



Course Syllabus: Research Methods

SOCL 3633, Section 201

Spring 2025

Instructor: Dr. Wesley Cohoon

E-mail: wesley.cohoon@msutexas.edu

Course Modality: Face-to-Face

Meeting Times: Mon, Wed, and Fri from 9:00 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.

Class Location: Martin Hall, 106

Office: Prothro-Yeager, 0-134

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:55 a.m. to 1:55 p.m. and Fridays
11:55 a.m. to 12:55 a.m.

Course Introduction

Course Quote

“Research is what I’m doing when I don’t know what I’m doing.” – Werner von Braun

“Writing organizes and clarifies our thoughts. Writing is how we think our way into a subject and make it our own. Writing enables us to find out what we know—and what we don’t know—about whatever we’re trying to learn.” – William Zinsser

Course Introduction

I am very happy that you are taking my course, and I look forward to learning with you this semester! Learning how to conduct research is like moving from being a spectator in the stands to a participant on the field. Instead of passively sitting back and letting others control the game, as a researcher you become an

essential player or coach who gets to make decisions and decides how the game goes. Researching is a skill that you can learn that allows you to ask profound questions, think critically, explore problems, and develop solutions. This course will teach you how to conduct research on your own.

The class is highly collaborative, and at the end, you get to develop a research project and decide on a question you want to ask. You will draw from what you have learned from previous classes and put it into action. I will not tell you what to research or ask, but instead, I will guide you on clarifying a project that is interesting and pertinent to you.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the methods and techniques of sociological research. The course allows students the ability to examine and apply quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection through selected research. This course offers students practical experience in conducting and understanding research. The knowledge gained from this course applies to several professions and careers.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Book: Writing in Sociology, 2nd Edition
Author: Edwards
ISBN: 9781483351292 or 9781483354590
Publisher: Sage Publications

Book: Introduction to Research Methods: A Hands-On Approach, 2nd Edition
Author: Pajo
ISBN: 9781544391700 or 9781071879825 or 9781544391724
Publisher: Sage Publications

Who is the instructor?

My career has included a wide range of professional experiences, from teaching at universities to working in businesses, nonprofits, hospitals, and governmental agencies. My diverse professional journey has been united by my work with, love of, and curiosity for people. Although I have changed careers many times, sociology has been at the core of all my careers because I have dealt with people.

I am married with five children. My youngest three are 17, 15, and 13. My two oldest kids are adults who are both married and have children. We have three dogs at my house—Cupcake, Oreo, and Waffles. I love spending time with my family and hanging out.

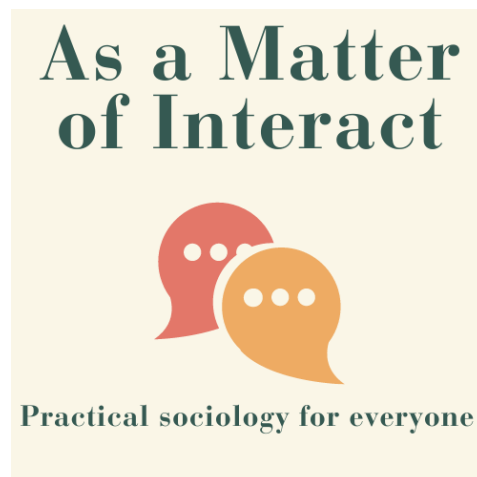
I have earned two doctorates, two master's, and a bachelor's degree. Part of my research focus is on applying sociology in the real world. I have a sociology podcast called "As a Matter of Interact: Practical Sociology for Everyone." I am a Certified Clinical Sociologist through the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology and serve as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Applied Social Sciences*.

Teaching Philosophy

I want to come alongside students and help them discover themselves and their social world. In addition to providing information, I want to listen and learn from others and their experiences. While I care about students, I also want them to grow and experience some level of discomfort. While people do not like tension and conflict, people experience growth through it. People need to feel some stress and have their existing knowledge challenged to gain new understanding. I encourage students to engage in an action/reflection model where they can learn, do something with their knowledge, come back and reflect on their experience, and repeat the process. Lastly, learning is difficult, but it is also fun. I welcome playfulness, humor, and student interaction throughout class time.

