METHODS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH
SYA 4300, sections 3U51 (class # 24478) and 414A (class # 25293)
4 credits, 100% traditional (face-to-face)
Fall 2022

CLASS: Mon, Wed, Fri, period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 a.m.), Anderson Hall, room # 134
LABS: Section 3U51 – Fri, period 5 (11:45 a.m. - 12:35 p.m.), Weil Hall, room # 0408E
  Section 414A – Fri, period 6 (12:50 - 1:40 p.m.), Weil Hall, room # 0408E

Instructor: *Dr. Alin M. Ceobanu*, Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law
Office: 3338 Turlington Hall
Office Phone: (352) 294-7170
Office Hours: Mon & Fri: 9:30-10:30 a.m.; Wed: 1:45-2:45 p.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: *Luis Rondan-Vasquez,* Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law
Office: 3347 Turlington Hall
Office Hours: Thu, 9:00-11:00 a.m. (**in-person, conditional on COVID-19 protocol**)
E-mail: lrondanvasquez@ufl.edu

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. The UF Computing Help Desk is available to help troubleshoot technical issues.

We will be using IBM SPSS Statistics 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.

COVID-19 Policy:

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 and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.uf for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities

• **If you are sick, stay home.** 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 to be evaluated.

• As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

COURSE POLICIES

➤ Class Attendance, Participation and Excused Absences:

Class attendance is expected -- participation is classroom activities is an important component of the learning process. *Assigned readings must be completed before class time.* Students are strongly encouraged to attend both lectures and labs on a regular basis, given that class participation facilitates understanding of the topics and furthers the ability to conduct research independently (e.g., running analyses in SPSS).
Medical situations must be documented appropriately (e.g., a signed physician's form) to be excused. Consistent with university regulations in the undergraduate catalog, make-up work will be allowed in the case of excused absences, as defined by UF attendance policies.

➤ 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 a maximum of 5 points. There are 3 possible grades: 'Absent' (0 points), 'Adequate' (3 points), and "First-class" (5 points).

➢ Lab Assignments:

Mr. Luis Rondan-Vasquez will be teaching the labs. Students will complete 11 lab assignments during the semester. 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 (11:45 a.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. The following grading scheme will be used:

Component	Points each	Points total	Percentage
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:

Grade	Points	Grade	Points
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 Statistics 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.

➢ 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 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 & Wellness Center website 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.
- *University Police Department*: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 911 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.

➢ Academic Resources:

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk online, by phone at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- Ask-A-Librarian: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Academic Resources: 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010. Tutoring, supplemental instruction, general study.
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers

Critical Dates:

Aug 31 (Wed)	Syllabus quiz due
Sep 5 (Mon)	*Labor Day, no class*
Sep 19 (Mon)	**Test 1**
Oct 7 (Fri)	*Homecoming, no class & lab*
Oct 14 (Fri)	**Test 2**
Nov 7 (Mon)	**Test 3**
Nov 11 (Fri)	*Veterans Day, no class & lab*
Nov 23 (Wed)	*Thanksgiving, no class*
Nov 25 (Fri)	*Thanksgiving, no class & lab*
Dec 5 (Mon)	**Test 4**

Course Schedule:

Meeting Date	Topic(s)	Readings, Assignments, Due Dates, etc.
Week 1		
Wed, Aug 24	Introduction, Syllabus	NO READINGS
Fri, Aug 26	Ch. 1 – Social world, science, social science	pp. 2-13
Fri, Aug 26	*Lab 1: Sociological Abstracts*	*Assignment # 1 posted*
Week 2		
Mon, Aug 29	Ch. 1 – Types of social research	pp. 14-23
Wed, Aug 31	Ch. 2 – Social research questions & theories	pp. 27-35
Fri, Sep 2	Ch. 2 – Foundations of social research	pp. 35-49
Fri, Sep 2	*Lab 2: Introduction to SPSS*	*Assignment # 1 due, Assignment # 2 posted*
Week 3		
**Mon, Sep 5	LABOR DAY, no class	
Wed, Sep 7	Ch. 2 – Social research strategies & standards	pp. 49-62
Fri, Sep 9	Ch. 3 – Ethical principles, hist. background	pp. 67-87
Fri, Sep 9	*Lab 3: Introduction to GSS*	*Assignment # 2 due, Assignment # 3 posted*
Week 4		
Mon, Sep 12	Ch. 3 – Research ethics, IRB	pp. 87-96
Wed, Sep 14	Ch. 4 – Conceptualization	pp. 102-109
Fri, Sep 16	Ch. 4 – Operationalization	pp. 109-116
Fri, Sep 16	*Lab 4: Working with variables*	*Assignment # 3 due, Assignment # 4 posted*

