

SOCIOLOGY 207: SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS
FALL 2008, TWTHTF 10-10:50 A.M.
MAXEY 203

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X4952/JANNINMY

MAXEY 227
OFFICE HOURS M 10-11; M 2-3; W 1-2

COURSE DESCRIPTION: SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS IS A COURSE DESIGNED TO INTRODUCE THE STUDENT TO THE PROCEDURES BY WHICH SOCIOLOGISTS GATHER, ANALYZE AND INTERPRET FACTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOCIAL WORLD. TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN THIS COURSE INCLUDE THE PART WHICH SOCIAL RESEARCH PLAYS IN THE LARGER DISCIPLINE OF SOCIOLOGY, THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH, RESEARCH DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF CONCEPTS, PROBABILISTIC SAMPLING, OBSERVATIONAL AND QUALITATIVE DATA-GATHERING PROCEDURES, SURVEY RESEARCH, THE USE OF SECONDARY SOURCE MATERIALS, AND EXPERIMENTATION. REQUIRED OF SOCIOLOGY MAJORS AND MINORS; OPEN TO STUDENTS IN OTHER SOCIAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINES WITH CONSENT OF INSTRUCTOR.

REQUIRED TEXTS (AND YES, THE EDITION # MATTERS, OR YOUR PAGE #S WILL BE OFF!):
AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION STYLE GUIDE, 3RD EDITION. 2007. THIS BOOK IS FOR CONSULTATION ONLY. THERE ISN'T REQUIRED READING, BUT THE CITATION STYLE YOU WILL USE IN YOUR ASSIGNMENTS NEEDS TO BE CONSISTENT WITH WHAT IS PRESENTED IN THIS BOOK.

BABBIE, EARL. 2007. *THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL RESEARCH*, 11TH EDITION. BELMONT, CA: WADSWORTH.

BERG, BRUCE L. 2006. *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES*, 6TH EDITION.

THERE IS ALSO A SOCIOLOGY 207 CLEO SITE, WHICH HOUSES THE SYLLABUS, CALENDAR, AND SOME CLASS RESOURCES. TO ACCESS THE SITE, GO TO [HTTPS://CLEO.WHITMAN.EDU/PORTAL/](https://cleo.whitman.edu/portal/) AND LOGIN USING YOUR EMAIL USERNAME AND PASSWORD. SELECT SOC207 A F08 AND NAVIGATE TO THE INFORMATION YOU WANT.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES: THERE ARE 12 ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS SEMESTER, EACH DUE ON THEIR RESPECTIVE DUE DATES (MOSTLY FRIDAYS) AT 2 P.M. IN PROFESSOR JANNING'S ASSIGNMENT MAILBOX IN THE MAXEY DIVISION OFFICE (PLEASE DO NOT SLIP THEM UNDER MY OFFICE DOOR OR HAND THEM TO ME DURING OR AFTER CLASS – THAT WILL INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THEY GET LOST). EACH ASSIGNMENT IS WORTH 5% OF YOUR FINAL GRADE, FOR A TOTAL OF 60%. DON'T FALL BEHIND ON THESE! UNLESS ARRANGED AND EXCUSED WITH PROFESSOR JANNING AHEAD OF TIME, LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL RESULT IN GRADE PENALTIES, LIKELY ONE-THIRD OF A LETTER GRADE EVERY DAY THE ASSIGNMENT IS LATE. BECAUSE HARD COPIES ARE EXPECTED, EMAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED (NOT EVEN TO SHOW ME THAT YOU GOT IT DONE IN TIME). 😊 YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE YOUR ASSIGNMENT SHOWS UP IN MY MAILBOX. ALWAYS SAVE A COPY IN CASE YOUR ASSIGNMENT MANAGES TO GET LOST IN THE ETHER.

