with evidence. By understanding how scientific arguments are produced and substantiated, this course will help you recognize, evaluate, and respond to empirical claims. Understanding research methods can be useful if you are asked to collect or analyze data or recommend a course of action in an organization. That understanding can help you become a better problem solver and a better leader.

Learning to seek out, parse, and digest primary research is an important objective in this course. Rather than being a passive consumer of claims filtered and distorted by reporters or leaders, you can (and should) “chew your own food” by engaging published research itself. We therefore will develop insight by scrutinizing and discussing scholarly publications. Note that this will involve a lot of reading. Some material will be dense and difficult. A degree frustration often will be a normal part of the learning process. The lecture and lab sessions will help you make sense of the material and focus on what’s important.

You also will learn by developing and presenting your own research. This will involve using software to examine and analyze data. Computer software can be inherently frustrating, but the lecture and lab sessions will help make the experience as painless as possible.

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## 2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

**2.1. ELIGIBILITY.** Students eligible to take this course should have completed at least one 200-level SOC course and either completed or be currently enrolled in Statistics 311. This session of SOC 300 is restricted to sociology and criminology majors and minors.

**2.2. MATERIALS.** A required text, **Singleton, Royce A. Jr. and Bruce C. Straits. 2018. *Approaches to Social Research, 6th Ed.* New York: Oxford.**, is available at the NCSU bookstore. Please use this *6th edition*; copies will be placed on reserve. Additional readings will be available on the course Moodle website. You also will look up publications from electronic databases, such as the NCSU library catalog. Readings usually will have highlighting to indicate what to focus on. Students are invited to skim the rest. Students are expected to have a means of bringing electronic materials to class, by either printing them or viewing them on a laptop or tablet. Some coursework involves viewing online video before class. Students should have access to a computer that can stream internet video and audio. Readings and media viewing should be completed prior to each class. Students are expected to see an instructor if they anticipate any problems accessing course content.

**2.3. COURSE WEBSITE.** Visit <http://moodle.wolfware.ncsu.edu> and log in using your student ID and password. The link to SOC 300-002 will grant you access to the course.

**2.4. COURSE EVALUATION.** Your final grade will be determined by summing percentage points as follows:

Quiz	3%
Research Project	15%
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	15%
Assignments	22% (2% for each of 11 assignments)
Lab Participation	10%
Lecture Attendance	5%
On-Call Participation	15%
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Total Possible	100%

Final grades will be assigned after rounding percentage points to the nearest whole number (e.g., 89.5% rounds to 90.0%; 89.49% rounds to 89.0%). The following grading scale will be used:

97–100% A+	87–89% B+	77–79% C+	67–69% D+	Below 60% F
93–96% A	83–86% B	73–76% C	63–66% D	
90–92% A–	80–82% B–	70–72% C–	60–62% D–	

**2.4.1. Quiz (3%).** A brief online quiz will be administered around September 14.

**2.4.2. Research Project (15%).** A research project will be due at the end of the term. The final product will be roughly 15–20 pages. Two percentage points will be awarded for discussing your research question with the instructor, three points for submitting a rough draft, and two points for presenting your project to the class. Each of these three tasks is graded all or nothing. The remaining eight points will be based on the assessed quality of your research project.

**2.4.3. Exams (30%).** The midterm (15%) will cover the first half of the class and the final exam (15%) will cover the entire course. The midterm is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 16 in class** and the final exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 11 from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM**. If you have an official, university conflict with either exam date, please notify the instructor in writing as soon as possible to request a makeup date. Students who miss an exam without prior notice and without an extraordinary, valid excuse will receive no credit for the exam. For more information, please see “What To Expect On Exams,” below.

**2.4.4. Assignments (22%).** You will have eleven written assignments, each worth 2% of the final grade. These are small projects or papers in which you apply ideas from the course. Each assignment will be scored on a scale from 0 to 1 in increments of 0.25. Each score will then be multiplied by 2 to calculate the assignment grade. To earn a “1,” an assignment must be submitted on time, substantially correct, and substantially complete.

**2.4.5. Participation (30%).** Regular attendance in lecture and lab is required.

**2.4.5.1. Lecture attendance (5%).** Students will sign in if they are on time and present in lecture.

**2.4.5.2. “On call” lecture participation (15%).** The instructor believes that student learning is better when students have read and thought about the material in advance of lecture. Therefore, this class uses an “on call” participation system. Students will highlight their names on a sign-in sheet. To be eligible to highlight their names, students must be present at the beginning of class. Students are expected to have completed the assigned reading and read any assigned audio-visual content and to be prepared to discuss it with the instructor in class. The instructor will randomly call on signed-in students and ask questions about the assigned materials. Students who highlight their names therefore signal to the instructor that they have engaged the material, are ready for questions, and are “on call” during the class. (See “What To Expect When You Are On Call,” below, for more information.)

