

RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

FALL 2022

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Lecture: Mondays 8:30-10:20

Lecture Location: CNH 103
Office: KTH 213
Office Hours: Mondays 11-12pm or by appointment

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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the fundamentals of social scientific research, and dive into how social psychologists study social phenomena. First, we will lay the foundations with an overview of why research is important, and the general ways in which we can design our projects. From there, we delve into both quantitative and qualitative research, addressing the mechanics, as well as the potential ethical quagmires, we may encounter as researchers. We will wrap things up with a discussion of how *you* can conduct your own research project. In this class, you will not only be provided with the opportunity to understand the principles of social research, but you will also acquire some of the essential skills in order to actually carry it out!

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Understand the predominant research methodologies used by social psychologists, and highlight their strengths and weaknesses
- Gain an appreciation for both quantitative and qualitative research designs
- Apply knowledge practically through course assignments and in-class activities
- Work collaboratively and independently on written assignments
- Enhance critical thinking, writing, and organizational skills through course assignments
- Enhance communication skills through class discussions.

Required Materials and Texts

- **Required:** Bell, E., A. Bryman, and S. Kleinnecht (2022) *Social Research Methods* 6th Edition. Oxford University Press
 - The text can be purchased at the *Campus Store*. There are both physical copies and an e-book version.
 - The publisher’s website also offers the option to rent the text at a lower cost
 - Any previous editions purchased are done so at the student’s own risk
- All other assigned and supplemental readings will be posted on Avenue to Learn

Class Format

Lectures will be held in-person, unless otherwise specified. Lectures will take place on Mondays from 8:30-10:20am in CNH 103. Tutorials will also be in-person. You must attend the tutorial that you have been assigned through Mosaic.

While attendance is not mandatory, it is *strongly* encouraged. With that being said, please do not come to lecture/tutorial if you feel unwell. This is especially the case if you are experiencing COVID symptoms and/or have tested positive. Contingencies will be in place if you are unable to attend. This will be addressed during the first lecture

The format of this class may change due to the ever-changing nature of the pandemic. If the university closes, the lectures will be moved to a virtual format until it is safe to return to campus.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Tutorial Participation – 10%
2. Quizzes - 10% (2 quizzes at 5% each)
3. Mid-Term Exam – 25%,
4. Assignment 1 – 15%
5. Assignment 2 – 15%
6. Final Exam – 25%

Course Evaluation – Details

Tutorial Participation (10%)

Over the course of the semester, you are asked to attend tutorials. These tutorials will be designed to provide a more practical consideration of the course material, as well provide you an opportunity to connect with other students in the class. If you are unable to attend your tutorial for that week, please contact your TA to work out alternatives for assessment

Quizzes (5% Each = 10%), Due: Oct. 3 and Nov. 28, 2022

Throughout the term, you will complete TWO quizzes that will be based on both lecture and reading material. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice/true or false questions. They are open-book assessments and will be administered through Avenue to Learn. You will have 15 minutes to complete the test, which will be available from 9am-9pm on the day they are due

Assignments (15% Each = 30%), Due: Oct. 17 and Nov. 21 by 11:59pm

Assignment 1: You will be tasked with watching a short documentary and writing a brief report regarding the ethical issues of the experiment under review, and what could have been done to avoid these violations

Assignment 2: You will create your own structured interview. Working in pairs, you will develop a research question, a hypothesis, address how you will measure the variables, and any possible limitations your research may encounter. You will also come up with 5 interview questions based on the guidelines provided in class

For both assignments, further instructions will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Midterm Exam (25%), Due: Oct. 31, 2022

The exam will be based on both the lectures and the readings. It will consist of multiple choice and true or false questions. Unless otherwise specified, the exam will be held in-person during class time

Final Exam (25%), Due: TBD

The exam will be based on both the lectures and the readings. It will consist of multiple choice and true or false questions. Please note that the exam is **not cumulative**. Unless otherwise specified, the exam will be in-person and will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	DUE
Week 1 (Sept. 12)	Introduction to the Course	Preface	
Week 2 (Sept. 19)	Foundations of Social Research Research Design	Chapters 1 & 2	
Week 3 (Sept. 26)	Ethics	Chapter 3	
Week 4 (Oct. 3)	Quantitative Research Design	Chapter 4	QUIZ 1 – OCT. 3 (covers weeks 2-3)
Week 5	READING WEEK	No Readings!	
Week 6 (Oct. 17)	Survey Research	Chapter 5	Assignment 1 Due by 11:59pm
Week 7 (Oct. 24)	Quantitative Sampling and Data Analysis	Chapters 7 & 8	
Week 8 (Oct. 31)	Midterm Exam	No Readings!	MIDTERM EXAM – OCT 31 (covers weeks 2-6)
Week 9 (Nov. 7)	Qualitative Research Design	Chapter 9	

Week 10 (Nov. 14)	Ethnography and Participant Observation	Chapter 10	
Week 11 (Nov. 21)	Interviewing	Chapter 11	Assignment 2 due Nov. 21 by 11:59PM
Week 12 (Nov. 28)	Content Analysis Data Analysis	Chapters 12 & 13	QUIZ 2 – NOV. 28 (covers weeks 9-10)
Week 13 (Dec. 5)	Conducting a Research Project Review	Chapter 15	

Course Policies

Email Policy

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the term, please feel free to email either Dr. Speakman at hiltze@mcmaster.ca, or your TA (contact information forthcoming).

When emailing either Dr. Speakman or the TA, please use your McMaster email. This is University policy. In addition, please do not use Avenue messenger, as these messages often get overlooked or missed entirely. In the subject heading of your email, please indicate the course code. It would also be helpful to include your name (this can either be the one on the registrar's list, or your preferred name) and student number in the email.

If you do not get a response within a week, please re-send the email as it may not have been received. In addition, please be aware that emails may not be responded to in the evenings or the weekends, and the instructor or TA will get back to you as soon as they are able

Submission of Assignments

Please submit your assignments to the appropriate folder on Avenue to Learn. When submitting an assignment, please use either a PDF or Word document as other formats are not recognized. Also ensure that you are submitting the correct assignment to the correct class

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

The due dates for assignments are fixed and non-negotiable unless you are registered with SAS or submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf>). The MSAF is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences for medical or other reasons that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work worth less than 25% of your overall. In these cases, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence. If you are absent for more than 3 days, or exceed one request per term, you **MUST** visit your Associate Dean's Office. You may be required to submit supporting documentation.

MSAF cannot be used for the Midterm or Final Exam. Late assignments will be deducted **2% per day late**. Any assignments that come in 2 weeks past the due date will receive an automatic grade of zero.

If you miss a quiz, please fill out an MSAF and contact Dr. Speakman as soon as possible to work out an alternative test date within a reasonable time

Review of Marks

We will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, we will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.***

To request a review of a mark, write a ½ page memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error and submit this memo to your Teaching Assistant. You may submit requests for review no sooner than **48 hours** after receiving a grade, and no later than one week after assignments/exams are released back to the class.

If, after this review of your mark, you continue to dispute the mark, you may submit an appeal to Dr. Speakman. Write a 1-page memo describing the dispute with the reviewed mark and submit it along with the original assignment and all written feedback from the Teaching Assistant. Dr. Speakman will not review any marks not already reviewed by the respective Teaching Assistant.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.