6

Week 5

Mon, Sep 19	**TEST 1**	
Wed, Sep 21	Ch. 4 – Measurement & measurement levels	pp. 116-131
Fri, Sep 23	Ch. 4 – Reliability & validity	pp. 131-141
Fri, Sep 23	*Lab 5: Level of measurement*	*Assignment # 4 due, Assignment # 5 posted*

Week 6

Mon, Sep 26	Ch. 6 – Units of analysis, longitudinal designs	pp. 187-200
Wed, Sep 28	Ch. 6 – Causal explanations, criteria	pp. 200-213
Fri, Sep 30	Ch. 6 – Criteria for causation	pp. 200-213 (yes, same pages)
Fri, Sep 30	*Lab 6: Univariate analysis*	*Assignment # 5 due, Assignment # 6 posted*

Week 7

Mon, Oct 3	Ch. 5 – Sample planning	pp. 147-157
Wed, Oct 5	Ch. 5 – Probability sampling	pp. 157-168
**Fri, Oct 7	HOMECOMING, no class	
***Fri, Oct 7*	*HOMECOMING no lab*	

Week 8

Mon, Oct 10	Ch. 5 – Nonprobability samples, distributions	pp. 168-182
Wed, Oct 12	Ch. 8 – Survey research in social sciences	pp. 253-259
Fri, Oct 14	**TEST 2**	
Fri, Oct 14	*Lab 7: Correlation*	*Assignment # 6 due, Assignment # 7 posted*

Week 9

Mon, Oct 17	Ch. 8 – Writing survey questions	pp. 259-272
Wed, Oct 19	Ch. 8 – Designing questionnaires	pp. 273-281
Fri, Oct 21	Ch. 8 – Organizing surveys	pp. 281-305
Fri, Oct 21	*Lab 8: Comparison of means*	*Assignment # 7 due, Assignment # 8 posted*

Week 10

Mon, Oct 24	Ch. 7 – The logic of experiments	pp. 220-231
Wed, Oct 26	Ch. 7 – Quasi-experiments, exp. validity	pp. 231-248
Fri, Oct 28	Ch. 10 – Essentials of qualitative methods	pp. 354-376
Fri, Oct 28	*Lab 9: Cross-tabulation and Chi-square*	*Assignment # 8 due, Assignment # 9 posted*

Week 11

Mon, Oct 31	Ch. 10 – Participant observation	pp. 376-390
Wed, Nov 2	Ch. 10 – In-depth interviewing	pp. 390-407
Fri, Nov 4	**TEST 3**	
Fri, Nov 4	*Lab 10: Bivariate regression*	*Assignment # 9 due, Assignment # 10 posted*

Week 12

Mon, Nov 7	Ch. 11 – Features, types of qualitative analysis	pp. 413-428
Wed, Nov 9	Ch. 11 – Alternatives in qual. data analysis	pp. 428-440
**Fri, Nov 11	VETERANS DAY, no class	
**Fri, Nov 11	VETERANS DAY, no lab	

Week 13

Mon, Nov 14	Ch. 11 – Qualitative analysis approaches	pp. 440-458
Wed, Nov 16	Ch. 12 – Mixed methods: history & types	pp. 464-476
Fri, Nov 18	Ch. 12 – Mixed methods: yes & no	pp. 476-483
Fri, Nov 18	*Lab 11: Multivariate regression*	*Assignment # 10 due, Assignment # 11 posted*

Week 14

Mon, Nov 21	Ch. 13 – Evaluation & policy research	pp. 487-504
**Wed, Nov 23	THANKSGIVING, no class	
**Fri, Nov 25	THANKSGIVING, no class	
**Fri, Nov 25	THANKSGIVING, no lab	

Week 15

Mon, Nov 28	Ch. 13 – Evaluation & policy research issues	pp. 504-517
Wed, Nov 30	Ch. 15 – Overview of historical & comparative	pp. 551-585
Fri, Dec 2	Ch. 15 – Demographic & content analysis, ethics	pp. 551-585
Fri, Dec 2	*Lab 12: Regression examples*	*Assignment #11 due*

Week 16

Mon, Dec 5	**TEST 4**	
Wed, Dec 7	Wrap-up	