**2.4.5.3. Participation grading.** Students will be invited to sign in for 27 sessions, but only 22 will count towards the student's grade. Therefore, 5 "free" sessions are offered for both attendance and on-call participation, which students may use however they see fit. Performance during conversation with the instructor does not matter, except that if the instructor determines that the student clearly did not engage the assigned materials, the instructor may void the sign in. In that case, the student will not receive any credit for that session. See "What To Expect When You Are On Call," below, for more information. Dates not eligible for sign in will be the first day of class, the midterm, and university holidays.

**2.4.5.4. Lab participation (10%).** To be eligible for participation credit, you must be substantially on time and not be disengaged or distracted by cell phones and the like. Fifteen lab sessions will be graded, and students who are on time and engaged will receive 10/15 of a percentage point for each session. Students who are late, disengaged, or distracted by cell phones will receive 5/15 of a percentage point towards the course. Students who are quite late or absent for a given lab session will receive no credit for it.

**2.4.6. Extra Credit (0%).** No extra credit will be awarded in this course. Students who take this class agree promptly to speak with the instructor if they experience difficulties completing the coursework.

**2.4.7. Absences.** University attendance regulations require instructors to provide excused absences for a reasonable number of anticipated absences as well as for emergencies. In accord with Section 2.4.5, each student is therefore granted 5 free absences, which may be applied to any combination of days during the term that the student chooses. Absences will be determined by identifying who has signed in. Students are expected to apply their free absences first to anticipated, excused absences and second to unexpected absences and emergencies. The instructor will only provide additional excused absences in the rarest and most exceptional of circumstances or pursuant to a written agreement with the Disabilities Services Office.

**2.4.8. Equitable Adjustments.** It may become necessary on one or more occasions to adjust the fractions used to compute certain grade items. In lieu of or in addition to such adjustments, the instructor may award participation credit to an entire class session. The instructor has discretion to make any or all such adjustments on an ad hoc basis, so long as they will be for the benefit of all students. The instructor may make the availability of any adjustment contingent on one or more conditions, for example attaining a minimum classroom completion rate on instructor evaluations.

**2.5. PAPER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES.** Submission guidelines for the research project will be provided. The instructor's policy is to focus on content, not typographical formatting or layout.

**2.6. INCOMPLETES.** Incomplete grades (INs) will rarely, if ever, be given. Per university policy, INs may be given only when the student's record in the course is such that successfully completing particular assignments, projects, or tests missed because of *a documented serious event* would enable that student to pass the course. However, an IN must not be used as a substitute for an F when the student's performance in the course is deserving of failing. Please see the university regulations for more information about incompletes.

**2.7. CREDIT-ONLY ENROLLEES.** Per university regulations, students must earn a grade of C– or better to be awarded an “S.” Please refer to the relevant university regulations for more information.

**2.8. AUDITORS.** Due to the strong emphasis on class participation and engaging the readings, auditors are expected to sign in and be on call during the term. Auditors who sign in 10 or fewer times will receive a mark of NR (No Recognition). See the university regulations for more information.

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### 3. NCSU PRRs AND CLASSROOM POLICIES

**3.1. NAME / PRONOUN POLICY.** Students are encouraged to set any desired nicknames in the NCSU student directory. Please contact me if you prefer a name, pronouns, or both, if they differ from any listed in the student directory.

**3.1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** “Students are responsible for reviewing the NC State University PRR’s which pertains to their course rights and responsibilities:

- Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, <https://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-04-25-05>, with additional references at <https://oied.ncsu.edu/equity/policies/>.
- Code of Student Conduct, <https://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01>
- Grades and Grade Point Average, <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-03>
- Credit-Only Courses <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-15>
- Audits <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-04>”

**3.1.1. No Cheating.** Please see the NCSU Code of Student Conduct, POL 11.35.1, § 8.2 for a description of cheating. Collaborating with other students to *write* or *prepare* individual assignments or the final exam will be deemed cheating, but collaborating with other students to *discuss* assignments or the final exam will not be deemed cheating.