EXAMS: THERE IS A MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAM IN THIS COURSE. THE MIDTERM IS WORTH 20% OF YOUR FINAL COURSE GRADE, AND THE FINAL IS WORTH 20%. SINCE MUCH OF WHAT WE LEARN IN THIS COURSE BUILDS UPON KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THAT WE GAIN DURING THE SEMESTER, THE FINAL WILL NECESSARILY BE CUMULATIVE, BUT WITH A FOCUS ON THE LATTER HALF OF THE SEMESTER. BOTH EXAMS WILL HAVE OBJECTIVE AND ESSAY PORTIONS. REVIEW SESSIONS BEFORE EACH EXAM WILL BE ARRANGED IF STUDENTS DESIRE THIS. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE 2-PART MIDTERM IS SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 AND THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 IN MAXEY 203. THE FINAL EXAM IS SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19 FROM 9-11 A.M. IN MAXEY 203. NO LATE EXAMS ALLOWED.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: AS HAS BEEN THE TRADITION WITH SOCIOLOGY 207, I WILL NOT TAKE ROLE IN THIS CLASS, AND THE REGULARITY OF YOUR ATTENDANCE IS, IN LARGE MEASURE, UP TO YOU. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY OF MUCH OF THE MATERIAL WHICH WE WILL BE COVERING AND THE PACE AT WHICH WE WILL BE MOVING, IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS ATTEND CLASS AS FREQUENTLY AS POSSIBLE. MOREOVER, STUDENTS SHOULD NOTE THAT THEY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE ON ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS FOR ALL MATERIAL COVERED IN CLASS MEETINGS, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WERE PRESENT FOR A PARTICULAR CLASS. PLEASE TAKE ATTENDANCE SERIOUSLY – IF YOU FALL BEHIND, IT WILL ONLY GET WORSE AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES.

SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS (SOC 207) COURSE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS, FALL 2008

DATE	TOPIC	READING(S)	ASSIGNMENT(S) – PLEASE REFER TO ASSIGNMENT PACKET FOR DETAILS
T, 9/2	GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW		
W, 9/3	HUMAN INQUIRY IN SOCIAL SCIENCE	BABBIE CH. 1 PP. 1-28	
TH, 9/4		BERG CH. 1 PP. 1-16	
F, 9/5			#1
T, 9/9	PARADIGMS, THEORY, AND RESEARCH	BABBIE CH. 2 PP. 30-58	
W, 9/10		BERG CH. 2 PP. 19-25	
TH, 9/11			
F, 9/12			#2
T, 9/16	ETHICS AND POLITICS	BABBIE CH. 3 PP. 60-82	
W, 9/17		BERG CH. 3 PP. 53-84	
TH, 9/18			
F, 9/19	NO CLASS		
T, 9/23	RESEARCH DESIGN	BABBIE CH. 4 PP. 86-117; BERG CH. 2 PP. 33-41	#3 (NOTE – THIS IS DUE ON A TUESDAY)
W, 9/24	CONCEPTUALIZATION, OPERATIONALIZATION, & MEASUREMENT	BABBIE CH. 5 PP. 120-150	
TH, 9/25			
F, 9/26			#4
T, 9/30	LITERATURE REVIEWS: READING AND WRITING IN SOCIOLOGY	BABBIE CH. 17 PP. 488-510	
W, 10/1		BERG CH. 3 PP. 25-33 BERG CH. 12 PP. 340-363	
TH, 10/2			
F, 10/3			#5
T, 10/7	INDEXES, SCALES, AND TYPOLOGIES	BABBIE CH. 6 PP. 152-177	
W, 10/8	SAMPLING	BABBIE CH. 7 PP. 179-216	
TH, 10/9		BERG CH. 2 PP. 41-45	
F, 10/10	NO CLASS		#6 (DUE EVEN THOUGH WE DON'T HAVE CLASS)
W, 10/15	SURVEYS	BABBIE CH. 9 PP. 243-282	
TH, 10/16			
F, 10/17			#7
T, 10/21	MIDTERM REVIEW		
W, 10/22	MIDTERM EXAM PART I		
TH, 10/23	MIDTERM EXAM PART II		SELECT SOMEONE FOR A 5-MINUTE INTERVIEW; MAKE APPOINTMENT TO

