

**SSRM 2301**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODS**  
**T/Th 6:30-7:45 PM**  
**SS 3027**

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Office: SS 4066

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Use Vista email for class. I check my email during email office hours.

Please use my KSU email only for emergencies: [mboeri@kennesaw.edu](mailto:mboeri@kennesaw.edu)

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION (2005-2006 catalog):**

This course provides an introduction to concepts and techniques of social science research. Students will (a) become familiar with levels of measurement, sampling techniques, research design, and research techniques, and (b) apply these techniques to the study of specific research questions in criminal justice, sociology, and geography. (Catalog description is currently under revision.)

**Course Objectives (Learning Outcomes):**

- Identify basic methodological approaches and describe general role of methods in sociological knowledge.
- Compare and contrast basic methodological approaches for gathering data.
- Critically assess published research papers and explain how the studies could have been improved.
- Design a research study in an area of choice and explain why various decisions were made.
- Identify underlying assumptions particular to methodological approaches to an issue.
- Describe and apply appropriate ethical practices in doing human-based research, including IRB processes.
- Write a research proposal for a study that can be conducted in the Senior Seminar.

**Required Books:**

The Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches by W. Lawrence Neuman  
A Simple Guide to SPSS for Windows version with SPSS 14.0 CD by Kirkpatrick and Feeney

**Course Format:**

Our class will meet twice a week. Below you have a reading and assignment schedule. You are required to bring books to class with you. I use WebCT Vista to post supplemental reading materials, tools, grades and messages. Please see me early if you are not familiar with using WebCT Vista. Please note the days I will be at conferences. I am available through WebCT if you have questions.

Course Requirements and Grading System	Points	Percentage of Grade
Human Subject Research Certification	10	10%
POP Quizzes (4* @ 10 pts each)	30	30%
POP Assignments (2 @ 5 pts each )	10	10%
Lab Assignments (2 @ 5 pts each)	10	10%
Rough Draft of Lit Review	10	10%
Rough Draft Methods	10	10%
Research Proposal	20	20%
Attendance	5 extra points	

90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; Below 60=F

**Attendance:** I will take attendance. You are allowed 2 absent days. After that, I take off one point for each day absent. The points you earn are extra credit points added to your overall grade. Specific chapters will be discussed during class meeting time, and any changes in the reading assignments for the next class will be announced in class.

### POP Quizzes

There will be pop quizzes covering all the chapters that are to be read in the Neuman book on and up until that day. If you are absent from class **FOR ANY REASON**, you cannot make up these quizzes. \*I will drop one grade from the quiz grades, which will be a missed quiz or the lowest grade.

### Assignments:

All exercises and assignments are assigned and collected in class (i.e. they are not posted on Vista nor can they be emailed to me). I will not accept a late assignment unless there is documented proof of an extraordinary hardship (hospital bill, etc.). **There are NO make-ups for missed exercises and assignments.** You must bring your lab book to the lab classes for lab exercises.

### Rough Drafts

In order to help you write a good research proposal, I will ask for two rough drafts. One includes your introduction with the research statement and the literature review (with references). The second includes your methods section. Points count off for not following instructions given in class and for consistent spelling and grammar mistakes. I will edit these so you may incorporate my comments in your final paper. You are required to turn in hard copies of rough drafts with my edits when you turn in your final papers, so please keep these graded papers. All papers in this class are required to have a cover page with the assignment title (rough draft 1), class, your name, and the date turned in. Please staple all papers but do NOT enclose in any type of folder. Double spaced and number all pages except the cover page. Failure to have a cover page or comply with these simple guidelines results in an automatic 1 point deduction.

**Policy on late rough drafts:** If you are late handing in the rough draft for any reason, you must do the following: One point will be deducted for each DAY late (weekend day included). Turn your paper in after class or in the office to Donna or another office staff and make sure she stamps a date on it and signs it. If there is no date and signature, I will count off from the day I pick it up.

### **Research Proposal:**

The purpose of this class is to learn how to conduct research. At the end of the course you will turn in a complete research proposal for a research study you would like to conduct in Senior Seminar. You should be thinking of a topic early in the semester and discuss any ideas with me. You should be using what we have learned in class when writing your proposal.

You may decide to work on a research proposal together in a group or design a proposal on your own. For this class, team proposals can be only two students and no more. I suggest that a team proposal include both a quantitative and qualitative component. One team member will hand in the quantitative proposal and the other the qualitative component. The literature review for a team will have twice the minimum requirements. If you write a proposal on your own, you may choose either a quantitative or qualitative design. Remember, that your proposal must be DOABLE, which means you should have the time, funds, access and knowledge to be able to conduct the research, analyze your data, and write a paper in one semester (Senior Seminar). Most often, students try to do too much. Keep this in mind as you develop your proposal.