Additional Sociological Resource

To learn more about sociology and its practical applications, check out my bi-weekly podcast, [As a Matter of Interact: Practical Sociology for Everyone](#). The podcast helps people understand and evaluate social interactions, relationships, human behaviors, and systems. Check out the podcast to better navigate your life and make informed decisions as you practically apply sociology.



London Study Abroad: Sociology

I highly encourage students to consider participating in the Study Abroad program that MSU offers through its Global Education Office. In the summer of

2025, I will teach British Culture and Society (SOCL 4883, 4893). Students will earn six credit hours towards their degree in only five weeks. Studying sociology in London is a great learning opportunity, and it provides students with a chance to experience, live, and travel to a foreign country. The London classes last for five weeks with a one-week minibreak in between. The flight will depart on Thursday, July 3rd, and we will return to the United States on Monday, August 4th.

You can take my London sociology class with any major. Depending on your major and minor, this course could count towards your major, minor, or elective course requirements. My sociology class will compare British society and culture to American society and culture. The class will teach students how to evaluate and assess cultures, societies, and social interactions. The class will be highly interactive, and several assignments will include activities and immersion into British culture.

Planning is critical to a successful study abroad experience. I will share the London Study Abroad finalized dates and information as soon as it is available through the Global Education Office. If you have any questions or concerns, you can always contact me or schedule a meeting with MSU's Global Education Office and Study Abroad. Remember, the application deadline is usually in March, and the Global Education Office is there to discuss financial aid and scholarship opportunities to ensure you are well-prepared for this exciting journey.

[MSU Global Education Office](#)

[MSU London Study Abroad](#)

Instructor Policies

Assignment Submission

Submit all your assignments via D2L, and they need to be in Word or PDF. Students are responsible for ensuring assignments are submitted on time and in an accessible format.

Assignment Feedback

I will provide assignment feedback within seven days of the due date. My feedback will be provided in the form of comments on the assignment in D2L. You are welcome to come and talk to me about any assignment and feedback that I have offered. Your grades will be posted in D2L.

Email Communication with the Instructor

Please follow the below template when sending me an email. Failure to follow this format will result in a response from me stating, "Please read the syllabus and follow the email formatting instructions." Students are welcome to ask questions, but I want them to first check the syllabus for the answer before asking or clarifying a question.

Dr. Cohoon

My name is (Xyz), and I am a student in your SOCL 3633: Research Methods class this spring semester. I am emailing to ask you about (blank). I looked in the syllabus, and it states (blank) about my question.

Thanks,

(Your Name)

Late Work

All assignments are due in D2L before 11:59 p.m. on their listed due date in Word or PDF. If the assignment does not upload, I do not have it. The student is responsible for ensuring that their assignments are uploaded. Corrupted documents do not count, and you need to ensure that the assignment is uploaded in the proper format. I will deduct ten percent per day for late assignments. There are no exceptions, and all late work will be deducted 10% for every day it is late. This late policy is generous, and students can still earn a good grade on an assignment when it is late.

Attendance

Presence is important. There is a high correlation between attendance and class grades. In-class attendance is required. If a student is going to miss class, they need to email the instructor. Students who miss more than 20% of the classes can result in a reduction of a full letter grade. Students who miss more than 30% of the classes can either be dropped or receive an F in the course. Students with excessive absences, or those who fail to notify the instructor of class absences, can be dropped at the instructor's discretion.

Plagiarism

The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit. Using AI technology (like ChatGPT) to write assignments is considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize will receive a zero on the assignment and can face additional academic consequences. However, students are welcomed and encouraged to use proofreading applications like

Grammarly. The difference between technology ChatGPT and Grammarly is that technology like Grammarly uses the student's original ideas and helps proofread.

Evaluation and Grading

Certifications – 15%

Students can earn 15% of their final grade by completing and submitting proof of their research certifications. The students can include these certifications on their resume, and they provide a general overview about research ethics. These trainings are free when signed up through your MSU account.

Go to: [CITI Program](#), and students will need to earn the:

1. Conflict of Interest
2. Social and Behavioral—Basic/Refresher
3. Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research

Book Review – 10%

Students will provide one critical book review this semester. The book review will be *Writing in Sociology, 2nd Edition* by Edwards. Before students submit this Book Review, they need to read "Chapter 17: Writing a Book Review" in *Writing in Sociology, 2nd Edition*. The book review is worth ten points: The critical book review needs to be 4 to 6 pages of written content in paragraph form, and it is due by March 23rd.