**3.1.2. No Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is offensive, morally wrong, and a violation of university policy. “Plagiarism is the use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another and the representation of the other’s work as their own. . . . Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully and correctly acknowledged. [Submitting previously prepared coursework] must first be approved by the faculty member. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited, to . . . (a) Representing the work of others as [one’s] own; [and] (b) submitting written materials without proper attribution or acknowledgment of the source.”

**3.1.3. No Aiding And Abetting.** Assisting others to cheat or plagiarize is a form of academic misconduct.

**3.1.4. Penalties For Academic Misconduct.** The instructor treats academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, and aiding & abetting, with the utmost severity. It simply will not be tolerated. Punishments may range from failing an assignment to expulsion. I’m good at recognizing it. Trust me: It is not worth the risk. Don’t do it.

**3.2. DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT.** Students who engage in unlawful acts or disruptive conduct in class will be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. Note that NCSU considers “the use of cell phones or other electronic devices for voice or text communication” without the instructor’s authorization to be “disruptive conduct.” Students may not use “chat,” email, social media, or other distractions during course time and the instructor may deem any such use disruptive pursuant to this paragraph.

**3.3. ELECTRONIC COURSE COMPONENTS.** “Students may be required to disclose personally identifiable information to other students in the course, via electronic tools like email or web-postings, where relevant to the course. Examples include online discussions of class topics, and posting of student coursework. All students are expected to respect the privacy of each other by not sharing or using such information outside the course.”

**3.4. IN-CLASS ELECTRONICS.** Cell phones are not permitted on desks during exams. Laptops are permitted in class for course-related purposes only. Browsing the internet, social media, email, and similar tasks often distract other students, and they are not permitted in class. Cell phones and laptops must be silent during class and may not be used for unauthorized texting, browsing the internet, or similar purposes.

**3.5. IN-CLASS RECORDING.** Please talk to the instructor before audio or video recording any classroom lecture or discussion. Certain university regulations apply.

**3.6. INCLUSION, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION.** NC State University provides equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Discrimination or harassment based on age (40 or older), color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or veteran status is a violation of state and federal law and/or NC State University policy and will not be tolerated. Furthermore, this course has a policy of inclusion; we value the diverse perspectives and backgrounds that students bring to the classroom. Thinking about and sharing diverse points of view is a critical component of higher education, and students and instructor are expected to be respectful and considerate.

**3.7 ADVERSE WEATHER.** In the event of adverse weather, you will be notified through Moodle, by email using the email address you have on file with Registrations and Records, or both.

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#### **4. INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION**

**4.1. FORMAL EVALUATION.** Students will formally evaluate the course and instructor near the end of the term. Students will receive an email message directing them to <https://classeval.ncsu.edu/>, where they will complete the evaluations. Student IDs are confidential, instructors will not know specific responses, and students will not know the instructor's overall ratings.

**4.2. INFORMAL EVALUATION.** The instructors will strive achieve the university's learning goals and follow course policies. It is not easy to get everything exactly right all of the time. They therefore welcome feedback on teaching effectiveness throughout the course of the term in office hours. Any such feedback should be communicated in a professional and respectful manner, should cite to specific examples of instructor behavior and its impact on one or more students, and should, if applicable, cite to any specific sections of the syllabus or relevant NCSU policies or regulations that the student is concerned about. The instructors pledge to receive feedback delivered in this manner respectfully and professionally and give it due consideration.

**4.3. COMPLAINTS.** If the student feels comfortable, complaints about either instructor should start with an in-person conversation with the course instructor and, if not, then with the Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, whom you can locate at [https://socant.chass.ncsu.edu/faculty\\_staff/](https://socant.chass.ncsu.edu/faculty_staff/).

## 5. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

“Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at [2221 Student Health Services Building, 2815 Cates Avenue Campus Box 7509], 919-515-7653. For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG 02.20.01).”

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## 6. ADVICE FOR SUCCEEDING IN THIS CLASS

This class will be a lot of work, but I predict it will also be interesting and change the way you look at the social world. Here are my suggestions for making the most of our journey together:

- **Hit the ground running.** This is not a class where we spend three weeks reviewing simple material. The first half of the class probably will be more conceptually difficult than the second half. Use the energy and excitement of the early semester to read and engage difficult material.
- **Pace yourself.** Work on your projects consistently and strive to get things done early. Do assignments promptly. Some people need the pressure of impending deadlines to help them sort through competing demands, but you will have an easier time of it if you pace yourself and avoid last-minute crunches.
- **Enjoy the challenge.** You will not be spoon-fed ideas, far removed from evidence, numbers, and scientific jargon. I want you to feel the “heat” of empirical research. It might feel dense, pointless, or boring at times. Pace yourself and create yourself the challenge of trying to understand something that’s a little tough. I have faith your abilities.
- **Read twice.** Read the assigned readings twice, if possible. The first time through, read to identify the major points and create a bullet-point list or map. Then, preferably after 24 hours have passed, read it again and revise your list or map.
- **Visit the instructor.** Students too often don’t take advantage of office hours. Get to know your instructor by coming by office hours to discuss the material. Ask questions. Express interest. Discuss how the course might influence your career objectives. Instructor engagement in office hours can help your learning experience and make the material more enjoyable.

## 7. STUDENT RESOURCES

### Students of Concern

Student Behavioral Case Management at NC State (also known in the community as NCSU Cares and Students of Concern) was established in January 2014 to provide support for students in crisis or exhibiting concerning behaviors. Case managers meet with students and provide access to resources while following up with them and monitoring their progress. Students are encouraged to report behaviors that they feel are concerning or worrisome (no matter how small or insignificant they may seem). You may make a referral online at <https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php>.

The terms “concerning and “worrisome” are subjective, so the following indicators may provide guidance:

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Academic Indicators	Emotional Indicators	Physical Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Persistent unexplained absences</li><li>● Deterioration in quality/quantity of work</li><li>● Extreme disorganization or erratic performance</li><li>● Written or artistic expressions of <i>unusual</i> violence, morbidity, social isolation, despair, or confusion</li><li>● Continual seeking of special permission (extensions, make-up work)</li><li>● Patterns of perfectionism</li><li>● Disproportionate response to grades or other evaluations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Direct statements indicating distress</li><li>● Significant change in mood</li><li>● Angry or hostile outbursts, yelling, or aggressive comments</li><li>● More withdrawn or more animated than usual</li><li>● Appears over-anxious</li><li>● Excessively demanding or dependent behavior</li><li>● Fails to respond to outreach from staff/faculty</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Deterioration in physical appearance or personal hygiene</li><li>● Excessive fatigue, exhaustion;</li><li>● Erratic or disjointed thinking – skips around a lot; unable to stay focused on one topic; topics don’t align</li><li>● Noticeable cuts, bruises, burns</li><li>● Frequent or chronic illness</li><li>● Disorganized speech, rapid or slurred speech; confusion</li><li>● Substance abuse</li></ul>

### **Career Services**

NCSU's Career Development Center offers resources for enrolled students, including drop-in hours: <https://cdc.dasa.ncsu.edu>. Explore career options, make decisions about your major or minor, build resumes and cover letters, prepare for interviews, develop internship/ job search strategies, maximize career fairs, and more. Use ePACK to make an appointment with your career contact at [ncsu.edu/epack](https://ncsu.edu/epack) or at the Career Development Center.

### **University Counseling Services**

NCSU counseling services for students include personal, drug, academic, group, career, and psychiatric services.

### **Writing Center**

The university's writing and speaking tutorial services, <https://tutorial.dasa.ncsu.edu/wsts-overview-programs/>, may be useful to some students. The instructor may recommend one or more students to take advantage of their services.

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## **8. WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARE ON CALL**

**What It Is And Why We Will Use It.** This class uses an "on call" method of engaging students. This is a gentle form of "cold calling." Research findings about the effectiveness of cold calling are mixed. Though there is not enough research to draw firm conclusions, some studies show superior learning outcomes. The instructor's law school experience and self-reports from students in previous sociology courses strongly suggest to him that cold calling increases overall classroom engagement and understanding. Moreover, the quality of classroom conversation tends to be higher when everyone has engaged the materials and thought about them.

**How It Will Work.** Therefore, this class requires students to be ready to discuss assigned materials in class. One or more students will randomly be called on, as described elsewhere in the syllabus. Typically (not always), students will not be called on multiple times in a single session. However, all students who have signed in will be eligible to be called on in subsequent sessions, regardless of whether or not they have been called on in previous sessions. By the end of the term, some students may have been called on more than others. This can be a normal consequence of a random selection process. The instructor will track who has been called on. If the instructor determines that a student has been called on *quite* disproportionately, the instructor may select a different student.