			DO THIS OVER THE NEXT 6 DAYS. ENSURE YOUR BORROWED DIGITAL RECORDER IS FUNCTIONING PROPERLY.
F, 10/24	NO CLASS		
T, 10/28	INTERVIEWS AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	BABBIE CH. 10 PP. 285-315	
W, 10/29		BERG CH. 4 PP. 89-138; BERG CH. 5 PP. 144-168	
TH, 10/30		BERG CH. 6 PP. 171-215	
F, 10/31			#8
T, 11/4	EXPERIMENTS	BABBIE CH. 8 PP. 220-241	
W, 11/5	UNOBTRUSIVE RESEARCH	BABBIE CH. 11 PP. 318-346	
TH, 11/6		BERG CH. 8 PP. 239-259	
F, 11/7		BERG CH. 11 PP. 303-336	#9
T, 11/11	APPLIED AND EVALUATION RESEARCH	BERG CH. 7 PP. 222-237	
W, 11/12		BABBIE CH. 12 PP. 348-372	
TH, 11/13			
F, 11/14			#10
T, 11/18	QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS	BABBIE CH. 13 PP. 377-401	
W, 11/19		BERG CH. 2 PP. 45-49	
TH, 11/20			
F, 11/21			#11
T, 12/2	QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS	BABBIE CH. 14 PP. 404-428	
W, 12/3			
TH, 12/4		BABBIE CH. 16 PP. 449-486	
F, 12/5			
T, 12/9			
W, 12/10	LOOKING TOWARDS A SENIOR THESIS PROJECT AND BEYOND		#12 (NOTE – THIS IS DUE ON A WEDNESDAY)
TH, 12/11	FINAL EXAM REVIEW		
F, 12/12	FINAL EXAM REVIEW		

FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19TH 9-11 A.M. IN MAXEY 203.

FALL 2008 ASSIGNMENTS: SOCIOLOGY 207/SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS

You are expected to read these assignments carefully, and by the specified dates in the syllabus. If you have questions about any assignment, don't hesitate to call me or send me an email, or stop by during office hours. We cannot afford to spend much class time on questions from assignments, so please use the aforementioned methods first. Some important guidelines:

- All Assignments are due by **2 p.m. on their respective due dates (mostly Fridays), in my assignment mailbox** in the Maxey Division Office.
- No e-mail entries please. Do not slip the assignments under my office door or hand them to me – this will increase the likelihood that your assignment will get lost.
- One-third of one full letter grade will be dropped for every 24 hours that the assignment is late, beginning at 2:30 p.m. on their respective due dates.
- Use only double-spaced, 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman). No Courier font please ☺.
- Desired page lengths are listed on each assignment.
- Please print on both sides of a page or use recycled paper.
- If your write-up is more than one page, you must STAPLE your pages together. This makes your professor far less cranky when she grades your assignments.

I will not accept assignments that do not meet all of these criteria. “Why is Janning being so picky?” you may be asking yourself. Several reasons: to get students in the habit of submitting entries that are up to professional standards, so that when you write your senior theses (or if/when you submit your wonderful research reports to an academic journal for publication) you needn't worry about formatting, due date, and page length issues. You'll already have formed excellent habits that won't make your professors cranky! Plus, it really does make my life much easier.

A note of caution: some of these assignments take longer than others. This means that some weeks will have heavier workloads than others. I strongly encourage you to read through and begin the assignments early. Even with this variation, however, most weeks are relatively similar in terms of reading and assignments.

