COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide you with a graduate-level understanding of social science research methods. Our major objectives are to:

- MASTER the course subject matter, specifically the design, components, methodologies, values, politics, and ethics of the social science research process;
- DEVELOP your ability to use course concepts in thinking and problem solving;
- DEVELOP your interpersonal and team interaction skills, to both ENGAGE in designing a manageable research project and to CONTRIBUTE to our LLC learning community.

TEACHING APPROACH: TEAM BASED LEARNING

I have chosen to use Team Based Learning (www.teambasedlearning.org) because I feel it is the best way to achieve our course objectives. While teachers and disciplines vary in their use of TBL, students typically take more responsibility for their own learning through initial discovery of course concepts. After individual and team "Readiness Assurance Tests" over key concepts in assigned readings, teams are “ready” to work on application exercises during class meetings. Significant individual effort is required and rewarded, but it is not sufficient alone as a component of student success in this course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING – MORE INFORMATION ON BLACKBOARD

Generally, there will be three types of assignments that contribute to the student’s final grade (to be finalized as the first “team application exercise” on the first night):

1. INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE (55 percent of the final grade)
   - IRAT (Individual Readiness Assurance Test)
     - 5 total, 20 points each (usually biweekly, covering textbooks CS and KK)
   - Participation Portfolio of your best online posts & replies to classmates about articles.
     - 4 total, 20 points each (one every 3 to 4 weeks, covering assigned articles)
     - Details available on the Blackboard course site.
   - Individual homework assignments
2. TEAM PERFORMANCE (45 percent of the final grade)
   • TRAT (Team Readiness Assurance Test)
     o 5 total, 20 points each (usually biweekly, covers same material as IRAT)
   • Team Application Exercises (hypothesis testing, survey design, content analysis)
     o Each in-class team exercise will have four characteristics:
       ▪ Significant, relevant problem related to course concepts;
       ▪ Same problem for each team (to promote intra-team learning)
       ▪ Specific choice that each team makes for the best answer or recommendation;
       ▪ Simultaneous reporting of each team’s decision.
     o 3 total, 10 points each
   • Team Poster Presentation
     o All teams will apply 2-3 methodologies to case study #3 from *The Tao of Research*: Equal rights of women in matrilineal vs. patrilineal African cultures.
     o Mid-term (online) “gallery walk” version on issues/methods to date, 20 points
       ▪ Use a free online PPT templates at [www.postersession.com](http://www.postersession.com)
     o Final (in class) "gallery walk” presentation, 20 points
       ▪ You will print & display your final PPT template “poster” (paid for by GSA if received on the LLC644 Bb Site by Wed., Dec. 8, at Noon).
       ▪ Best poster will be encouraged to submit to the GRC.
     o Time will be provided in class for teams to work on this project
     o AN Example: [http://tinyurl.com/unisatblposter](http://tinyurl.com/unisatblposter)

3. PEER REVIEW (5 percent of the final grade)
   • Anonymous “grade” of each team member’s effort (mid-term & final), 10 points each
   • A sample evaluation form will be provided on the course Blackboard site.

If you must be absent from class, please speak with your team members AND me in advance or as soon as possible, and we will discuss the matter.

Assignments are due as indicated in the syllabus. Late work is not acceptable. One letter grade will be deducted (up to 3 letter grades) for each day that an assignment is late (up to 3 days). Individual homework assignments will take several hours each to complete.

Per the UMBC Graduate School’s policy effective Fall 2010, I will assign grades that include a plus or a minus in this course. Accordingly, the grading scale is:

- A = 93-100       A- = 90-92
- B+ = 87-89       B = 83-86        B- = 80-82
- C+ = 77-79       C = 73-76        C- = 70-72
- D+ = 67-69       D = 63-66        D- = 60-62
- F < 60 points.
REQUIRED READINGS


3. Articles, located on our Blackboard site or online. Designated as [B] or [O] on syllabus.


COURSE POLICIES

- **Plagiarism** is incorporating someone else’s work into your own, without giving them credit. Repercussions may include a failing assignment grade, a failing course grade, suspension, and/or dismissal. We will follow the Faculty Senate’s position on academic integrity: “By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory.”

- **Harassment** of any nature will not be tolerated. If you feel you are disrespected by anyone (including myself), please consult with the UMBC Office of Human Relations.