Required Book Review Sections

The required sections of the book review along with a description of them are below.

Basic Information

- Provide basic information for the author and book. Also, write your understanding of the author's purpose for the book.

Summary

- Summarize the pertinent contents of the book. Note: you may want to briefly talk about each chapter or at least cover a significant amount showing that you read the book).

Evaluation

- What is your evaluation and explanation of how well the author achieved his purposes.
- Explain any sociological or practical disagreements with the premises set forth in the material. What is the basis for your disagreement?

Practicality

- Explain how the material might hold value for your academic and professional careers. Specifically, how might the key concepts addressed strengthen your overall approach to writing and communicating?

Include page numbers

- This last one is not a section, but you need to reference actual page numbers in your book review. Here is an example pulled from the book you will actually review, "I found it interesting that the article argues that writing is a social act and not just a personal one of self-revelation (p.4)."

Grading Criteria for Critical Book Review:

Well-written— 30%

- Paper meets the minimum requirement of 4-6 pages – 10%
- Grammar and mistake-free – 10%
- Paragraphs are appropriate length – 10%

Formatted Correctly— 30%

- Student has clear section headings – 5%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 5%
- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%
- Paragraphs are indented – 10%

Demonstrated an Ability to Think Sociologically – 40%

- Student addressed the four above criteria for a book review (Basic Information, Summary, Evaluation, and Practicality) – 20%
- The student included page numbers throughout their review – 20%

Assignments – 35%

There will be seven assignments that are worth five points each for a total of 35% of your final grade. Each assignment builds your knowledge and lays the foundation for the research paper. Staying on track of these assignments means that your paper has been virtually written by the end of the semester. Keep on track.

The objective of these assignments/assessments is to ensure that you are producing work towards your final paper, that you comprehend the nature of your research and how to accomplish it, as well as ensure that you do not end up writing a research paper on the day it is due.

Assignment 1: Find Your Topic

For the first stage of your project, you will need to pick a topic of interest from the list included on this assignment sheet. If you do not find a topic that interests

you, please consult with me to pick one that does. Keep in mind that you will eventually be transforming this personal interest into a professional topic that you will study and write a detailed paper about. The best topic is always one you have a personal interest in, and one that you anticipate needing information about in your professional or academic career.

Your topic must be approved before you begin collecting literature. There is not one perfect way to choose a workable topic. Rather, what you are looking to develop is a topic that is a) clearly within the bounds of this course, b) is suitable for a critical literature review, and c) can be completed in the time available to us. What you are seeking to identify and clearly describe is a researchable problem around which there is enough literature to construct a fully developed review. I have to approve your research topic. Assignment #1 is 1-2 pages, and it is due February 16th.

Grading Criteria for Assignment 1: Find Your Topic

Well-written— 30%

- Paper meets the minimum requirement of 1-2 pages – 10%
- Grammar and mistake-free – 10%
- Paragraphs are appropriate length – 10%

Formatted Correctly— 20%

- Paragraphs are indented and the font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 10%
- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%

The paper addresses the following questions – 50%

- The topic you are choosing for your paper – 10%
- Why you picked this topic and what is interesting about it to you – 10%
- A brief explanation of what you already know about the topic – 10%
- How this topic is sociologically relevant – 10%
- What theoretical perspective is best used for studying this topic and why – 10%

Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography

Reading an article that you don't use helps you clarify what you are doing and teaches you how to write better. For this assignment, you are to write an Annotated Bibliography of at least 10 academic sources—like peer-reviewed journal articles. I will show you how to do this in the MSU Library.

The writing of a one-paragraph review or annotated bibliography, per source, will test your skills in the writing of a compact summary. The summary will resemble the book report but will be much briefer and deal with only the most appropriate

elements. Remember that every word and idea must count with no room for details. Use brief, simple, direct sentences.

This assignment should include at least 10 academic sources. The students should list the sources by ASA guidelines and write a paragraph per source. Assignment #2 is due February 23rd.