Assignment # 1: Beginnings Due Friday, September 5

This assignment has two parts. The first – a short paragraph – is meant entirely for me to get to know you as students of social research methods. Briefly tell me something interesting about yourself, why you happen to be taking this wonderful course, and what component of social research methods you think sounds the most intriguing, scary, or bizarre – and why. Be as general or specific as you'd like here.

Next, find and photocopy (or print out or tear out of your own copy) a survey or piece of research reported in some piece of popular media. Possible examples include a reader poll in Entertainment Weekly, a survey in Cosmopolitan or a similar website, or a transcript of a report on NPR. After examining this piece of research, briefly comment on what issues an astute student of social research methods would want to address before taking this research seriously. Incorporate (and cite explicitly) at least one concept from Chapter 1 of Babbie. Include a copy of the piece of research with your assignment.

This assignment should be 1-2 pages, typed and double-spaced.

Assignment # 2: Theory and Causation in Social Research
Due Friday, September 12

First, in your own words, define inductive methods and deductive methods in social research and theory construction. Next, consider a possible relationship between two variables that center around an issue that affects the daily life of Whitman students. Make it interesting (and perhaps not-so-obvious). Describe how you might examine that relationship through both deductive and inductive methods (this is not saying you should specify your research tool – such as a survey or interview – it is saying you should elaborate on the process of creating and refining a research question deductively or inductively). In your write-up, make reference to and thoughtfully integrate *at least two* of the following concepts from the reading (and please underline these terms in your write-up): the relationship between theory and research; variable(s); operationalization; operational definition; hypothesis.

Do not exceed 2 double-spaced pages in your write-up. You will be working with the topic you choose in future assignments, so be careful to choose one that interest you.

Assignment # 3: Ethics
Due Tuesday, September 23

This assignment has two halves: one graded with letter grades; one graded credit/no credit

Visit the website of the American Sociological Association (<http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>) (can also be found by going to [asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org), clicking on “Ethics,” and then downloading the whole document) and read the code of ethics [note – this is about 28 pages, so plan accordingly]. Identify two topics addressed in the code and summarize the content. Suggest hypothetical research situations for which these two topics would be most useful. Refer to specific section numbers in your write-up. This portion of the assignment should be about 1-2 pages.

Read the Whitman College Institutional Review Board’s webpage (<http://www.whitman.edu/content/dean-of-faculty/irb>). Click on “download IRB forms as an editable Word document.” Save this form, and fill it out as a hypothetical research project using either the inductive or deductive project you wrote about in Assignment #2. It’s okay if you can’t answer all the questions, and obviously some of them will be left blank (faculty adviser, for example). This portion of the assignment will be evaluated based on a credit/no credit basis – turn it in filled out as much as possible and you’ll get credit.

Assignment # 4: Operationalization, Reliability & Validity
Due Friday, September 26

This assignment is intended to provide you with the opportunity to convincingly demonstrate to me that you know all that there is to know about the important process of operationalizing sociological concepts, and that you understand and are able to effectively apply the concepts of reliability and validity to this process. To accomplish this, it will be necessary for you to do the following:

1. List three variables *BESIDES* GPA (grade point average) that relate generally to student life at Whitman College and label their level of measurement – one nominal level; one ordinal level; one interval or ratio level.
2. For each of these three variables, provide clear *conceptual* definitions of the concepts to which they refer. In other words, work backwards – what are the fuzzy and imprecise definitions (Babbie calls this conceptualization or nominal definitions on p. 129) of the concepts that your variables are measuring?
3. Next, state an *operational* definition and specific way you'll be able to actually observe and/or measure each of these three concepts.
4. For each of these variables, indicate what potential units of analysis would be most useful if you were to actually measure the concepts. It's okay if the unit of analysis is the same for all three – just state it as such.
5. Consider GPA as a variable. Grade Point Average (GPA) is often assumed to measure the intelligence of a student relative to that of other students. But we, as astute social researchers, can justifiably call this assumption into question, being cautious not to let our own biases sway our reactions, that is. Describe at least two reasons why GPA may be UNreliable AND INvalid as a measure of the intelligence of college students. Make sure your reasons regarding reliability address the consistency or repeatability of the elements comprising GPA and your reasons regarding validity address the extent to which GPA measures intelligence.

