

METHODS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH
SYA 4300, sections **6958** (class # 17326) and **9081** (class # 17363)
4 credits, 100% traditional (face-to-face)
Spring 2022

CLASS: Tue, period 4 (10:40-11:30 a.m.); Thu periods 4-5 (10:40 a.m. – 12:35 p.m.),
Pugh Hall, room # 120

LABS: Section 6958 (Class # 17362) – Wed, period 6 (12:50 - 1:40 p.m.), Weil Hall, room # 0408D
Section 9081 (Class # 17363) – Wed, period 7, (1:55 - 2:45 p.m.), Weil Hall, room # 0408A

Instructor: Dr. Alin M. Ceobanu, Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law
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Office Phone: (352) 294-7170
Office Hours: Tue & Thu, 9:30-10:30 a.m. (**in-person, conditional on COVID-19 protocol**) &
by appointment
E-mail: aceobanu@ufl.edu (**PLEASE USE THIS E-MAIL TO CONTACT ME
DIRECTLY RATHER THAN THE CANVAS SYSTEM**)

Teaching Assistant: Ginelle Sukhu, Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law
Office: 3349 Turlington Hall
Office Hours: Thu, 8:30-10:30 a.m. (**in-person, conditional on COVID-19 protocol**)
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Course Description:

This *4 credit-hour course, delivered 100% traditionally (face-to-face) for both lectures and labs*, is a thorough introduction to the fundamentals of scientific research used in sociology and related social science disciplines. As such, it provides the tools necessary for practicing good social research. *Methods* covers a variety of topics, such as the nature and process of social research, social research strategies and design, formulating research questions and deriving testable hypotheses, reviewing the literature, conceptualization and measurement, sampling, creating survey questions, doing quantitative analysis, qualitative data analysis, mixed methods or using secondary data.

Knowledge in this course is acquired via a mix of lectures and labs (students will learn about the basic principles of research design and then apply them in practice). The active learning component in this class presupposes spending substantial time on both theoretical and practical issues. With an honest effort, you will acquire a set of skills that will serve you well (in the labor market, for instance), for many years to come.

This class makes extensive use of Canvas/[e-Learning](#). You are responsible for regularly checking e-Learning for updates, discussions, instructions, posted lecture notes, and many other resources. Students can learn more about Canvas and other technologies by visiting <https://elearning.ufl.edu/keep-learning/>. The [UF Computing Help Desk](#) is available to help troubleshoot technical issues.

We will be using IBM [SPSS statistical software](#) during labs, which, if is already installed on the lab computers and also available to all UF students via [UF Apps](#).

Prerequisites:

Students **MUST** have taken SYG 2000, *Principles of Sociology* (or equivalent), and have at least 60 credit hours. It is recommended that you have already taken a statistics course (such as *Introduction to Statistics*, STA 2023).

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify, explain, and apply the basic concepts of social science research.
- Acquire critical skills to interpret social science research outcomes.
- Recognize the ethical issues involving social science research and ensuring ethical standards.
- Describe basic research designs commonly used in sociology.
- Critically interpret and explain the differences (strengths and limitations) between quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Ability to independently design and conduct own research projects involving analysis of original or secondary data.

Required Text:

Schutt, Russell K. 2019. *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research*, 9th edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (e-ISBN: 9781544308845).

Lecture and lab notes (in PDF, from the instructor) will be made available in the course's Canvas shell.

UF Policy on COVID-19:

Per the Office of the Provost, and in response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- **If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated.** Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment:

<https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students can receive their first/second dose and booster on campus.

- **You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings, even if you are vaccinated.** Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.

- o Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.

- o Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.

- **If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine.** Please visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect](#) website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect](#) offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect](#) website for more information.

o Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

o If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

• Continue to regularly visit <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/> and <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/> for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

COURSE POLICIES

➤ Class Participation and Excused Absences:

Class participation is an important component of the learning process for this course. *Students must complete the assigned readings before class time.* Students are strongly encouraged to attend classes (lectures and labs) on a regular basis, given that participation in both lectures and labs facilitates understanding of the topics and furthers ability to conduct research independently (e.g., running analyses in SPSS).