Grading Criteria for Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography

Formatted Correctly— 40%

- Has a titled that is bolded and centered – 5%
- Paragraphs are single-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 5%
- The paragraph setting “Hanging” is selected under the Special setting – 20%

Student demonstrates critical engagement – 60%

- The student has at least 10 scholarly sources – 25%
- The student has written a summary paragraph for each source. – 25%
- The scholarly sources are current (less than 10 years old) – 10%

Assignment 3: Problem Statement and Purpose

The problem and purpose statements are a significant part of your paper. This will include the background and significance of the research, a problem statement, and your purpose of the study. Assignment #3 is 1-2 pages, and it is due March 2nd.

Grading Criteria for Assignment 3: Problem and Purpose Statements

Formatted Correctly— 30%

- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 5%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 5%
- The assignment is 1-2 pages in length – 5%
- The paragraphs are appropriate in length – 15%

Background and Significance of the Research – 20%

- Did the student discuss how the results of the research will fill a gap in our knowledge?
- Did the student offer a brief synopsis and background of the complex problem they plan to study?
- The student wrote at least 1–3 paragraphs.

Problem Statement – 20%

- Did the student present the problem, research focus, and population affected?

- The student wrote at least 1–2 paragraphs.

Purpose of the Study – 20%

- Did the student clearly outline the participants, the topic, and the methodology?
- The student wrote at least one paragraph on this. The purpose of the study is a very important part of the paper and research.

Assignment 4: Literature Review

The literature review is written to place your study within the context of existing knowledge and other studies in your discipline. It gives recognition to other scholars, and it also allows you to point out what is new about your research. Be sure to indicate if you are building on a previous study or a well-established theory; addressing certain gaps in knowledge that exist; or adding to existing knowledge by doing a study with a different or more complete methodology.

The Literature Review is where you will take the sources from your Annotated Bibliography, add to it, and clarify it. After you have written the literature review read it carefully and make sure it is clear. Notice whether you can easily determine how the proposal is built on earlier studies, as well as exploring a line of research that is new.

In the review you seek to find out what questions scholars have asked about the problem, what methods they have used, what theories they have used, what lines of inquiry they have pursued, and to organize and summarize the literature. You seek to identify limitations or gaps in the literature, questions that need to be asked but have not been asked, and by your review aim to make a contribution by helping push the study of this problem forward.

When you mention other studies, they are usually cited by the author's last name and the date of publication. For example: "Another important study in the area (Chan and Gibbs, 2003) found that..." Later on, in the bibliography, you will provide a full citation to all the studies you cited in your proposal.

What you are looking for is to collect a set of literature that is both broad enough and deep enough to give you a sense of the major trends in the literature that bear on your topic. You may be wondering how much literature you should collect. This will vary greatly depending on the depth and breadth of available literature that relates to your topic. You will normally need to consult 20 or more references. Also, note that the most contemporary material will be found in journal articles.

Your literature review should begin with a clear statement of purpose, followed by a brief overview of each of the forthcoming sections of the review. The main body of the review is then divided into sections, corresponding to how you have categorized the literature that you have located. Within each section, your goal is

to describe and critique the main trends in research in that area. You focus on themes, issues that researchers have identified as important, and give particular attention to any problems or limitations that you (or other researchers) may see or have seen in that area of research. The research that you refer to is used to illustrate the “big picture” that you are sketching out in each section and in that sense not the focus of each section. You do not write in detail about each article or book that you find relates to a section. Rather, the articles and/or books that you find are used to illustrate the broader points you want the reader to gain from each section. Assignment #4 should be 4-5 pages, and it is due March 30th.

Grading Criteria for Assignment 4: Literature Review

Formatted Correctly— 40%

- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%
- Paragraphs are appropriate in length – 10%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 10%
- The assignment is 4-5 pages in length – 10%

Student demonstrates critical engagement – 60%

- Did the student demonstrate a thorough and current understanding of the peer-reviewed literature related to their topic? – 10%
- Did the student begin the literature review with a clear statement of purpose? – 10%
- Did the student organize the literature in themes and clearly mark them with subheadings? – 20%
- Did the student identify gaps in the current research? – 20%

Assignment 5: Methods and Methodology

As you will learn in the Social Science Research Methods course, sociologists use a variety of methods in their research. The methods you use in your research will depend on three things: the research question you select, your own individual preferences, and the constraints of time and resources.

