PA 585: Survey Research Ethics

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Credits: 2 hours
Location: 100 2SH

Course Overview and Objectives: The goals of this course are to understand the basic tenets of social science research and to explore the special challenges faced by researchers collecting or analyzing survey data.

Required Texts: None

Assignments: There are two assignments due during the course. These assignments are designed for you to (1) demonstrate your understanding and mastery of the concepts discussed in class; (2) apply these concepts; and (3) prompt your discussion and questions.

Leading Class Discussion: Each class will be divided so that some portion of the class is dedicated to lecture and some portion is dedicated to class discussion. Individuals will be assigned to lead the discussion each week. For the week to which you are assigned, you will be responsible for generating discussion questions relevant to the assigned readings, distributing these questions to other class members, and initiating and facilitating class discussion of these questions. The goal of this assignment is NOT for you to summarize the readings for the week for the rest of the class. Everyone should complete the assigned readings on their own before class.

Final Paper and Presentation: A final paper is due on the last day of class. You will also be asked to do brief presentation based on this paper (about 20 minutes) on the last day of class. In this paper, you should focus on one example of survey research (this can come from the examples we talk about in class or from other published literature). Highlight the ethical issues that are relevant to the use of survey research and discuss whether the research violated any ethical guidelines. Finally, could anything be done to revise the research design to address any ethical violations? (10-15 pages; double-spaced; 10-12 point font; 1 inch margins).

Course Policies:

Deadlines: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Students will lose 10% credit for each day that an assignment is late. In addition, do the assigned readings before they are discussed in class.

Extensions for assignments: Extensions for assignments are at the discretion of the instructors and should be requested before the deadline. Emergencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have a question about an extension, please talk to the instructor.
**Plagiarism or cheating:** Don’t do it. It’s not worth it. Guidelines regarding academic integrity at UIC are available online <http://www.uic.edu/depts/sja/integrit.htm>, and sanctions for academic dishonesty are also available <http://www.uic.edu/depts/sja/chpt3.htm#3>. Please don’t put us in a position where we need to learn more about these policies.

**Attendance:** Fifteen points will be assigned based on attendance and participation. If you must miss a class, please let the instructors know in advance. Class attendance is strongly encouraged. Active involvement in class is also expected. If your final grade is on the border, a subjective assessment of your class participation may be used to make final adjustments.

**Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent of Total Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leading Class Discussion</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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**Schedule and Reading Assignments**

**Week 1: August 25 - Human Subjects Research Ethics**

**Readings:**

Readings from social science methods books (handout)

Materials available via UIC’s Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
45 CFR 46 - Protection of Human Subjects
OHRP IRB Guidebook
Belmont Report

**Week 2: September 1 - Survey Standards (AAPOR and CASRO), disclosure of information, response rates and example: Frank Luntz**

**Readings:**

AAPOR Standards (available at www.aapor.org)
Week 3: September 8 - Falsification issues and Peterson trial

Readings:


Best practices for detecting and preventing falsification (available at www.aapor.org).

Week 4: September 15 - Linking research and teaching through the use of student interviewers; ethics and statistical analysis; HIPPA regulations and survey researchers

Reading:


HIPAA Regulations - available via UIC’s Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research

Week 5: September 22 - Media Reporting and Ethical Implications

Readings:


"20 Questions a Journalist Should Ask About Poll Results" and FAQs from the National Council on Public Polls (www.ncpp.org)

"What Is a Survey?", and "What is a Margin of Error?" by the American Statistical Association (www.amstat.org)

AP Stylebook entry on polls and surveys (www.aapor.org)

Week 6: September 29 - Push Polls and Telemarketing

Readings:

AAPOR Statements regarding push polls (available at www.aapor.org)


Week 7: October 6: No lecture, but required attendance at Eleanor Singer’s lecture

Readings:


Week 8: October 13 –Summing Up and Presentations