



SYA 3300

Research Methods

Section: RVC

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2025

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

Professor Information

Dr. Melissa Bernardo

Roles: Primary Instructor

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Phone: 305-348-2247

Office Hours: Mondays

Office Location: SIPA I, 326

Department or Academic Unit: Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description and Purpose

Welcome to SYA3300: Research Methods! This course is dedicated to understanding how sociologists, human geographers, anthropologists, and other social science scholars analyze, interpret, and make sense of the social world.

This course is divided into three different sections. First, we will begin with broad questions about knowledge production that underline our approach to any social inquiry. Next, we will then explore the different types of research methods, both qualitative and quantitative. This includes interviews, focus groups, survey research, statistics, and GIS. During the final part of this course, you will be able to apply what we have learned and gain some hands-on experience.

Ultimately, upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- 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

Textbook and Course Materials

Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation (6th edition)

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Chambliss and Schutt

Publisher: Sage Publications

Publication Date: 2019

Copyright Date: 2019

ISBN 10: 150636411X

ISBN 13: 9781506364117

Panther Book Pack

The Panther Book Pack rental program provides your required print and digital course materials at a flat rate of \$20 per undergraduate credit hour. When you registered for your classes this session, you were notified via email of the required course materials that are included in the Panther Book Pack.

Make sure to review the pricing for all materials across your classes this semester and compare the cost to the Panther Book Pack flat rate. If the Panther Book Pack is not your best option, you may opt out up to three days after the add/drop deadline. The deadline to opt back into the Panther Book Pack is also three days after the add/drop deadline.

If you do not opt out of the Panther Book Pack rental program, you will be charged \$20 per undergraduate credit hour for which you are registered and the course materials will be reserved in your name. For more details and to learn how to access your course materials, visit onestop.fiu.edu/bookpack.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Student learning outcomes allow faculty to assess the level of proficiency in content knowledge and skills that their students acquire in a course.

If the objective meets a special designation, you will see the code after the objective:

University Core Curriculum: UCC

Gordon Rule Writing: GRW

Global Learning: GL

Civic Literacy: CL

- 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

Expectations of this Course

This is a [fully online](#) course, which means all of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students. Please do not fall behind in this course, as it is very difficult to catch up with an online course.

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

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

Weekly Announcements: A weekly announcement will be posted on our Canvas page for each module, which will automatically be sent to your FIU email. Review these announcements carefully. All assigned reading materials, any new assignments, due date reminders, etc. will be outlined. If you have any questions, as always, please email me. I am happy to clarify any information.

Policies & Resources

Lectures and Assignments

It is your responsibility to listen to all class lectures, read or watch the assigned readings and/or videos, and complete the weekly assignments on time. Late work will only be accepted for three days after the deadline and will have 10% of the total point deduction. Late work can be excused for serious reasons (i.e., emergency, death of a family member, acute illness) with the appropriate documentation.

Communication

Weekly announcements will be posted on Canvas. Important messages will also be sent to each student's email address. If you have any urgent questions or concerns, please send me an email instead of using Canvas messages. All students are asked to please be polite and responsible when communicating with the professor and/or classmates.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether the effort is successful or not. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with severe consequences that range from probation to expulsion. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Academic Integrity Committee.

A.I. Technology can be helpful when brainstorming. However, A.I. generated writing will not be allowed in this class. You are expected to complete all writing assignments and quizzes yourself. Everything you hand in will be run through plagiarism and A.I. detection software. Assignments with A.I. generated writing will receive an automatic zero.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact me or consult FIU academic misconduct webpage at <https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>

Grading

Graded Item	% of Grade	Comments

Reading Responses	25	Short-answer questions
Class Activities	25	Submitted on Canvas
Quizzes	25	Open-book, online quizzes
Final Project	25	Participant observation, interview, or survey

Assignments & Assessments

Reading Responses (25%): For various modules, you will be required to respond to one or more questions that demonstrates your engagement with the assigned readings. For the reading response, you will write a short response (about 3-5 sentences) for each question.

Class Activities (25%): These are short assignments that give you an opportunity to apply a course concept or skill. The idea being 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 (25%): 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. Detailed instructions will be provided on Canvas before administration.

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

Schedule of Topics

Module	Topic	Assignment
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Module 1	Getting Started	
Module 2	The Process of Social Research	Reading Response #1
Module 3	Research Ethics	Class Activity #1
Module 4	Research Conceptualization & Measurement	Class Activity #2
Module 5	Social Theory	Reading Response #2
Module 6	Introduction to Quantitative Methods (for Social Research)	Quiz #1
Module 7	Generalizability & Sampling	Reading Response #3
Module 8	Survey Questionnaire Design	
Module 9	Causality & Experimental Design	Quiz #2
Module 10	Qualitative Interviewing	Reading Response #4
Module 11	Ethnography & Field Research	Class Activity #3
Module 12	Qualitative Coding & Analysis (2 weeks)	Class Activity #4

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility** (CRCA) 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 CRCA team through report.fiu.edu.

Student Resources

[Students with Disabilities](#)

Any student who feels he/she/they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Disability Resource Center at 305-348-3532 in GC 190 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/>) to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

If you suffer from stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns or alcohol use that damages your academic performance, you are not alone. Students who have these issues are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Psychological Services at 305-348-2277 in SHC 270 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/index.php>

[Links to an external site.](#)).

[Center for Excellence in Writing](#)

The FIU Center for Excellence in Writing offers various services that will help improve your writing skills. I highly recommend using these resources for you to be successful in this course. Visit their website (<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>) to make an appointment.