



SYA 3300

Research Methods

Section: RVC

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2026

Course Time Zone: Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates and times are according to this time zone.

Professor Information

Jacquelyn Johnston

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: jajohnst@fiu.edu

Phone: 305-348-7555

Office Hours: Fall in-person office hours Tuesdays noon - 4PM and online office hours will rotate to accommodate student schedules, zoom appointments available at beginning of semester

Office Location: SIPA 315

Department or Academic Unit: Global and Sociocultural Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

Welcome to Research Methods! Together we will learn basic principles of social research and use them to explore *working in the education sector*.

This course is divided into two modules. First, we will explore the foundations of social research. What is it? What makes research valid? Second, we will try our hand at methods of data collection and analysis and consider what makes for sound data collection and analysis. We will also reflect upon the ethics and purpose of social research.

Course materials include models of exemplary research, how-to-guides on the nuts and bolts of research, and a textbook. Much of the exemplary research will be drawn from literature on work and labor given this semester's theme of *working in the education sector*.

Readings, Materials, and Open Educational Resources (OER)

See above for information about the textbook.

Textbook and Course Materials

Making Sense of the Social World Methods of Investigation

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Daniel F. Chambliss, Russell K. Schutt

Publisher: SAGE Publications

Publication Date: 2018-12-01

Copyright Date: 2018

ISBN 10: 1111111111

ISBN 13: 9781506364100

Chapters/Pages: As assigned

Panther Book Pack

Get all required course materials for \$22 per undergrad credit hour through Panther Book Pack. You'll be charged automatically unless you opt out within 3 days after the add/drop deadline.

For more details, to compare costs, and to learn how to access your course materials, visit the [Panther Book Pack information page on FIU OneStop](#).

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- **Articulate the goals and limitations of social research**
- **Identify and apply principles of social research design**
- **Use different research methods to collect social data**
- **Analyze social research data**
- **Report the findings, importance, and limitations of social research data**
- **Identify and apply principles of social research ethics**

Expectations of this Course

Learning social research methods is incredibly rewarding. A firm understanding of research methods will enable you to better evaluate social research. Social research skills are applicable in many contexts beyond the university such as in community organizations, government offices, and for-profit companies.

Many students find social research methods difficult. You may find it helpful to designate a regular time to do the readings and coursework for this class (e.g. Mondays and Fridays

from 10am – noon). Keeping up with the material as we progress is essential – it is simply too much material to try to learn the week before the final week.

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the coursework will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Assignments & Assessments

Course Structure

This course is a online class. Students will be responsible for the following:

Canvas: This class uses Canvas as a course webpage. All the readings, class activities, assignment instructions, and the weekly announcements will be posted here. Students must access Canvas weekly. Students can go to <https://fiu.instructure.com/courses> and log in using their FIU credentials.

Assigned Materials: Students must read the assigned chapter(s) for the week. Additional materials assigned for the course may include articles, reports, webpages, etc. Links or PDFs of these materials will be provided on Canvas. These items will complement (not repeat) the lectures, and students are accountable for all assigned readings on the quizzes.

Class Meetings: This is an asynchronous online course, therefore there are no assigned course times.

Course Evaluation

Reading Responses (20%): For different modules, you will be required to respond to one or more questions that demonstrate your engagement with the assigned readings. For the reading response, you will write a short response (about 5-6 sentences) to a question. For some modules, you may choose one question from among several questions. Reading responses will be graded according to the following rubric:

Reflection Activities (25%): These are short assignments that give you an opportunity to apply a course concept or skill. The idea is that they offer a low-stakes way to engage with the course materials. Such activities typically consist of individual assignments of various types (reflections, virtual fieldwork, methods exploration, etc.) – specific instructions and due dates will be provided on Canvas.

Quizzes (20%): Throughout the semester, there will be online quizzes. These are to be completed **individually** but are open-note. Quizzes will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions. Review questions will be included in the lecture PowerPoints.

Participation (10%): Students are expected to participate in Canvas each week. Engaging with one another's work, offering thoughtful feedback, and other discussion-type activities will be offered to meet the requirement.

Final Assignment (25%): You will select ONE of the options below. Each option type will have 5 parts that need to be submitted on Canvas. Full details and instructions will be provided. Please see an overview of the options below.

- Option 1 In-depth Interview: The interview assignment is designed to give you experience carrying out qualitative social research. It is divided into five parts.
 - Part 1: Interview guide
 - Part 2: Transcription
 - Part 3: Initial coding
 - Part 4: Code list & categories
 - Part 5: Analytic memo

- Option 2 Participant Observation: You have the option of completing participant observation at a location of your choice. There are five required parts to this final assignment option.
 - Part 1: Jottings
 - Part 2: Extended fieldnote/field memo
 - Part 3: Initial coding
 - Part 4: Code list & categories
 - Part 5: Analytic memo

- Option 3 Survey: The last possible option entails designing a survey protocol and collecting data from 10 participants. There are five required parts to this final assignment option.
 - Part 1: Survey questions
 - Part 2: Logistics and administration plan
 - Part 3: Collected responses
 - Part 4: Excel entry
 - Part 5: Research memo

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Weight
Reading Responses	Weekly	20%
Reflection Activities	Weekly	25%
Quizzes		20%
Participation	Weekly	10%
Final Assignment	1	25%
Total	10	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A	95 to 100
A-	90 to 94.99
B+	87 to 89.99
B	83 to 86.99
B-	80 to 82.99
C+	77 to 79.99
C	70 to 76.99
D	60 to 69.99
F	0 to 59.99

Proctored Exams

Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our [Student Proctored Exam Instructions](#) webpage for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.

Both exams in this course will be proctored through HonorLock.

Schedule of Topics

Please refer to the [Modules](#) page

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours during the week.

I also accept communication via my faculty email, jajohnst@fiu.edu. I will usually respond within a few days, except on weekends or holidays. For faster responses, please use Canvas Inbox.

The message feature is a private, internal, CANVAS-only communication system. Users must log on to CANVAS to send/receive/read messages. There are no notifications in CANVAS to inform users when a new message has been received; therefore, it is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

In addition, your professor will post course announcements, alerting students of upcoming deadlines, feedback on assignments, and other important information. Please make sure to read them carefully and get back to your professor immediately if you have any questions or concerns. Please make sure to include detailed questions or explain your concerns so your professor is better prepared to answer them on a timely-manner.

Policies & Resources

Please review the [FIU's Policies webpage](#). The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses. For additional information, please visit [FIU's Policy and Procedure Library](#).

As a member of the FIU community, you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code](#).

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities.

Zoom meetings can be accessed via the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. Once you click on the Zoom link, it will route you to join the meeting for the respective class session. You will also be able to view upcoming meetings, previous meetings that you have already joined, and meeting recordings. Before joining an actual class session:

- Reference the [Zoom Student Tutorials](#) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting room, and share your screen.
- Access the [Zoom Test Meeting Room](#) to test out the software before

joining an actual session.

If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the [FIU Canvas Help Team](#). Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights** (OCR) is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the OCR team through report.fiu.edu.