You should be able to do this assignment in two pages or less. Bullet points are just fine.

Assignment # 5: Literature Review
Due Friday, October 3

Careful – this assignment will take more time than previous ones, and requires library research!

In Assignment #2 you proposed a relationship between two variables. Any conscientious and well-trained social researcher who is about to embark upon the study of a topic in the social sciences will begin his/her investigation by conducting a relatively thorough “review of the literature” relevant to that topic. This means that the researcher will become aware of and read as much as possible of what other social scientists working in the same area have theorized and/or discovered in their own investigations. This aspect of social research is extremely important, as it helps the researcher to become generally familiar with the topic in question, and to shape and guide his/her investigation in interesting and potentially fruitful directions.

In this assignment, then, I would like you to become familiar with this important element of the social research process, by conducting a review of the literature for the topic that you chose in Assignment #2. This will entail the following:

1. Using the library resources discussed in class, become as aware as possible of the general literature that presently exists relating to your topic.
2. From this literature, select three journal articles and one book or book chapter which you feel to be particularly relevant to your general topic, and/or to the specific way in which you have chosen to approach that topic in your causal hypothesis. Be sure these sources are currently available at Penrose Library.
3. In your write-up, restate the relationship you are investigating. Then, list the sources you found, using correct citation format as discussed in the ASA Style Guide.
4. After each source, indicate exactly how and where you located the source. Abstracts alone are not sufficient as sources – you must view the actual journal article, book, or chapter.
5. Following this, for each of the four sources, present a brief summary of what the source says about your topic (do not just use the abstract).
6. In a final paragraph, include a discussion that summarizes and integrates the major points which you found to be true in your investigation of the literature, and/or relates the findings from your review in some way back to the variable relationship which you developed back in Assignment #2.

This is a pseudo-literature review (most, as you undoubtedly noticed in your search for relevant literature, do not contain the citations until the end, and none discuss how and where the authors located the sources ☺).

If you really wish to switch your topic for this literature review, please finalize this with Professor Janning by Wednesday, October 1 at class time.

Length: 3-5 pages.

Assignment # 6: Composite Measures & Sample Selection
Due Friday, October 10

Part I (Composite Measures): Pick one of the three Whitman College student life variables you discussed in Assignment #4. Restate this variable, along with its clear conceptual definition. Then, use any of the procedures for constructing indexes or scales discussed in Chapter 6 of the Babbie text – e.g., the additive index, the Likert scale, the semantic differential, the Bogardus social distance scale, the Thurstone scale, the Guttman scale, etc. – to provide a convincing and creative operationalization of this concept. Be sure to include all of the information necessary to ensure a complete and correct operational definition of the variable in question. If you have to slightly adjust one of the variables you propose to make it an effective index or scale variable, feel free (just note that you've done this).

Part II (Sampling): Refer again to your individual Assignment #2. Restate the relationship explored therein in the form of a research question. Answer the following questions in regards to your proposed relationship:

1. To what general population do you ultimately wish to be able to generalize the results of your study (if you were to investigate the relationship in a study)?
2. What is the working population at Whitman College, or in the Walla Walla area, which seems to successfully lend itself to the empirical test of your hypothesis, and why is this an appropriate working population?
3. How large should your sample be, and why?
4. Devise and describe a sampling methodology which you feel would allow you to generate a representative sample of the size specified above from your population. Put simply, what would your sample look like and why?
5. Identify and briefly discuss any factors of either a biased or random nature which might somehow threaten the overall representativeness of each person's sample, and discuss what, if anything, you could do in the sampling design to eliminate, control for, or minimize these factors.

This assignment should be about 1 ½ pages long, give or take a half a page.

