

FALL 2016  
SOCIOLOGY 300.3  
SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS  
Professor Debora Paterniti

Contact Information: [paternit@sonoma.edu](mailto:paternit@sonoma.edu)

Prerequisites: Sociology major/minor or instructor consent

General Education: No

**Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to the fundamentals of research design in Sociology. Lectures and course readings will focus on the relationship between theory and research, the structure of inquiry, various modes of observation (interviewing, observation & ethnography, surveys & secondary data analyses, content analysis, experimental design, and evaluation research) and the context of social research. Attention to mindful exploration will allow students to examine the interdependence of the researcher and the subject of observation in the research process and its results. Students will learn to apply critical evaluation strategies to existing data sets and research findings as well as to understand the relevance and significance of patterns in defining social life, developing interventions, and considering directions for social change.

Sociology 300 will engage students in applied understanding of the relationship between theory and research, and will include both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research design and data analyses. Sociology 300 is a prerequisite to Sociology 498 (Senior Research Seminar); students must receive a passing grade (a C- or better) in this course to enroll in Sociology 498.

**Course Requirements:** Students will be expected to complete all required reading and to come to class prepared to participate in lecture and discussion periods. Active course participation and short, in-class quizzes will constitute a portion (10%) of the final course grade. There will be two examinations (20%), which will consist of some multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions (essay questions will be selected from a list of study questions). Five research assignments (60%), including a literature review, three written methods papers with analyses, and one research proposal will also be required. Five journal assignments (500 word minimum) will be assigned so that students can reflect on the decision-making, ethical, and political processes involved in mindful engagement in the research process (10%). Written assignments are due on their designated due date, and must be turned in at the beginning of class to receive full credit.

**Required Readings:**

Earl Babbie. 2014. *The Basics of Social Research, 6th edition*. Wadsworth/Thomson.

Selected contemporary and classic social science publications, announced in class and posted to MOODLE, will also be required.

**Additional Expenses:**

- Students will have some expenses associated with printing or photocopying required readings and course materials, including instructions for written assignments, example surveys, interview transcripts, and other materials.
- Students may need access to an audio recorder for one of the research exercises.

Please note: the information above is subject to change.