

FYC 4801: Applied Social Research Methods

Section 2406, 4 credit hours
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Monday 7th – 8th, Wednesday 7th – 8th
Classroom: MCCA 3194
Phone: 352-273-3505
Office Hours: Friday 10:00 am – 11:30 am
& by appointment

Course Description

Students taking this course will “understand and apply the principles of social science research methods, learn a variety of research methods, and have hands-on experience with data collection and analysis.”

About the course. Applied Social Research Methods introduces Family, Youth and Community Sciences students to empirical social science research. The course provides a fundamental understanding of the research process that will help students to both competently answer their own inquiries using sound research methods, and to understand and evaluate research done by others. This course emphasizes the overall research process, beginning with asking questions, and moving through research design, data collection, the basics of data analysis, and data reporting and presentation. Ultimately, students should develop a set of tools for “methodological thinking” that provide a unique perspective on conducting research about the social world.

Prerequisites: FYC 3001 with a grade of ‘C’ or better or STA 2023.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand and apply the fundamental elements and procedures of social science research designs.
2. Select the research method best suited to collecting data to answer a given research question.
3. Conceptualize, operationalize, and measure research variables.
4. Select the data analysis process best suited to a research question and method of data collection.
5. Understand basic practices for conducting and interpreting various types of data analysis.
6. Write and present research.
7. Apply this knowledge of research methods to better understand and evaluate the research conducted by others (both academic and applied).

Course Materials & Technology

Required Text:

- Dixon, J. C., Singleton, R. A., & Straits, B. C. (2022). *The Process of Social Research* (3rd ed.) Oxford University Press. (ebook only: EISBN13: 9780197613757). This book is available through UF All Access. Please visit the UF All Access website at <https://www.bsd.ufl.edu/AllAccess> to opt in. If you need assistance opting in to UF All Access, please contact the UF Bookstore.

Statistical Software:

- This course will use SPSS Statistics for data analysis, which is available to all UF students via UF Apps (info.apps.ufl.edu). To use SPSS on your laptop hard drive, you may purchase the software from the HUB for \$35 (helpdesk.ufl.edu/software-services/spss/) for install on your personal computer.

All other materials will be provided by the instructor and will be available in Canvas.

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Course Requirements & Grading Policies

Quizzes

You are required to complete 4 short quizzes (50 points each) during the semester that account for 20% of your final grade (5% each). Quizzes must be completed within the designated time interval on or before the due date specified in Canvas.

Research Labs

You are required to complete 10 of the research lab assignments offered during the semester that account for 25% of your final grade (25 points each). If you complete all 12 of the labs, your 10 highest grades will count towards your final grade.

Research Projects

You are required to complete four research projects and a presentation during the semester that account for 50% of your grade (points vary by project). Projects must be completed within the designated time interval on or before the due date specified in Canvas.

Attendance & Participation

You are expected to demonstrate your preparation for class and understanding of course materials through active participation and engagement in class. Participation will be evaluated via in-class activities, pop-up attendance, class discussion, and similar metrics.

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Total Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance & Participation	50	5%
Research Lab Assignments	250	25%
Research Projects	500	50%
Quizzes	200	20%
Total	1000	100%

Grading

Grade	Points	Grade	Points
A	920 – 1000	C	720 – 779
A-	900 – 919	C-	700 – 719
B+	880 – 899	D+	680 – 699
B	820 – 879	D	620 – 679
B-	800 – 819	D-	600 – 619
C+	780 – 799	E	599 or fewer

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

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Course Policies

Contacting Me

The best way to reach me (outside of in-person office hours) is email. As UF policies prohibit me from discussing your grade through any other mail servers, please email me through Canvas or using your UF email account only. You can expect a response within 24 hours during the week and by the next business day if you email over the weekend.

Attendance & Make-up Work

Class attendance is extremely important, and it is essential that you keep up with research lab assignments and readings as each week's material builds on the previous week. In addition, the work we do in labs (during Wednesday classes) is directly tied to the larger projects that compose the bulk of your grade in the class. If you need to miss class for some reason, please contact me ahead of time. Students who miss a quiz, lab, or project for a reason consistent with UF's excused absence policy will receive a reasonable amount of time to make up that assignment.

You are responsible for completing the assigned readings before class, as this will facilitate your understanding of lectures, participation in discussion, and lab instruction. All materials beyond the required text will be provided on Canvas (and on the R drive). Assignments and quizzes will be posted and submitted via Canvas, and discussion boards for student interaction will be available there as well.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Academic Honesty

Research is often collaborative in academic and other work settings, and I encourage you to study with students outside of class. However, on quizzes and individual independent assignments, you should work independently. The quizzes are open note. However, Chat GPT and other similar generative AI should NOT be used in any format, for any of the quizzes, labs, or projects, unless instructed otherwise.

If generative AI is used with my permission on a course assignment, the content produced by generative AI must be cited using APA 7th edition guidelines. Using generative AI without my permission, in ways not explicitly permitted, or failing to properly cite material created by generative AI falls under the university [Student Code of Conduct academic integrity policy](#).

