INSTRUCTOR

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OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are scheduled by appointment, M-F, between 8:30 – 5:00.
Please contact me at least 24 hours in advance with multiple date and time requests and I will do my very best to accommodate you.
My office is located in UTDC 414.

COURSE TIME AND LOCATION

Hamburg Hall 1003
Tuesdays and Thursdays
4:30 PM to 5:50 PM

TEXTBOOK


PREREQUISITES

None
COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with a solid practical foundation in survey research methodology. We will begin by discussing how to formulate good research questions and the types of research questions that can be investigated through survey research. (Although we will briefly discuss the various survey formats, this course will focus on designing self-administered questionnaires.) Because the success or failure of a survey project rests on the individual survey items, we will spend the majority of our time learning how to develop, test, and revise survey items. In doing so, we will also consider the cognitive processes that affect how people respond to survey items, in order to ensure we are creating items that are both understandable and answerable. We will also briefly discuss survey instrument organization and design, survey administration techniques, and ethical issues in survey methodology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Develop a set of research questions to guide the survey design and analysis process
- Describe each of the steps in designing a survey instrument and analyzing survey data
- Articulate a researcher’s ethical responsibilities, particularly regarding respondent protection
- Identify improperly formatted survey items within existing survey instruments and suggest revisions to improve understandability and answerability
- Recognize and keep in mind that cognitive process exist which can affect how respondents answer survey items
- Conduct the iterative process of developing, testing, and revising to create survey items that are understandable and answerable by respondents
- Design a well-organized, effectively ordered, and visually appealing survey instrument
ANTICIPATED COURSE OUTLINE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)
All readings should be completed by the date for which they are listed.

Week 1, Session A: September 1
Survey design steps

Week 1, Session B: September 3
Creating good research questions
Reading for today: Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink, pgs. 3-31, 323-333

Week 2, Session A: September 8
How items should be asked: Questions, Part One
Readings for today: Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink, pgs. 35 - 150

Week 2, Session B: September 10
Each team will share their guiding research questions and population.

Week 3, Session A: September 15
How items should be asked: Questions, Part Three
Readings for today: Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink, pgs. 151 – 177

Week 3, Session B: September 17
How items should be asked: Response sets

Week 4, Session A: September 22
Review and feedback for team project draft surveys
Team 3: 4:30 – 4:55 PM
Team 1: 4:55 – 5:20 PM
Team 4: 5:20 – 5:45 PM
You only need to be in class for your assigned review time. These times subject to change depending upon final number of teams.

Week 4, Session B: September 24
Review and feedback for team project draft surveys
Team 5: 4:30 – 4:55 PM
Team 2: 4:55 – 5:20 PM
You only need to be in class for your assigned review time. These times subject to change depending upon final number of teams.

Homework assignment #1 due by 3 PM
Homework assignment #2 due by 3 PM
Take-home Midterm Exam posted
Homework Assignment #3 due by 3 PM
Week 5, Session A: September 29
  Item testing and revision

Week 5, Session B: October 1
  How items are answered: cognitive processes in survey response

Week 6, Session A: October 6
  Instrument design and ordering

Week 6: Session B: October 8
  Using a web-based survey program

Week 7, Session A: October 13

Week 7, Session B: October 15
  Administering surveys and related ethical issues
  Readings: Groves, et al., pgs. 371-400

Week 8, Session A: October 20
  Session B: October 22

  Team project presentations
  All team project reports, presentations, and individual reflection papers are due by 3:00 PM on October 20

Additional readings may be posted to Blackboard and assigned as needed.
**COURSE GRADE**

Homework Assignments: 25%
Midterm Exam: 25%
Class Participation, Attendance, and Reading Quizzes: 20%
Team Project: 30%

**ENGAGEMENT IN THE COURSE**

Surveys are best when designed in cooperation with others and not by one individual working alone. We will use each class session as an opportunity to improve our survey design skills by engaging in small group activities on the topics of the day. Therefore, I expect you to attend each class and be ready to participate in the discussions and activities.

The daily course outlines will be posted to the course Blackboard site prior to each class session and I suggest you print them for note taking, as I have a “no electronic devices” policy. I consider the use of electronic devices (for example, laptops, iPads, cell phones, etc.) to be distracting in a classroom setting. Please keep all devices out of sight with the sound off.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Although survey design is often a group process, I expect your homework assignments and midterm exam to be your own work. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable. If you are not certain whether your actions are considered academic dishonesty, please ask me. I will deal with cases of academic dishonesty on an individual basis related to the specific circumstances.