- **Special Accommodations**: I am committed to accommodating students who need special accommodations. Please let me know at the start of the semester and, if you need further assistance, please contact the UMBC Office of Student Support Services.
# Course Schedule

*Readings should all be completed before you come to class. Readings are listed in the order in which I prefer that you read them. Due dates for all assignments are noted.*

## The Nature and Ethics of Social Science Inquiry

| Week 1 | Introduction  
Sept. 6 |
|--------|-------------------|
|        | **Sample IRAT/TRAT**  
*(covers the syllabus)* |
|        | **CS**, Chapter 1: “Science, Society, and Social Research”  
**KK**, Preface  
**KK**, 1. The Proposition’s Restrictions  
**KK**, 1a. Questions  
**KK**, 3. Structural (Methodological) Restrictions  
**KK**, 3a. Qualitative  
**KK**, 3b. Quantitative  
**KK**, 3c. Mixed Methods  
**KK**, 3f. Data Sources  
**B**, “What Good is Polarizing Research into Qualitative and Quantitative?” (Ercikan and Roth 2006) |

| Week 2 | The Nature of Social Science  
Sept. 13 |
|--------|-------------------------------|
|        | **IRAT/TRAT #1**  
*(covers all readings from CS and KK to date)* |
**KK**, 1e. Assumptions  
**KK**, 1f. Bias  
**KK**, 4. Functional Restrictions  
**KK**, 4a. Access  
**KK**, 4b. Proxies  
**KK**, 4c. Interpretations  
**B**, “Holy Men and Big Guns” (Sprague 1997)  
✅ 1 pg. Procrastination Essay: Post on Bb by start of class. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3 Ethics</th>
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<td>Sept. 20</td>
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- **Guest Lecture:** Tim Sparklin, Administrator for Human and Animal Research Protections Office at UMBC

- **Participation Portfolio #1 Due on Bb before Class** *(covers all non-textbook readings on Bb to date)*

- CS, Chapter 3: “Ethics in Research”
- KK, 2. Ethical Restrictions
- KK, 2a. Human Participants
- KK, 2b. Privacy
- O, “The Menace Within”
- B, “Observing Abuse” (Taylor 1987)
- B, The UMBC Institutional Review Board researcher’s guide

**Read two of the following (your choice):**

- O, Explore the “Internet Research Ethics” site. The mission of this project is to "push the boundaries of traditional research ethics issues, allowing transformative models for managing internet research. It exists to provide sound resources, a solidified research base, and expert advice as more researchers and more IRBs/ethics boards struggle with the complexities of Internet research ethics." [http://internetresearchethics.org/](http://internetresearchethics.org/)

- ✓ **Homework #1 (IRB Training) due at the start of class.** Go to [http://www.umbc.edu/research/ORPC/human_subjects_use_training.html](http://www.umbc.edu/research/ORPC/human_subjects_use_training.html) and click on the module for “Human Subjects Training” to start. This module will take about 2.5 hours to complete. Email me a copy of your IRB training certificate to receive credit.
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</table>
| 4    | Measurement | IRAT/TRAT #2  
(covers all readings from CS and KK SINCE last IRAT/TRAT)  
CS, Chapter 4: “Conceptualization and Measurement”  
KK, 5b. Levels of Measurement  
KK, 5f. Association  
KK, 1b. Reliability  
KK, 1c. Validity  
B, “Truth and DARE” (Wysong, Aniskiewicz, and Wright 1994)  
Team Application Exercise #1: Hypothesis Testing (in class) |
| 5    | Sampling | CS, Chapter 5: “Sampling”  
CS, Chapter 6: “Causation and Experimental Design”  
KK, 1d. Generalizability  
KK, 1g. Confounds  
KK, 3d. Power  
KK, 4e. Error  
KK, 4f. Regression to the Mean  
KK, 5a. Sample Size  
KK, 5g. Randomness |
| 6    | Midterm Posters | ✅ Midterm poster sketch is due on Bb at the END of class  
Work with groups in class to finish preparing your midterm posters |
| 7    | Midterm Posters | Midterm Peer Evaluation Due on Bb before start of class.  
✅ Online Gallery Walk: Present/Review Team Midterm Posters!  
More information on Blackboard, but class will NOT meet F2F. |
# Methods of Data Collection

