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**Catalog Description:** SOCL 302 Survey design and analysis, scaling techniques, methods of analyzing data with emphasis on hypothesis testing, statistical inference and tests of relationship.

- **Chambliss, D.F. & R.K. Schutt. 2016. Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation. Sage Publications 5<sup>th</sup> edition ONLY**
- **This course will also use academic articles which can be accessed online through blackboard.**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the uses and purpose of social science research;
- Design methodological instruments;
- Carry out the steps of the social science research process;
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills through issues, ideas, and artifacts.

### Departmental Objectives Met in this Course:

- Identify primary sociological research methods
- Describe the logic of scientific reasoning
- Describe the application of ethical principles in research
- Apply appropriate methodology in an assigned project.
- Understand the logic of scientific reasoning

### Course Content:

Research is a fun, exciting process. Or, at least it is to me! There is just something about having a question or a problem and doing the necessary work to find insight and solutions. In this course, we will discuss the research process from beginning to end. We will undertake figuring out how to come up with a research question—there are so many potential questions how do I decide? We will also cover how to take your question to actually measuring the issue. This course provides your options for conducting research including surveys, content analysis, evaluation research and participatory action research. Finally, we will work through what to do with all the data once you have collected it and how to properly assemble a research report.

This course is also hands on. Thus, you will not only study the theory, but construct some research instruments and test them. You will gain experience in survey construction, interview facilitation, content analysis and observation.

This is meant to be an application of theory and also the building of those important skill sets that are necessary in the job force. Of all your sociological core, research methods has the most potential in terms of building marketable skills. Engage with each activity in that way and you will gain a tremendous amount of applicable experience.

### Course Organization and Approach:

Sociology 302 uses a **participatory, learner-centered, adult education** approach. This approach recognizes that **YOU are responsible** for your own learning. The instructor can only provide **opportunities** to learn, but cannot force you to learn. Course material is presented in **substantive readings** from the text; **structured activities**; **lecture**; and **class discussions**. You are expected to work hard in this course; for every hour of class time, you should spend at least **two to three hours** outside of class preparing by doing readings, assignments, studying for exams, and thinking about the course material.

*You are expected to take **responsibility** for the success of the course*, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as **interest, motivation, creativity, and initiative** are important elements in evaluating your performance in the course and assigning a grade.

This class will be a place for sharing ideas and voicing opinions. Intelligent argument and polite disagreement is welcome. It is important each student is respectful of an individual's point of view. I will not tolerate personal attacks on an individual due to their argument.

**Description of Major Assignment(s)/Project(s):**

**Exams (3 @ 100 pts each):** Exams will consist of multiple choices, T/F, short answer and essay. Study guides will be provided. All exams are timed.

**Discussion Questions (10 Sets @ 10 Points Each):** For each set of readings I will provide questions in which you must respond. More information will be on Blackboard.

**Research Applications (3 @ 100 points each):** This semester you will be tasked with completing 3 research/application activities. Details will follow on blackboard. Rather than doing a single research proposal, we will break the proposal down throughout the semester.

**Assessment of Student Learning:**

Activity	Points Possible	Approx. Percent of Total Grade
Exams	300	43%
Research Activities	300	43%
Group Questions	100	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>100%</b>

Points Needed	Percent	Letter Grade
630-700	90%-100%	A
560-629.5	80%-89%	B
490-559.5	70%-79%	C
420-489.5	60%-69%	D
419.5 and below	59% and below	F

**Instructor Policies:**

**How do Address me:** It is my request that you address me in emails and calls as Dr. Lovell.

**Office Hours:** Please email me to schedule a time to discuss the course. We may do so via zoom or telephone. In your email, please include the issue or content you'd like to talk about. I will also work from my Bowling Green and Elizabethtown office. I will let you know in announcements which days I will be there.