**What It Will Involve.** Students called on may be asked to answer brief questions, long questions, to offer opinions or analysis based on their engagement with the materials, or to interpret passages or themes. Frequently the conversation will be a friendly dialog with the instructor. The goal is not to “drill” students, but rather to draw out big themes of the course while illustrating them with examples. Sometimes students will read passages aloud. The length of time a student will be on call will vary considerably; one student might answer numerous questions and converse with the instructor for a large part of a class, while another might only briefly offer an opinion or read a selection of text. The instructor will strive to make the process unpredictable. The instructor may ask for volunteers at one or more points during the course.

**The Focus.** As noted, the goal is not to “drill” students, but some factual questions might be asked to assess whether the student engaged the reading. Students should expect such questions to be general in nature and ascertainable from a good-faith reading of the materials. The readings are not long, but they do pack in a lot of content and it would be impossible to remember everything from them. The instructor’s goal is not to expect you to memorize pointless detail or non-central points. Focus on main ideas and consider reading (or viewing) the content more than once, taking notes to help you process the material.

**Other Ways To Participate.** Students may also be recognized for participating by asking substantive questions or pointing out any errors in the instructor’s presentation. This form of participation will not compensate for non-highlighted names. Participation grades are strictly based on highlighting as discussed above. But students who ask substantive questions and advance the quality of classroom discussion might on occasion be passed over if the random on-call process presents them to be called on.

**Embarrassment.** Some students might find any on-call process exasperating or frustrating, perhaps even embarrassing. Some degree of discomfort is common with the on-call experience, but for most students that discomfort passes after having been through it once or twice. The course policy is to create a “gentle” on-call experience. The instructor will strive to cultivate a comfortable space for people to talk, even if that means stumbling and making errors. Nevertheless, if the instructor senses that a student has signed in but has not made a serious effort to engage the materials, he may continue to converse with the student anyway, asking the student why they nevertheless had chosen to sign in, and perhaps employing the student’s assistance anyway. This can be more embarrassing than an authentic, if imperfect, conversation after having read the materials. The instructor’s goal is not to embarrass or pick on any student. But signing in without having made a good faith attempt to engage all of the assigned materials increases the odds of embarrassment.

**Exceptional Circumstances.** Notwithstanding the learning goals of this method, the instructor is sensitive to the possibility that some students will have exceptional difficulty concentrating, preparing for, or succeeding in this class with even a gentle cold-call method. Because the method is explained on the first day and described in this syllabus, students who anticipate or discover serious problems with the method are expected to discuss the matter with the instructor promptly in office hours. Failing to raise the issue with the instructor promptly means that the student deems the procedure and the student's experience with it fair and satisfactory.

**Please Ask Questions.** Nothing in the syllabus or this attachment implies that students should avoid asking questions in class of the instructor or other students. Questions are emphatically valued and invited.

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## 9. WHAT TO EXPECT ON EXAMS

**Scope.** The point of an exam is to quantify student mastery of the course content. Exams will draw from both readings and lecture, and students should prioritize studying the overlap between the two. The instructor aspires to provide a mix of straightforward questions that gauge general engagement with the course content and challenging questions that indicate mastery of the material. Some questions might be *very* challenging or focus on subtle details from the course. Whether or not those questions will count towards your exam score will depend on how well they "test"; see "Bad Questions" and "Equivocal Questions" below.

**Format.** The exams will consist of multiple choice, matching, true/false, and similar questions. Some questions might ask you to interpret computer output or identify issues in a hypothetical. Any short-answer questions will usually have clear-cut answers.

**"Curves."** "Grading on a curve" is an equivocal phrase. Students typically use the phrase to mean a process in which an instructor limits the number of exams eligible for each grade category. For example, in a class of 100 an instructor grading on a curve might set aside only 5 exams for As, 5 for A-minuses, and so forth. This class does not grade on a curve in this sense. The course policy is that all students have an opportunity to earn an "A."

**Scoring.** Exam grading in this class is straightforward. The instructor does not assign letter grades to exams or assignments. Instead, students earn percentage points that count directly to their final course grade. For example, if an exam has 57 points available and a student earns 38 of them, the student scores 38/57 on the exam. To see how this fraction affects a total course grade, multiply this fraction by 15. This student will have earned  $(38/57) * 15\% = 10\%$  instead of 15% towards the total course grade.

**Bad Questions.** As it is described above, this scoring system could lead to unfair outcomes if questions are poorly written or the instructor did not choose them well. When available, the instructor will use an appropriate method to evaluate how effective a question is at assessing content mastery. A useful method (not always available or practical) is to assess whether performance on a question matches overall exam performance: Students who did well on the exam overall should do better on any given question than students who did not do well on the exam overall. If the instructor's formal or informal evaluation of questions suggests that a question did not adequately measure mastery, the instructor will discard it for the class as a whole from the denominator. For example, if one question on a 57-question exam is dropped, the new denominator for scoring will be 56. This discarding procedure will handle the vast majority of quibbles and concerns about poor questions, both legitimate and illegitimate.