The research question you select will largely determine the methods you will use in your research – or at the very least, make some methods less appropriate and others more so. The main methodological distinction in the social sciences comes between quantitative and qualitative methods. If you use quantitative analysis, you will almost certainly be using the methods of statistics to analyze a publicly available dataset. Conversely, qualitative data analysis includes methods such as content analysis, interviews, and ethnographic research. Sociologists also use experimental methods, which may be either qualitative or quantitative in terms of the data collected and subsequently analyzed. Assignment #5 should be 5-6 pages, and it is due April 13th.

To some extent, how sociologists write about their methods is common across all forms of methodological inquiry. Regardless of their means of analysis, sociologists must do the following things:

- Describe your sample of data, and explain how it was constructed
- Define variables, means of measurement, and any hypotheses you have
- Describe the methods by which you will analyze this data

Grading Criteria for Assignment 5: Methods and Methodology

Formatting – 30%

- Paragraphs are indented, double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 5%
- The paragraphs are appropriate in length – 5%
- The paper is at least 4-5 pages in length – 10%
- Student has three main sections: Data Construction, Means of Measurement, and Methods to Analyze. – 10%

Student demonstrates critical engagement – 70% or 7% each

- The student indicated their proposed methodology (qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods).
- The student provided a rationale for why they selected this approach.
- The research question(s) and any hypothesis are stated clearly.
- The student provided a description of the variables and population under study.
- The student provided a description on how they would identify and recruit participants or find data.
- The student listed any necessary permissions to access and recruit population or data sources under study.
- The student listed their proposed data collection tools (surveys, interviews, etc.).
- The student identified any ethical considerations.
- The student described their process of data analysis (software, coding, etc.).
- The student provided potential limitations to their study.

Assignment 6: Discussion and Limitation

Provide a nice summary of what you've written. Restate the problem that you set out to analyze, review the methodology you would propose, and include some anticipated findings. This provides the "so what" part of the paper. In this section, you will highlight why your study is important and why others should care. It ties the threads of your review together, summarizes the key conclusions, and makes explicit suggestions for advancing the literature related to your topic. For example, what new studies or new methodologies do you think may allow researchers to more profitably address your question? The suggestions that you make should clearly address problems, gaps, weaknesses,

or limitations you have seen and identified in the preceding sections. Assignment #6 should be 2-3 pages, and it is due April 27th.

Grading Criteria for Assignment 6: Discussion and Limitations

Formatted Correctly— 40%

- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%
- Paragraphs are appropriate in length – 10%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 10%
- The assignment is 2-3 pages in length – 10%

Critical Engagement Discussion Section – 30%

- The student discussed their expected results and how it will make a positive impact.
- Based on the findings or expected findings, what would one expect to find in similar or future research?
- The student provided suggestions for future research.

Critical Engagement Limitation Section – 30%

- The student discussed any potential limitations of their study/data/sample, and how might those limitations affect their interpretations.
- The student discussed what kinds of data or additional studies could build on their research or improve their argument.

Assignment 7: Introduction, Abstract, and Title

While it may seem counterintuitive to develop the title, intro, and abstract last, doing it after your research is completed can help. You may have already been thinking about these things, and that's fine. Finalizing them at the end is important because you are now better set up to describe and define how your research will be presented.

You will probably revisit the problem statement and purpose that you initially wrote in Assignment 2. Reread those documents and rewrite them to better fit your current research and understanding. Assignment #7 should be 1-2 pages, and it is due May 4th.

How to write an introduction:

- The proposal starts on a general level with some type of introductory remarks before going into the details of the specific research question you are proposing.
- Provide a statement of the question, issue or general problem that you are examining. A common problem in research proposals is for the author to delay too long in stating the specific research question. Make sure the research question is stated no later than the end of the second or third paragraph. Make sure the research question is fully stated in one place.

- Discuss what other studies have said about your research topic and how your research relates to that of other scholars who have written on the topic.

How to write an abstract:

- The need for the study (1-2 sentences)
- The research problem statement or what you want to study (1 sentence)
- Theory, hypotheses, and/or argument (1-2 sentences)
- Data and methods (1 or 2 sentences)
- Findings/results (1-2 sentences. If results are not yet available, you can talk about the expected results)
- Implications of the findings (1-2 sentences)
- 3-5 key words
- Some variations are possible. The abstract of a theory paper is largely different. The maximum word count normally ranges from 100 to 250 words.

