

# Research Methods in Labor Studies

## Fall 2024

**38:578:501:90/37:575:401:90. Asynchronous Online.**

### Course Description

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This course is an introduction to the methods of research most commonly employed by social scientists. Most of us are exposed to social research every day, from reports of the effects of the pandemic on telework to articles on the impact of having children on the gender wage gap. The main purpose of this course is to make you a more critical consumer of this kind of material in part by showing you how social research is done and also by engaging you in the process of social research itself.

### Course Delivery Format

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**This course runs from September 3 through December 15.** It is delivered *entirely* online through Canvas. There will be no Face-to-Face, in-person classroom sessions. The course is delivered in *asynchronous* mode. This means the learning activities and communication takes place outside of real-time. You do not have to log in at any specific scheduled time; you log in at your convenience.

**Note:** Even though you don't need to log in at any specific time, **you are required to adhere to all course work due dates.**

### Instructor Information

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Virtual Office Hour: Tuesdays 10am-11am or by appointment.

Throughout the semester, I will communicate with you via either [Canvas Announcements](#) or your Rutgers email account.

### Virtual Office Hour

- The Professor's Virtual Office Hour will be conducted through Zoom on Tuesdays 10-11am, or upon

request (inbox professor in Canvas, or send email, to schedule a different time).

## Course Objectives

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By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand the basics of methodological reasoning and how to formulate research questions.
2. Understand social causality.
3. Understand key issues related to how to make ethical decisions in doing research.
4. Understand the "nuts and bolts" issues – e.g., research design, sampling, measurement, quantitative and qualitative methodologies.
5. Use three specific methodologies.
6. Consume more critically the social science findings presented to you in your everyday lives.

## Textbook & Other Course Materials

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### Required Textbook:

- Blackstone, Amy. 2012. [Principles of Sociological Inquiry – Qualitative and Quantitative Methods](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/139)  (<https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/139>) . Saylor Foundation.
  - **Note:** Some of the Chapter links in the eText are no longer available. You will not be assessed on any missing content.

This is a text by a sociologist, but social science research methods are pretty much universal across disciplines. This is a good basic text, and even better, it is open access and free. I will supplement with other readings and resources. Any reading material in this course will be posted on Canvas.

### Additional Course Resources:

Any additional course materials, such as recorded lecture, supplemental videos, articles, data sets, etc., will be provided in the Modules section of this course site under the respective weekly modules.

# Course Work

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- **Examinations:** There will be two examinations, each a combination of short/long answers.
- **Knowledge-checks:** There will be two short quizzes, which will help test your knowledge before exams.
- **Discussion:** Each week, you will be required to post a substantive comment on the reading and other material in the discussion, and engage in discussion with peers.
- **Topic Reflections:** After viewing the lecture presentation every week, and reading the assigned reading, you will be reflecting on a series of questions and responding to one of the questions.
- **Exercises:** There will be a series of exercises.

## Course Topics & Schedule

This course is structured in a weekly module format. Each Module equates to a Week. Each week starts on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday. Exceptions are the 1st and the last week of the semester.

The course is divided into 14 Weeks as follows:

### COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS \*

Week	Date	Topic	Reading & Videos	Assignments
0		Learning your way around, meeting the instructor and your classmates.	Course site activities	Complete week 0 activities
1	9/3/2024	Epistemology and intro to methodology	Blackstone Ch 1 Supplemental Videos	View Main lecture.
				Week 1 Discussion: Ways We Know
2	9/10/2024	What is Social Research?	Blackstone Ch 2 Supplemental Videos	View Main lecture.
				Week 2 Discussion: Inductive vs. Deductive
				Topic Reflection.
3	9/17/2024	Research Ethics	Blackstone Ch 3 Belmont Report Supplemental Videos	Examine three articles/videos, student choice
				Week 3 Discussion: Research Ethics
				Topic Reflection.

4	9/24/2024	Topics in Social Research	Blackstone Ch 4 and Ch 5 Supplemental Videos	View Main lecture
				Week 4 Discussion: Research Study Assessment
				Topic Reflection.
5	10/01/2024	Sampling	Blackstone Ch 7 Supplemental Videos Simulation	View Main lecture
				Week 5 Discussion: Empirical Methods
				Knowledge Check (Quiz 1) (Covers weeks 1-5)
6	10/08/2024	Measurement	Blackstone Ch 6 Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Week 6 Discussion: Conceptualization & Measurement
				Topic Reflection.
7	10/15/2024	Experimental Research	Blackstone Ch 12.2 Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Week 7 Discussion: Experiments
				Mid-Term Exam (due Saturday 11:59pm)
8	10/22/24	Observation & Field research	Blackstone Ch 10, Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Week 8 Discussion: Observation
				Exercise: Conduct Field Research
9	10/29/24	Observation & Field research	Blackstone Ch 10, Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Week 9 Discussion: Reflect on Exercise
10	11/05/2024	Content Analysis	Blackstone Ch 11, Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Exercise: Conduct Content Analysis
11	11/12/2024	Content Analysis		View Main lecture
				Week 11 Discussion: Reflect on Exercise
				Knowledge Check (Quiz 2) (Covers weeks 8-11)
12	11/19/2024	Quantitative data analysis	Blackstone Ch 8, Supplemental Resources	View Main lecture
				Week 12 Discussion: Quantitative Data
				Exercise 1: Data Analysis

				Exercise 2: Data Analysis
Thanksgiving Break				
13	12/3/2024	Quantitative data analysis	Supplemental Resources	View Main Lecture Week 13 Discussion: Propose and describe a Research Project
14	12/10/2024	Review and Exam Prep	Exam Review Practice Questions	View Main Lecture
15	12/17/2024	Final Exam		Final Exam (due Tuesday 11:59pm)

### Weekly Schedule

**Week 1 (September 3 - 8): Epistemology and Intro to methodology**

**Week 2 (September 9 - 15): What is Social Research?**

**Week 3 (September 16 - 22): Research Ethics**

**Week 4 (September 23 - 29): Topics in Social Research**

**Week 5 (September 30 - October 6): Sampling**

**Week 6 (October 7 - 13): Measurement**

**Week 7 (October 14 - 20): Experimental Research, Mid-Term Exam**

**Week 8 (October 21 - 27): Observation and Field Research Part 1**

**Week 9 (October 28 - November 3): Observation and Field Research Part 2**

**Week 10 (November 4 - 10): Content Analysis**

**Week 11 (November 11 - 17): Content Analysis Part 1**

**Week 12 (November 18 - 24): Quantitative Data Analysis**

**November 28 - December 1: Thanksgiving. Nothing Due.**

**Week 13 (December 2 - 8): Quantitative Data Analysis Part 2**

**Week 14 (December 9 - 15): Review and Exam Prep, Final Exam due Dec. 17 at 11:59pm**

### Grading

Exams	30%
Discussions Forums	25%
Topic Reflections	20%
Knowledge Checks (Quizzes)	10%
Exercises	15%
Total	100%

### Grading Scale

Points Range	Grade
90 - 100	A

85 - 89	B+
80 - 84	B
75 - 79	C+
70 - 74	C
60 - 69	D
59 and below	F