**Difficult Questions.** A difficult question is not necessarily a bad one. A question that measures mastery may be a valid question even if most students do not answer it correctly. Nevertheless, questions that are sufficiently difficult that few, if any, students get them right present a dilemma. If those questions are included in the denominator, the overall percentage scores on the exam will decrease, possibly reducing the availability of high grades for the class overall. On the other hand, if those questions are removed, then students who got them right and thereby properly demonstrated mastery of the material are in a sense penalized for their accomplishment. The course policy for difficult questions is therefore as follows: (1) For any question that 20% or less of the class answers correctly, the instructor will formally or informally analyze whether the question assessed student mastery over an aspect of the course material. If the question reasonably appears, on that analysis, to assess mastery, the question will be deemed valid and retained or otherwise will be deemed a bad question; (2) However, if 5% or less of the class answers a question correctly, the instructor will presume that the question is a bad question and only retain it in the presence of clear and compelling evidence that it indicates mastery of important (not peripheral) course content.

**Equivocal Questions.** Some questions can be equivocal even if the instructor thinks they are clear-cut. Typically, only a minority of students is affected by equivocal questions. The usual techniques for identifying and removing bad or difficult questions will help when a subset of students has an alternate answer under a valid, but different, reading of the question. The instructor's policy in these cases is to award points those answers that make sense under either legitimate reading. For example, if a question was equivocal because it could legitimately have been read to imply X (correct answer A) or Y (correct answer B), then points will be awarded to all students who answered A or B. Points will not be awarded for answers that are incorrect under either legitimate reading. Adjustments for equivocal questions typically require a successful appeal.

**Equitable Adjustments.** The instructor's method of dealing with questions that are difficult is to adjust the denominator and not the numerator used to calculate exam performance. This is an imperfect method, but it is efficient and improves class performance as a whole. The instructor may also adjust the denominator for equitable purposes, such as adjusting for unforeseen exam difficulty.

**Appeals.** *In lieu* of accepting the instructor's overall adjustments for bad and difficult questions, students may appeal. Students who appeals an exam question thereby request their own exam denominators to be calculated without any equitable adjustment. To establish that a question is equivocal, or to challenge another aspect of the exam, students must submit an appeal within seven calendar days of receiving their graded exam or before final grades have been submitted to the registrar, whichever occurs sooner. This time limit is strict and will only be extended in extraordinary circumstances involving grave emergencies. To be considered by the instructor, an appeal must (a) be in writing, (b) state the nature of the alleged equivocation or other problem, and (c) identify specific course materials or lecture content that supports the student's position. The instructor will promptly consider appeals, will have sole discretion to decide whether the alleged problems merit a revision. The instructor is not obligated to respond in writing to an appeal. If a student wishes to contest an unsuccessful appeal further, the student should discuss the matter with the instructor in office hours.

**Advice For Studying For Exams.** Study early and often. Review lecture notes and readings periodically during the course of the term. In principle, questions can come from *any* aspect of the assigned readings or lecture, but material covered in both is clearly quite important. A sensible preparation strategy would be to master all areas of overlap, only *then* go on to master remaining lecture content, and only *then* go on to master remaining content in the written and audio-visual materials.

**Practice Questions.** The instructor may, but is not obligated to, provide prior to an exam practice questions, answers, or both. Providing these on one occasion does not guarantee that they will be provided on another occasion.

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## COURSE READINGS

### The Scientific Approach to Social Studies

- Singleton & Straits, Ch 2; Pp. 108–12
  - SKIM: Logical Reasoning; Boxes
- Causal Diagrams §§ 1, 2, 3
- Selection of abstracts

- Wilson, William Julius. 2010. "More Than Just Race: A Rejoinder." *Sociological Forum* 25(2):390–94.