Assignment # 7: Surveys

Due Friday, October 17

Come up with two bivariate causal hypotheses that are relevant to you, and that are logical. For each hypothesis, indicate one control variable [don't use the same control variable for each if you can help it]. The hypotheses should be related conceptually somehow – either by using the same variable in each hypothesis, by having them build on each other, or some other logical connection (a connection that I can discern without needing an explanation). Here's an example:

Hypothesis 1:

College students who major in social sciences are more likely to hold liberal political values than college students who major in physical or biological sciences.

Independent variable: college major

Dependent variable: likelihood of holding liberal political values

Control variable: Attending a private liberal arts college [this will be held constant for the entire sample; public university students will not be part of this research]

Hypothesis 2:

Female college students are more likely to take classes in the social sciences than are male college students.

Independent variable: gender of student

Dependent variable: likelihood of taking classes in social sciences

Control variable: Age of student [this will be held constant for the entire sample; only students of a certain age will be included in the research]

Produce and hand in a polished and professional-looking one-page survey instrument, which would allow you (were I to actually require you to administer it and analyze the resulting data) to test the two hypotheses you presented. Your survey instrument must operationalize all of the variables that are contained in your hypotheses – independent, dependent, and control.

The survey must be designed as a written questionnaire. It should be relatively short, carefully constructed, methodologically flawless, reflecting the various issues and concerns relating to social survey analysis which have been discussed in class and in the Babbie text. Be sure to include a title and any necessary contact or confidentiality information that you think would be appropriate to include.

Please turn in:

1. A copy of your survey instrument (in final, ready to administer form).
2. A brief typed statement that contains all of the information that is presented in the example in the box above.

Assignment # 8: Interviews and Participant Observation

Due Friday, October 31

Part I (Interviews): Sociology students are reputed to rank especially high in interpersonal competence, and it is the purpose of this assignment to provide you with the opportunity to put this desirable quality to good use – and to get class credit for it. Please do the following:

1. Select an individual (preferably someone whom you don't really know all that well, and necessarily someone not taking sociology 207) who is willing to be interviewed by you sometime between October 23 and 30.
2. Check out a digital recorder with Professor Janning. You will be allowed to have this recorder for 2 days. There are not enough for everyone in the class, so there will be grade penalties if you do not return your recorder for other students to use.
3. In a digitally-recorded interview of approximately 5 minutes duration, find out something of sociological relevance relating to this person's early family background and experiences. Be sure the questions are open-ended and qualitative in nature. **Digital recorders are available to check out with Professor Janning – be sure to test them and check the batteries.**
4. Turn in a CD-Rom that contains the recorded 5-minute interview you conducted between October 23-30. You do not need to write anything to accompany this, but do label the CD with your name and the date of the interview. Do not include the name of the person you interviewed. **NO WRITTEN COMPONENT ASSOCIATED WITH THIS HALF OF THE ASSIGNMENT.**

If you need assistance with the technical portion of this assignment, you have several options: the Multimedia Lab, Professor Janning, or the Sociology Department student assistant (name TBA).

Whom you choose to interview, what you choose to ask this person, and how you conduct your interview is pretty much up to you. However, please note my expectation that your interview will clearly reflect the basic principles of in-depth, relatively unstructured ethical interviewing discussed in class and in the readings. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE QUALITY AND WORKABILITY OF THE CD YOU TURN IN, AND IT MUST BE PLAYABLE ON A PC.** If I can't hear your interview, you won't get credit for this half of the assignment. You are allowed one "free" chance to fix it if there are problems.

Part II (Participant Observation): For this assignment you are required to devise and carry out a technically flawless and sociologically relevant observation study. What you observe, and how you observe it, are matters of individual choice. However, please note that, regardless of the general focus of and specific methodology employed by any particular student, I will be most concerned to see whether these conform to the basic principles of observational research, as these principles have been discussed in class and assigned readings. If you wish to observe phenomena commonly associated with Halloween, which happens to fall on Friday of this week, let me know – we can negotiate a one day extension on your report (it can be due Saturday at 2 p.m. instead of Friday, and could be emailed as an exception). Please let me know at the beginning of this week if you would like to do this.