Students who miss classes for reasons of excused absences, must email the instructor to arrange for any make-up work as soon as their condition permits this. Medical situations must be documented (such as a signed physician's form) to be excused. Consistent with university policies, make-up work will be allowed in the case of excused absences, as defined by [UF policy](#), which include illness, religious holidays, university activities, and military obligation.

➤ Syllabus Quiz:

Students will start the course by taking a quiz on the contents of this syllabus. The quiz must be completed by the due date. If you have never taken a Canvas quiz, you should access this [video tutorial](#). Once students have answered all questions correctly on the syllabus quiz, they will receive 10 points (1% of the final grade).

➤ In-class Assignments:

Over the course of the semester, we'll have 10 in-class assignments (unannounced), which are intended to motivate students to come to class and keep up with the readings. These in-class assignments link theory and practice and each is worth 5 points. There are 3 possible grades: 'Absent' (0 points), 'Adequate' (3 points), and "First-class" (5 points).

➤ Lab Assignments:

Students will complete 11 lab assignments during the semester. Ms. Ginelle Sukhu will be teaching the labs. These lab assignments will give students the opportunity to learn and demonstrate skill in some aspect of the research process (e.g., conducting a literature search, data management, statistical analysis of survey data). Lab assignments must be completed and submitted via Canvas on or before the due date and time (12:30 p.m. on Fridays). Only lab assignments submitted via Canvas will be accepted; do not send them as attachments to the UF email addresses of the instructor and/or TA. Late lab assignments will not be accepted. This portion of your final grade counts as 30% and will be based on the 10 highest scores (the lowest score will be dropped).

➤ Tests:

Students will be tested periodically on their knowledge of information from the textbook and lectures. Each of the 4 in-class tests corresponds to the knowledge learned specifically in the assigned chapters. Although none of the tests 2-4 is cumulative, it should be stressed that new information and skills are built around what has been previously learned. As such, retention of the material already covered may be necessary to establish knowledge of the newer information. All tests are closed-book (no assistance), in paper format, and consist of 40 multiple-choice questions. Students will have the entire class time to complete their tests (although many will likely finish early). Each test score counts as 16% towards the final grade.

➤ Grading Distribution:

The course grades are based on individual performance and are determined by each student's ranking in the class. There are no extra credit assignments in this class. The following grading scheme will be used:

<i>Component</i>	<i>Points each</i>	<i>Points total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Syllabus quiz	10	10	1%
In-class assignments (10 total)	5	50	5%
Lab assignments (10 total)	30	300	30%
Tests (4 total)	160	640	64%
TOTAL		1,000	100%

➤ Grading Scale:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>
A	≥ 920	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

➤ Technology:

The lab portion of this course requires the use of a personal laptop or desktop computer with a good internet connection. Students will need access to UF Library's e-resources, which can be done via a UF-networked computer or some type of software that will enable establishing a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection. See the UF Library's Connecting from Off-Campus website (<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufproxy.html>).

In addition, this course will require students to use the IBM [SPSS statistical software](#) available to all students via [UF Apps](#), a cloud-based suit of commonly used software applications accessible through most computers and mobile devices. Students must use their UF username and password to [login to UF Apps](#).

UF POLICIES

➤ In-Class Recording:

Per UF policies, students are permitted to record video or audio of class lectures, although 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. 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.

➤ Academic Honesty:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students 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.” The [Conduct Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

➤ Online Evaluation Policy:

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/>.

➤ Classroom Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

➤ Health and Wellness Resources:

For students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of health care or other support:

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
 - *Counseling and Wellness Center*: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
 - *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).
 - *University Police Department*: Visit UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
 - *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website (<https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>).
- Academic Resources:
- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk online (<https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>), by phone at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
 - Career Connections Center (<https://career.ufl.edu/>): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
 - UF Library Support (<https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
 - Teaching Center (<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
 - Writing Studio (<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers

Critical Dates:

Jan 13 (Thu)	Syllabus quiz due
Feb 1 (Tue)	Test 1
Mar 1 (Tue)	Test 2
Mar 5 – 12	Spring Break
Mar 29 (Tue)	Test 3
Apr 19 (Tue)	Test 4

Course Schedule:

Meeting Date	Topic(s)	Readings, Assignments, Due Dates, etc.
Week 1		
Thu, Jan 6	Introduction, Syllabus Ch. 1 – Social world, science, social science	pp. 2-13
Week 2		
Tue, Jan 11	Ch. 1 – Types of social research	pp. 14-23
Thu, Jan 13	Ch. 2 – Social research questions & theories, Foundations of social research	pp. 27-49
Wed, Jan 12	<i>Lab 1: Sociological Abstracts</i>	<i>Assignment # 1 posted</i>
Week 3		
Tue, Jan 18	Ch. 2 – Social research strategies & standards	pp. 49-62
Thu, Jan 20	Ch. 3 – Ethics	pp. 67-96
Wed, Jan 19	<i>Lab 2: Introduction to SPSS</i>	<i>Assignment # 1 due, Assignment # 2 posted</i>
Week 4		
Tue, Jan 25	Ch. 4 – Conceptualization	pp. 102-109
Thu, Jan 27	Ch. 4 – Operationalization, Measurement & measurement levels	pp. 109-131
Wed, Jan 26	<i>Lab 3: Introduction to GSS</i>	<i>Assignment # 2 due, Assignment # 3 posted</i>
Week 5		
Tue, Feb 1	TEST 1	
Thu, Feb 3	Ch. 4 – Reliability & validity Ch. 6 – Units of analysis, longitudinal designs	pp. 131-141 pp. 187-200
Wed, Feb 2	<i>Lab 4: Working with variables</i>	<i>Assignment # 3 due, Assignment # 4 posted</i>
Week 6		
Tue, Feb 8	Ch. 6 – Causal explanations, criteria for causation	pp. 200-213
Thu, Feb 10	Ch. 5 – Sample planning, probability sampling	pp. 147-168
Wed, Feb 9	<i>Lab 5: Level of measurement</i>	<i>Assignment # 4 due, Assignment # 5 posted</i>

Week 7

Tue, Feb 15 Ch. 5 – Nonprobability samples, distributions pp. 168-182

Thu, Feb 17 Ch. 8 – Survey research, writing survey questions pp. 253-259

Wed, Feb 16 *Lab 6: Univariate analysis* *Assignment # 5 due, Assignment # 6 posted*

Week 8

Tue, Feb 22 Ch. 8 – Questionnaire designing, organizing pp. 273-305

Thu, Feb 24 Ch. 8 – Writing survey questions pp. 259-272

Wed, Feb 23 *Lab 7: Correlation* *Assignment # 6 due, Assignment # 7 posted*

Week 9

Tue, Mar 1 TEST 2

Thu, Mar 3 Ch. 7 – Experiments, quasi-experiments pp. 220-248

Wed, Mar 2 *Lab 8: Comparison of means* *Assignment # 7 due, Assignment # 8 posted*

Mar 5 – 12 Spring Break

Week 10

Tue, Mar 15 Ch. 10 – Essentials of qualitative methods pp. 354-376

Thu, Mar 17 Ch. 10 – Participant observation,
In-depth interviewing pp. 376-407

Wed, Mar 16 *Lab 9: Cross-tabulation and Chi-square* *Assignment # 8 due, Assignment # 9 posted*

Week 11

Tue, Mar 22 Ch. 11 – Qualitative analysis, features, types pp. 413-428

Thu, Mar 24 Ch. 11 – Qual. analysis approaches, alternatives pp. 428-458

Wed, Mar 23 *Lab 10: Bivariate regression* *Assignment # 9 due, Assignment # 10 posted*

Week 12

Tue, Mar 29 TEST 3

Thu, Mar 31 Ch. 12 – Mixed methods pp. 464-483

Wed, Mar 30 *Lab 11: Multivariate regression* *Assignment # 10 due, Assignment # 11 posted*

Week 13

Tue, Apr 5 Ch. 13 – Evaluation & policy research pp. 487-504

Thu, Apr 7 Ch. 13 – Evaluation & policy research issues pp. 504-517

Ch. 14 – Secondary data sources pp. 522-534

Wed, Apr 6 *Lab 12: Regression examples* *Assignment #11 due*

Week 14

Tue, Apr 12 Ch. 14 – Secondary data analysis; big data pp. 534-548

Thu, Apr 14 Ch. 15 – Research using hist. & comp. data pp. 551-585

Wed, Apr 13 *Lab 12: Wrap-Up*

Week 15

Tue, Apr 19 TEST 4