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### Nuts & Bolts of Social Science Research

- Singleton & Straits, Pp. 81–83; 557–74; 444–45
- Causal Diagrams § 4
- <https://xkcd.com/1847>
- Bohannon, John. 2013. "Who's Afraid of Peer Review?" *Science* 342(6154):60–65.
- Freese, Jeremy. 2007. "Replication Standards for Quantitative Social Science." *Sociological Methods & Research* 36(2):153–72.
- Mekawi, Yara and Konrad Bresin. 2015. "Is the Evidence from Racial Bias Shooting Task Studies a Smoking Gun? Results from a Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 61:120–30.
- OPTIONAL: Scientific Studies: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO) (contains coarse language)

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### Conceptualization; Variables

- Singleton & Straits, Pp. 86–90; 117–18
- Causal Diagrams § 5
- Barki, H. (2008). "Thar's gold in them thar constructs." *ACM SIGMIS*, 39(3), 9–20. (3)
- Snow, D. A., & Machalek, R. (1984). "The sociology of conversion." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 10(1), 167–90. (3)

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### Measurement

- Singleton & Straits, Pp. 118–45
  - SKIM: Levels of Measurement; Sources of Error
- Causal Diagrams § 6
- Snow, D. A., & Machalek, R. (1984). "The sociology of conversion." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 10(1), 167–90. (4)

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### Units & Levels of Analysis; Ecological Fallacy

- Singleton & Straits, Pp. 83–86
- Portes, Alejandro. 2000. "The Two Meanings of Social Capital." *Sociological Forum* 15(1):1–12.

- Jargowsky, Paul A. 2005. "Ecological Fallacy." Pp. 715–22 in *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement*, vol. 1. Elsevier.

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### Univariate Distributions

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 501–11
- Crissman, Halley P., Mitchell B. Berger, Louis F. Graham, and Vanessa K. Dalton. 2017. "Transgender Demographics: A Household Probability Sample of US Adults, 2014." *American Journal of Public Health* 107(2):213–15. (1)
- Bader, Christopher and Paul Froese. 2005. "Images of God: The Effect of Personal Theologies on Moral Attitudes, Political Affiliation, and Religious Behavior." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 1(11):1–24. (3)
- Peterson, Richard A. and Roger M. Kern. 1996. "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore." *American Sociological Review* 61(5):900–907. (1)

► **QUIZ on Causal Diagrams**

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### Bivariate Distributions: Continuous Outcomes

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 518–21
- Causal Diagrams § 7
- Eckel, Catherine C. and Philip J. Grossman. 1998. "Are Women Less Selfish Than Men? Evidence From Dictator Experiments." *The Economic Journal* 108(448):726–35.
- Warr, M. (1989). What is the perceived seriousness of crimes? *Criminology*, 27(4), 795-822.

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### Bivariate Distributions: Dichotomous Outcomes

- Causal Diagrams § 7
- Davis, S. N. (2003). Sex stereotypes in commercials targeted toward children: A content analysis. *Sociological Spectrum*, 23(4), 407–24. (3)
- LeMoyne, T., & Buchanan, T. (2011). Does "hovering" matter? Helicopter parenting and its effect on well-being. *Sociological Spectrum*, 31(4), 399-418. (4)

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### Conditioning by Stratifying

- Singleton & Straits, Pp. 98–105
- Causal Diagrams § 8

### Multiple Regression

- Singleton & Straits, SKIM Pp. 531–50
  - INTRODUCTION TO DAGITTY
  - Causal Diagrams §§ 9, 10
  - Hayes, T. C., & Lee, M. R. (2005). The Southern culture of honor and violent attitudes. *Sociological Spectrum*, 25(5), 593–617. (6)
  - Michel, L. M. (2007). Personal responsibility and volunteering after a natural disaster: The case of Hurricane Katrina. *Sociological Spectrum*, 27(6), 633–52. (5)
- 

### Hypothesis Tests & Confidence Intervals

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=tFWsuO9f74o>
  - Read Drafts
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### Mediation and Moderation

- Causal Diagrams §§ 11, 12
  - Hayes, A. F. 2013. *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach*. Guilford Press, Pp. 7–9; 407–09 (3)
  - Matheson, Victor A. 2007. “Research Note: Athletic Graduation Rates and Simpson’s Paradox.” *Economics of Education Review* 26(4):516–20.
- 

### Prediction & Review

- Causal Diagrams § 13

### ► MIDTERM

### Probability Sampling

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 149–70; 183–84
  - Piliavin, Irving, Herb Westerfelt, and Elsa Elliott. 1989. “Estimating Mental Illness among the Homeless: The Effects of Choice-Based Sampling.” *Social Problems* 36(5):525–31.
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### Convenience and Respondent–Driven Sampling

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 170–77

- Magnani, Robert, Keith Sabin, Tobi Saidel, and Douglas Heckathorn. 2005. "Review of Sampling Hard-to-Reach and Hidden Populations for HIV Surveillance." *AIDS* 19(Suppl 2):S67–72.
- Goodman, Leo A. 2011. "Comment: On Respondent-Driven Sampling and Snowball Sampling in Hard-to-Reach Populations and Snowball Sampling Not in Hard-to-Reach Populations." *Sociological Methodology* 41(1):347–53.