Submit a research report which addresses the following questions:

1. What were the general goals or objectives of your observational study – i.e., what were you observing and why?
2. What was the specific research hypothesis or research question that your study sought to investigate?
3. What specific observational procedures did you use, and why did you choose them?
4. What results did you obtain? Did these results support, or fail to support, your hypothesis? Or, did the results serve to adequately answer your research question?
5. What are the general implications – either/both scientific and/or practical – of your results?

Your report should be 2-3 double-spaced typed pages.

Assignment # 9: Unobtrusive Data: Secondary Data Analysis

Due Friday, November 7

This is a group assignment – you must work with one or two other people and turn this in collectively.

Members of the U.S. Census Bureau have done lots of research using secondary data analysis. These people gather data, make tables of descriptive statistics, and produce reports that describe those statistics (and sometimes explain relationships between variables, but not usually) in a concise and visually pleasing way. Be sure you understand the difference between description and explanation in social research before you do this portion of the assignment (see Babbie, chapter 4 pp. 87-90).

Do a search on the U.S. Census Bureau website (www.census.gov) for a PDF Publication (this option is located on the home page). You'll need to perform a series of clicks to get to an actual single document. Look over the first few pages of the document and answer the following questions:

1. What is the general topic of this report (and don't just give the title)?
2. Locate one table or chart that is presented in the first few pages of the report, and name the variable(s) it describes. What is the table or chart describing, essentially?
3. Propose one explanatory relationship between two variables that are presented descriptively in the report, either in text or table/chart format. Why do you think these two variables might be related to each other?

Print out the PDF report document (if it is really long, only print the first 8 pages, to save paper), and include it with the typed group responses to the questions. Group members must sign their names. Turn in one response set per group – about 1 page double-spaced – along with the ≈8-page document.

Assignment # 10: Evaluation and Applied Research

Due Friday, November 14

Will be done in class on Thursday, November 13 and Friday, November 14. Forthcoming.

Assignment # 11: Qualitative Data Analysis

Due Friday, November 21

Transcribe the interview word-for-word that you conducted in October. Be sure to allow at least a half hour to do this. Use NVivo to analyze themes in the interview. Include a printout of the interview transcript, any printouts of NVivo analyses you do, and a half-page narrative analyzing the interview data based on the NVivo analyses.

Assignment #12: Presentation of Data

Due Wednesday, December 10 (note that this is due on a WEDNESDAY at 2 p.m.)

Part I:

Open the GSS SPSS file in Maxey Computer Lab (instructions forthcoming). Using SPSS, select 3 variables that you are interested in. They do not have to be related to each other. Run frequencies for each variable. Interpret the results in one or two sentences. Identify the level of measurement for each variable based on the frequency tables. Include a printout of the frequency tables with your write-up.

Part II:

Presented below are some hypothetical data representing 50 people: (IV) gender (M=male, F=female) and (DV) whether they attended church last week (Y=yes, N=no).

MN	FN	FY	MN	MY	FN	FY	FY	MN	MY
MY	FY	MN	MY	FY	FN	MN	MN	FN	FY
MN	FY	MN	MY	FY	FY	MN	MN	FY	MN
FY	MN	MY	FY	FN	FY	MY	FY	MN	MN
FY	FY	MN	FN	MN	FY	MN	FY	FY	MN

Construct the bivariate percentage table appropriate for examining the relationship between gender and church attendance. Present the table using Microsoft Word or Excel. See Professor Janning if you need help doing this.

Interpret the table in 2-3 sentences.

Hand in both parts of your assignment stapled together. Shouldn't be more than a page or so, plus the GSS output.