How to develop a title:

- Does it summarize the main idea of the proposed research?
- Will the general public understand it?
- Can it stand alone? Is it fully explanatory?
- Is the title catchy, unique, or memorable?

Grading Criteria for Assignment 7: Introduction, Abstract, and Title

Formatted Correctly— 40%

- Paragraphs are double-spaced with 0 points before and 0 points after – 10%
- Paragraphs are appropriate in length – 10%
- The font is 12-point, Times New Roman – 10%
- The introduction is 1-2 pages in length – 10%

Introduction Critical Engagement – 20%

- The student reframed and repurposed their original problem and purpose section into an introduction section.
- The student started their proposal on a general level with introductory remarks before going into the details of the specific research question you are proposing. This can be accomplished by providing a frame of reference, a definition, or a discussion of the significance of the topic in the field
- The student provided a statement of the question, issue or general problem that they are examining. A common problem in research proposals is for the author to delay too long in stating the specific research question. Make sure the research question is stated no later than the end of the second or third paragraph. Make sure the research question is fully stated in one place.

Abstract Critical Engagement – 20%

- The abstract is at least 100 to 250 words.
- The abstract is high quality.

Title Critical Engagement – 20%

- The title is informative.
- The title is catchy.

Final Research Proposal – 40%

This course requires a final project, which is a research proposal. The objectives of the assignment include being able to distinguish the type of research you are undertaking, being able to undertake the research and progress through the process and write up your research in a concise manner applying the appropriate theories and concepts.

The Final Research Proposal should be 13-17 pages, and it is due May 12th. Late assignments will be deducted 10% for each day they are late. The assignment will only be accepted until three days late with appropriate deductions.

Sections of Your Final Research Proposal

Title Page

- The student submitted this as part of Assignment 7.

Abstract

- The student submitted this as part of Assignment 7.
- It should be 100 to 250 words.

Introduction

- The student submitted this as part of Assignments 1, 3, and 7.
- It should be 2 to 3 pages.

Literature Review

- The student submitted this as part of Assignment 4.
- It should be 4 to 5 pages.

Proposed Methods and Methodology

- The student submitted this as part of Assignment 5.
- This should be 5 to 6 pages.

Discussion and Limitations

- The student submitted this as part of Assignment 6.
- This should be 2 to 3 pages.

References

- The student needs at least 20 scholarly sources.
- Part of this section is similar to Assignment 2. However, you should find sources throughout the semester. Also, do not submit an annotated bibliography for your final proposal.
- Most of your sources will be from peer-reviewed journal articles, but students can also use their textbooks as a source (specifically for your methods section).

Grading Criteria for Final Research Proposal

Formatted Correctly— 25%

- Paragraphs are appropriate in length – 10%
- The paper follows ASA formatting guidelines – 5%
- Paper is well-edited with little to no mistakes – 5%
- The proposal is 13-17 pages – 5%
- Title, Abstract page, and Reference page(s) don't count towards page total

Title Page and Abstract – 5%

- The title is informative and catchy.
- The abstract is high quality.

Introduction – 10%

- The student offered a good introduction that sets the context and need of their research problem, question, and purpose of the study.

Literature Review – 20%

- The student demonstrated an exhaustive and current understanding of the peer-reviewed literature related to their topic.
- The literature review had a clear statement of purpose.
- The student organized the literature in themes and clearly marked them with subheadings.
- The student identified gaps in the current research.

Proposed Methods and Methodology – 20%

- The student indicated their proposed methodology and a rationale for why they selected this approach.
- The research question, any hypothesis, variables, and population description were provided.
- The student listed ethical considerations and necessary permissions to access and recruit population or data sources under study.
- The student provided a description on how they would identify and recruit participants or find data.
- The student listed their proposed data collection tools.
- The student described their process of data analysis.

Discussion and Limitations – 10%

- The student discussed their expected results, how it will make a positive impact, and offered suggestions for future research.
- The student identified potential limitations of their study/data/sample, and how might those limitations affect their interpretations.
- The student discussed what kinds of data or additional studies could build on their research or improve their argument.

Scholarly Sources – 10%

- The student used at least 20 scholarly sources.
- The sources were cited properly.