Students agree that by taking this course all required work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com or other plagiarism detection services (directly or via a learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for detection of plagiarism. All submitted work will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purposes of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Classroom Expectations

Course Decorum. This course includes class discussion of a variety of research topics related to the social sciences. Everyone's opinion, as well as cultural background, is to be respected in these discussions, even though your values and opinions may differ. In response to challenging material,

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everyone is encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. However, hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in the classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. Treat others as you hope to be treated; follow rules of common courtesy. Also avoid behavior that is disrespectful to the instructor and other classmates including, but not limited to: excessive talking with a classmate (excluding in class activities); texting; premature packing of personal belongings.

Please discuss any issues with me so that problems can be dealt with immediately. Repeated violations of course etiquette may result in a grade reduction for participation.

Technology. All cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc. (and anything else that makes noise) must be set to silent during class.

Written Work

Use the APA Style Guide, 7th Edition to complete all assignments in this course. Use proper APA formatting for all components of an assignment including in-text citations, tables and figures, appendices, section headings, title, abstract and references. The FYCS Department has chosen to use the Professional title page guidelines, not the student title page format. Guidelines for formatting can be found in:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7 ed.). (2020). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Note: There are many citation generators and APA guides available online. While these can be good resources, they often produce citations that are incomplete or incorrectly formatted. If you use a citation generator for your work, it would be wise to review the references to ensure they are formatted correctly before submitting your assignment. **The only source that ensures 100% compliance with APA is the APA Style Guide itself.**

University Policies

Academic Conduct

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the

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Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Recording Class Sessions

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Troubleshooting Technical Issues

Students should contact the UF Help Desk at 352-392-HELP/4357 or at helpdesk@ufl.edu with all technical issues. Some issues may be resolved using resources on the Help Desk website: helpdesk.ufl.edu. Do not contact the instructor or TA to help you solve a technical issue. If a

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technical issue is impeding your ability to submit an assignment on time, send an email to the instructor explaining the situation and provide your UFIT ticket number (assigned to you by the Help Desk). Accommodations will not be made for technical issues unless a UFIT ticket number is provided.

Student Support

Services for Students with Disabilities. The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation: 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

Campus Helping Resources:

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu
Counseling Services
Groups and Workshops
Outreach and Consultation
Self-Help Library
Wellness Coaching
- U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/
- Career Connections Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>.
- Student Success Initiative, <http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu>.

Student Complaints:

- Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.
- Online Course: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

Campus Resources: Academic. E-learning technical support is available at 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or by emailing learning-support@ufl.edu. Library support is available for assistance in using the libraries or finding resources at <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.

Student Privacy. There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights at <https://registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa/>.

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SPSS Statistics

This course will use SPSS Statistics 29 for data analysis, which is available via UF Apps (info.apps.ufl.edu). To use SPSS on your laptop hard drive, you may purchase the software from the HUB for \$35 (helpdesk.ufl.edu/software-services/spss/) for install on your personal computer.

How to Access UFApps:

1. Go to <https://apps.ufl.edu>
2. Login using your Gatorlink credentials
3. Install the Citrix Receiver (or opt to use the Light Version)
4. Launch your desired application by clicking on the icon/name

Software Use. All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Course Outline

The schedule below is subject to change with proper advance notice to students. Links to lecture slides and instructional slides, key ideas, handouts, and supplemental readings and materials are available on Canvas. Links to datasets used in instructional slides and lecture examples are available in the R drive.

All assignments are due, along with any supporting materials (like SPSS output), by the due date listed, as stipulated in the Course Outline and in the Canvas Assignments section.

Critical Dates:

- February 9, Quiz 1 due
- February 23, Project 1 due
- March 2, Quiz 2 due
- March 16, Project 2 due
- March 30, Quiz 3 due
- April 13, Project 3 due
- April 20, Quiz 4 due
- April 23, Presentations (Project 4)
- April 27, Project 5 due

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Course Outline: Spring 2025

Week	Topic	Readings*	Assignments Due
1	Scientific & Ethical Contexts of Research	Dixon, Singleton, & Straits (DSS) Chapters 1 --3	Lab 1
2	Beginning the Research Process	DSS Chapter 4	Lab 2
3	Measurement	DSS Chapter 5	Lab 3
4	Sampling	DSS Chapter 6	Lab 4, Quiz 1
5	Research Designs	DSS Chapter 7	Lab 5
6	Surveys	DSS Chapter 8	Lab 6, Project 1
7	Unobtrusive Research (Social Indicators)	DSS Chapter 10	Lab 7, Quiz 2
8	Unobtrusive Research (Content Analysis)	DSS Chapter 10	Lab 8
9	Qualitative Methods	DSS Chapter 9 & 13	Lab 9, Project 2
SPRING BREAK			
10	Quantitative Analysis (Descriptive)	DSS Chapter 12	Quiz 3
11	Quantitative Analysis (Inferential)	DSS Chapter 12	Lab 10 & 11
12	Multiple/Mixed Methods	DSS Chapter 11	Project 3
13	Writing & Presenting Research	DSS Chapter 14	Lab 12, Quiz 4
14	Wrap-up/ Presentations		Project 4 & 5

**Readings from the required text are noted here, further materials may be included for each week's module on Canvas.*