All final research papers should be turned in as a hard copy.

**Note concerning email: I will not grade emailed rough drafts and papers! If you are not in class to turn in your hard copy paper with rough drafts attached, it must be turned in as a late paper. However, if you prefer that I edit your paper using “tracking:” please write on the cover page of your rough draft “I have sent a copy of this paper via WebCT email. Please edit by tracking.” I will do this ONLY if I get the hard copy and read this on the cover page. I will not return any emailed papers without a hard copy first.**

**THE PROFESSOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY A PROPOSED RESEARCH TOPIC BASED ON FEASIBILITY OF CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH.**

ASA style guide is at <http://www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm>

You will receive a “0” for any work you hand in that is plagiarized. You are also responsible for reading what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html> and <http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu/plagiarism.html>

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

**Disability Clause:** Kennesaw State University provides support for students with disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to identify himself/herself as an individual with a disability. A qualified individual in the area of the identified disability must provide the documentation of the disability. This documentation must show how the disability creates a significant impact on the individual's academic performance; it should include suggested accommodations that are reasonable to be provided in an academic setting.

## Checklist for grading Research Proposals (20 points total\*)

### ASA Format: 5 points total (25%)

Citations: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 References: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Five journals: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Headings: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Comments:

### Introduction: 5 points total (25%)

Purpose statement: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Reasoning: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Spelling and grammar: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Comments:

### Lit Review: 5 points total (25%)

Summaries: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Link to study: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Gap/build: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Spelling and grammar: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Comments:

### Methods: 5 points total (25%)

Type of research: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 If quantitative: hypothesis is stated:  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 If Qualitative, exploration focus is stated:  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Data Collection:  
     Sampling methods (where, who, age, number of respondents, eligibility criteria and why):  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
     Instrument or questionnaire (explained and in Appendix):  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
     Confidentiality and ethics explained (cover letter in Appendix):  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
     Interview or other research process explained in detail:  
     Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Spelling and grammar: Needs Improvement\_\_\_ Satisfactory\_\_\_ Excellent\_\_\_  
 Comments:

\*5 points are deducted if you did not include your rough drafts.

## READING AND CLASS SCHEDULE

Read all assigned text readings and be ready to discuss in class.

**Professor reserves right to make changes as needed.**

DAY	READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
1/9 Tuesday	Q & A on syllabus
<b>1/11 Thursday</b>	Neuman 1
1/16 Tuesday	Neuman 2
<b>1/18 Thursday</b>	Neuman 3
1/23 Tuesday	Neuman 4
	<b>Human Subjects Research Certificate Due</b>
<b>1/25 Thursday</b>	Neuman 4
1/30 Tuesday	Neuman 5
<b>2/1 Thursday</b>	Neuman 5
	<b>Rough Draft Lit Review Due</b>
2/6 Tuesday	Neuman 6
<b>2/8 Thursday</b>	Neuman 6
2/13 Tuesday	Neuman 7
<b>2/15 Thursday</b>	Neuman 7
2/20 Tuesday	Neuman 8
<b>2/22 Thursday</b>	<b>Lab room 291 Cronk 1</b>
2/27 Tuesday	Neuman 9
<b>*3/1 Thursday</b>	<b>Lab room 291 Cronk 1</b>
3/3-3/9 Tuesday	SPRING BREAK
3/13 Tuesday	Neuman 10
<b>3/15 Thursday</b>	<b>Lab room 291 Cronk 2</b>
3/20 Tuesday	Neuman 11
<b>3/22 Thursday</b>	<b>Lab room 291 Cronk 3</b>
3/27 Tuesday	Neuman 12
	<b>Rough Draft of Methods Due</b>
<b>3/29 Thursday</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b> <b>Work on proposal</b>
4/3 Tuesday	Neuman 13
<b>4/5 Thursday</b>	<b>Lab room 291 Cronk 4</b>
4/10 Tuesday	Neuman 14
	sign up for appointment with professor
<b>4/12 Thursday</b>	Meet individually with professor
4/17 Tuesday	Meet individually with professor
<b>4/19 Thursday</b>	Meet individually with professor
4/24 Tuesday	Meet individually with professor
<b>4/26 Thursday</b>	<b>Research Proposal due</b> <b>Attach rough drafts</b>
Finals Day	ALL Late Papers Due

**\*Last day to withdraw without academic penalty is March 2.**