Grading

Table 1: Total Points for Assignments

Assignments	Points
CITI Certifications	15
Book Review	10
Assignment 1	5
Assignment 2	5
Assignment 3	5
Assignment 4	5
Assignment 5	5
Assignment 6	5
Assignment 7	5
Final Research Proposal	40
Total Points	100

Table 2: Total Points for Final Grade

Grade	Points
A	90% and above
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	Below 60%

Course Schedule

This calendar represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunities. Any changes will be communicated clearly and as soon as possible.

Table 3: Class Assignments and Due Dates

Week	Class Assignment	Due Date
1	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 1: Purpose	Jan 21st
1	Wed Class Participation	Jan 22nd

1	Fri Class Participation	Jan 24th
2	Read Writing in Sociology, Section I (Ch 1-5)	Jan 27th
2	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 2: Research Quest	Jan 27th
2	Read "The Belmont Report" PDF	Jan 27th
2	Mon Class Participation	Jan 27th
2	Wed Class Participation	Jan 29th
2	Fri Class Participation	Jan 31st
3	Read Writing in Sociology, Section II (Ch 6-10)	Feb 3rd
3	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 3: Lit Review	Feb 3rd
3	Mon Class Participation	Feb 3rd
3	Wed Class Participation	Feb 5th
3	Fri Class Participation	Feb 7th
3	CITI Certifications	Feb 9th
4	Read Writing in Sociology, Section III (Ch 11-14)	Feb 10th
4	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 4: Quantitative	Feb 10th
4	Mon Class Participation	Feb 10th
4	Wed Class Participation	Feb 12th
4	Fri Class Participation	Feb 14th
4	Assignment #1: Find Your Topic	Feb 16th
5	Read Writing in Sociology, Section IV (Ch 15-18)	Feb 17th
5	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 5: Errors, Validity,	Feb 17th
5	Mon Class Participation	Feb 17th
5	Wed Class Participation	Feb 19th
5	Fri Class Participation	Feb 21st
5	Assignment #2: Annotated Bibliography	Feb 23rd
6	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 6: Sampling	Feb 24th
6	Mon Class Participation	Feb 24th
6	Wed Class Participation	Feb 26th
6	Fri Class Participation	Feb 28th
6	Assignment #3: Problem Statement and Purpose	March 2nd
7	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 7: Data Collection	March 3rd
7	Mon Class Participation	March 3rd
7	Wed Class Participation	March 5th
7	Fri Class Participation	March 7th
N/A	Spring Break - No Class	March 9-16th
8	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 8: Secondary Data	March 17th
8	Mon Class Participation	March 17th
8	Wed Class Participation	March 19th
8	Fri Class Participation	March 21st
8	Book Review: Writing in Sociology	March 23rd
9	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 9: Organizing	March 24th
9	Mon Class Participation	March 24th
9	Wed Class Participation	March 26th
9	Fri Class Participation	March 28th

9	Assignment #4: Literature Review	March 30th
10	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 10: Analyzing	March 31st
10	Mon Class Participation	March 31st
10	Wed Class Participation	April 2nd
10	Fri Class Participation	April 4th
11	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 11: Qual. Design	April 7th
11	Mon Class Participation	April 7th
11	Wed Class Participation	April 9th
11	Fri Class Participation	April 11th
11	Assignment #5: Methods and Methodology	April 13th
12	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 12: Analyzing Qual.	April 14th
12	Mon Class Participation	April 14th
12	Wed Class Participation	April 16th
12	MSU Holiday No Friday Class	April 18th
13	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 13: Results/Discuss	April 21st
13	Mon Class Participation	April 21st
13	Wed Class Participation	April 23rd
13	Fri Class Participation	April 25th
13	Assignment #6: Discussion and Limitations	April 27th
14	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 14: Presenting	April 28th
14	Mon Class Participation	April 28th
14	Wed Class Participation	April 30th
14	Fri Class Participation	May 2nd
14	Assignment #7: Introduction, Abstract, & Title	May 4th
15	Read Intro Research Methods, Ch 15: Big Data	May 5th
15	Mon Class Participation	May 5th
15	Wed Class Participation	May 7th
15	Fri Class Participation	May 9th
15	Final Research Proposal Due	May 12th

University and Class Policies

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Change to Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Service for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking and Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual’s to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)