**Academic Honesty:** You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the Western Kentucky University College Catalogue (page 42). You are expected to do your **own work** in this course. Plagiarism, fraud and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated. I will fail you on the assignment and depending on the seriousness of the offense may report you to your department. Do not test me on this. I have failed students in the past and will continue to do so for academic dishonesty.

IT IS **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES. Make sure you know what constitutes plagiarism and cheating **BEFORE** turning in any assignments. Once you turn in an assignment, you are representing it as your own work. If you are concerned about your knowledge of plagiarism, please see me and I will give you a handout with examples of plagiarism. Just a note, copying and pasting directly from a website is plagiarism. Copying and pasting and changing only a few words is still plagiarism. Do not copy from Wikipedia. It is obvious.

**Make-up and Late Work:** If you are late turning in an assignment you will receive a 10% reduction in grade for every day you are late until there are no more points.

**Extra Credit:** Extra Credit is at my discretion. The overall enthusiasm, preparedness and attitude of the class will depend on how many extra credit opportunities I provide. I do not grade any extra credit assignments until all regular course activities are complete and submitted.

**Email:** I will use university email to contact you. **You must access and check this account regularly.**

**FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act):** Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "eligible student," and all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student. Therefore, I am unable to disclose information about grades, attendance, class schedule, etc. to parents, spouses and other interested parties. If you would like to give these rights to your parents or spouse you need to file a waiver with Western Kentucky University. Until I have received such waiver, please discourage other parties from contacting me regarding your status as my student.

**WKU Statement on COVID-19:** All students are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine. In accordance with WKU policy, all students must call the WKU COVID-19 Assistance Line at 270-745-2019 within 4 hours of testing positive for COVID-19 or being identified as a close contact to someone who has tested positive. The COVID Assistance Line is available to answer questions regarding any COVID-19 related issue. This guidance is subject to change based on requirements set forth by federal, state, and local public health entities. Please refer to the Healthy on the Hill website for the most current information. [www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill](http://www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill).

**ADA Accommodation:** In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone

number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

**Title IX/Discrimination & Harassment Statement:** Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) (#0.070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Executive Director, Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, 270-745-6867 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's [Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.

### Some Comments on Critical Thinking:

It is my intent that the lectures, discussions, and activities will enhance your critical thinking skills. You might ask, "What is critical thinking? Everyone keeps saying we are building critical thinking skills, but what does that actually mean?" Critical thinking can mean a variety of things for different professors. For me, critical thinking involves the following: applying, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information "generated from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or community. Critical thinking is based on clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, sound evidence, good reasoning, depth, breadth, and fairness" (National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking).

Further, I really like this paragraph from the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking:

*"Critical thinking is self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. People who think critically consistently attempt to live rationally, reasonably, empathically. They are keenly aware of the inherently flawed nature of human thinking when left unchecked. They strive to diminish the power of their egocentric and sociocentric tendencies. They use the intellectual tools that critical thinking offers – concepts and principles that enable them to analyze, assess, and improve thinking. They work diligently to develop the intellectual virtues of intellectual integrity, intellectual humility, intellectual civility, intellectual empathy, intellectual sense of justice and confidence in reason. **They realize that no matter how skilled they are as thinkers, they can always improve their reasoning abilities and they will at times fall prey to mistakes in reasoning, human irrationality, prejudices, biases, distortions, uncritically accepted social rules and taboos, self-interest, and vested interest.** They strive to improve the world in whatever ways they can and contribute to a more rational, civilized society. At the same time, they recognize the complexities often*

*inherent in doing so. **They avoid thinking simplistically about complicated issues and strive to appropriately consider the rights and needs of relevant others. They recognize the complexities in developing as thinkers, and commit themselves to life-long practice toward self-improvement.** They embody the Socratic principle: The unexamined life is not worth living , because they realize that many unexamined lives together result in an uncritical, unjust, dangerous world.*

*—Linda Elder, National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking*

It is my hope that in asking you to carry out the steps of the research process you are enhancing your ability to apply, synthesize or evaluate the information in the lessons and create something new from them.