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### Experiments

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 191–200; 205–15; 233–44 (skip Design 6)
- Weisburd, David and Charlotte Gill. 2014. "Block Randomized Trials at Places: Rethinking the Limitations of Small N Experiments." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 30(1):97–112.

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### Evaluation Research

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 460–68; 477 (from "Randomization, in short . . .")–478; 482–484.
- Heller, Sara B. et al. 2017. "Thinking, Fast and Slow? Some Field Experiments to Reduce Crime and Dropout in Chicago." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 132(1):1–54.
- Gupta, Sandeep K. 2011. "Intention-to-Treat Concept: A Review." *Perspectives in Clinical Research* 2(3):109.

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### Surveys (Questionnaire Design)

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 305; 311–36
- Savage, Brenda K. 2016. "Race-of-Interviewer Effects and Survey Questions about Police Violence." *Sociological Spectrum* 36(3):142–57.

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### Surveys (Administration)

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 256–73; 285–87; 294–98
- Kohut, Andrew, Scott Keeter, Carroll Doherty, Michael Dimock, and Leah Christian. 2012. *Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys*. Washington, DC.
- Montaquila, Jill M., J. Michael Brick, Douglas Williams, Kwang Kim, and Daifeng Han. 2013. "A Study of Two-Phase Mail Survey Data Collection Methods." *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology* 1(1):66–87.
- Office of Management and Management. 2006. "Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys." *Federal Register* (September):41.
- GSS Technical Information Table A-6.

### Content Analysis

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 411–14
  - Krippendorff, Klaus. 2013. *Content Analysis*. 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Pp 129–49.
  - Sims, Randi L. 1997. “Gender Equity in Management Education: A Content Analysis of Test Bank Questions.” *Journal of Education for Business* 72(5):283–87.
  - Previs, Kathy K. 2016. “Gender and Race Representations of Scientists in Highlights for Children.” *Science Communication* 38(3):303–27.
- 

### Conversation Analysis

- The Royal Institution. 2015. “‘The Interactional Nudge’: Talking About Talk.” YouTube. Retrieved June 23, 2017 (@ 60 minutes).
  - Conversation Analysis Notation Cheat Sheet
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### Dynamic Influence Analysis

- BelindaTGI. 2008. “The Love Lab.” *YouTube*. Retrieved June 23, 2017.
  - TheRRInstitute. 2011. “Gottman’s 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse.” *YouTube*. Retrieved June 23, 2017.
  - UWTV. 2014. “The Mathematics of Marriage (10:42 - 12:04 ).” *YouTube*. Retrieved June 23, 2017.
  - Gottman, John Mordechai et al. 2003. “Observing Gay, Lesbian and Heterosexual Couples’ Relationships.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 45(1):65–91.
- 

### Field Research

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 346–78
  - TEDx Talks. 2013. “Ethnography: Ellen Isaacs at TEDxBroadway.” *YouTube*. Retrieved June 23, 2017 (@ 12 minutes).
  - Laurie Taylor on professional criminals, ethnography and social science (@ 10 minutes).
  - MacLeod, Jay. 1995. *Aint No Makin’ It*. Pp. 270–286.
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### Historical Case Analysis & Comparative / Historical Analysis

- Campbell, Michael C. 2011. "Politics, Prisons, and Law Enforcement: An Examination of the Emergence of 'Law and Order' Politics in Texas." *Law and Society Review* 45(3):631–65.
- Krook, Mona Lena. 2010. "Women's Representation in Parliament: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis." *Political Studies* 58(5):886–908.
- Necessary & Sufficient Conditions URL

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## Ethics

- Singleton & Straits Pp. 44–77
- Oakes, J. M. 2002. "Risks and Wrongs in Social Science Research: An Evaluator's Guide to the IRB." *Evaluation Review* 26(5):443–79.
- McNutt, M. 2015. "Editorial Retraction." *Science* 348(6239):1100–1100.
- Monaghan, P. 1993. "Sociologist Is Jailed For Refusing To Testify About Research Subject." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 39(38):A10.
- Achenbach, Joel. 2011. "Diederik Stapel: The Lying Dutchman." *The Washington Post*. Nov 1.