| Week 8 | Participation Portfolio #2 due on Bb before class  
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<tr>
<td>Experiments</td>
<td>(covers all readings on Bb since last portfolio to date)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B, “Effects of Ethnicity and Gender on Teachers’ Evaluation of Students’ Spoken Responses” (Shepherd, in press)</td>
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<td>B, &quot;Executing Hortons” (Mendelberg 1997)</td>
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| Week 9 | IRAT/TRAT #3  
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<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>(covers all readings from CS and KK since last IRAT/TRAT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>B, &quot;Sense and Nonsense about Surveys” (Schuman 2002)</td>
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<td>CS, Chapter 7: “Survey Research”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KK, 1d. Generalizability</td>
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<td>KK, 1e. Assumptions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KK, 1f. Bias</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B, Chapters 1, 2, and 3 from How to Conduct Surveys (2009)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B, “The Interpersonal Power of Feminism” (Rudman &amp; Phelan 2007)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B, “Internet Use and The Self Concept” (Rohall, Cotten &amp; Morgan 2002)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Team Application Exercise #2: Survey Design (in class)</td>
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| Week 10 | Participation Portfolio #3 due on Bb before class  
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>(covers all readings on Bb since last portfolio to date)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>B, “In Their Own Words: Making the Most of Qualitative Interviews” (Weiss 2004)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B, Chapters 1 and 4 from Reflective Interviewing</td>
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</table>
| | CS, Two excerpts from Chapter 9:  
| | - pp. 221-223, “What are Qualitative Methods”  
<p>| | - pp. 235-238, “How Do You Conduct Intensive Interviews?” |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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| 11   | Nov. 15     | CS, One excerpt from Chapter 9:  
- pp. 239-244, "How Do You Run Focus Groups," “Analyzing Qualitative Data,” “Ethical Issues in Qualitative Analysis,” and “Conclusion”  
B, Chapter 2 from Reflective Interviewing  
B, “The Role of Focus Groups in a Research Strategy” (Rose 2001a)  
B, “Vulnerability and Dangerousness: The Construction of Gender Through Conversation About Violence” (Hollander 2001)  
B, “The Social Contexts of Focus Groups” (Hollander 2004)  
☑ Homework #2 (Interviewing) due at the beginning of class |
| 12   | Nov. 22     | IRAT/TRAT #4  
* (covers all readings from CS and KK SINCE last IRAT/TRAT) |
|      |             | B, “The Promise and Pitfalls of Going into the Field” (Adler and Adler 2003)  
CS, One excerpt from Chapter 9:  
B, “Participatory Research in Practice” (Rose 2001b)  
B, “‘It’s Just about Being Fair’: Activism and the Politics of Volunteering in the Breast Cancer Movement” (Blackstone 2004)  
B, "Language and Literacy in a New Mainstream” (Enright 2011—make sure you read part 1 and part 2 of the article!)  
☑ Homework #3 (Observation) due by 5pm ON NOVEMBER 27th |
| 13   | Nov. 29     | CS, Chapter 10: "Qualitative Data Analysis”  
B, “‘Blacks and Bubbas’: Stereotypes, Ideology, and Categorization Processes in Restaurant Servers’ Discourse” (Mallinson and Brewster 2005)  
B, “Introduction to Content Analysis”  
B, “Images of Women’s Sexuality in Advertisements: A Content Analysis of Black- and White-Oriented Women’s and Men’s
- "Magazines” (Baker 2005)
- B, “Hegemonic Representations of Women’s Sexuality on Hurricane Katrina Souvenir T-Shirts” (Macomber, Mallinson, and Seale fc)

**Team Application Exercise #3: Content Analysis (in class)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 14 Mixed Methods Dec. 6</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IRAT/TRAT #5</strong> <strong>(covers all readings from CS and KK SINCE last IRAT/TRAT)</strong></td>
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<td>CS, Chapter 12, “Reviewing, Proposing, and Reporting Research”</td>
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<tr>
<td>KK, 4d. Results Representation</td>
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<tr>
<td>B, “Motivations for Mixed Method Social Research” and “Fitting Data Collection Methods to Research Aims” (Axinn and Pearce 2006)</td>
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<td>B, “‘I am Not a Racist But...’” (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000)</td>
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<td>B, “‘Because They Tip for Shit!: The Social Psychology of Everyday Racism in Restaurants” (Rusche and Brewster 2008)</td>
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<td>B, “Interpreting Social Influences on Holocaust Knowledge” (Bischoping 1996)</td>
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☑ Final poster due on Bb by Wednesday, December 8 at Noon (if you want it printed for free).
Work with groups in class to finish preparing your final posters

**PRESENTING YOUR WORK**

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<tr>
<th>Week 15 Final Poster Presentations Dec. 13</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation Portfolio #4 due on Bb before class <strong>(covers all readings on Bb since last portfolio to date)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Peer Evaluation due on Bb before start of class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ In-Class Gallery Walk and Class Party: Present your Final Posters!</td>
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<tr>
<td>More information on Blackboard</td>
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