



SOCI 2911 WDE
FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
Winter 2023

Lecture: TTh 8:30AM-10:00AM

Format: Zoom

Instructor: TBD

Office hours: After lecture and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SOCI 2911 is a survey of the common types of methods sociologists use to collect and analyze empirical data. For most of you, university learning has mainly consisted of reading scholarly books and papers without giving much consideration to how that scholarship was created in the first place. This course is about how social scientists apply principles of the scientific method to systematically gather and analyze data that, in turn, are used to evaluate research questions and draw conclusions about social problems and social phenomena. We will explore many of the *how to* steps of the research process from conceptualization and research design to data analysis and presentation of findings. We will begin by learning about the relationship between social theory and research methods. Next, we will explore research design skills, ranging from developing research questions and devising measurement categories to sampling techniques.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Learn key concepts and approaches in social research methods to complete tests;
- ❖ Apply key concepts to class activities and major assignments;
- ❖ Contribute to an active learning environment through participation;
- ❖ Learn the process of developing a professional research proposal.

COURSE READINGS

The following textbook is available from the LU bookstore:

- ❖ Neuman, W. Lawrence and Karen L. Robson. 2018. *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Fourth Canadian Edition. Toronto: Pearson Canada
- ❖ Additional readings will be uploaded to D2L

Attendance is optional. You should complete the required readings prior to class to maximize the benefit of lecture.

* Course schedule is subject to change as necessary. Please note that this is an abridged version of the syllabus and will not reflect changes to the schedule that occur as needed during the semester. Please refer to the syllabus posted to D2L for the most up-to-date version.



COURSE EVALUATION AND SUMMARY OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments will be discussed in class and you will have the opportunity to ask questions about expectations.

Description	Final Submission Date	Weight
Test 1	TBA	25%
Assignment 1	TBA	25%
Test 2	TBA	25%
Assignment 2	TBA	25%

Tests are comprehensive and include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Test questions are designed to evaluate your ability to apply key concepts.

Assignments teach students to evaluate empirical research and write an original research proposal. Assignment 1 is a methodological review of an empirical research article. Assignment 2 is a “significant aims” page, a concise 1-2 page summary of the purpose, significance, and design of a proposed study including ethical considerations. Precise guidelines for both assignments will be provided.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Grades: Grade inquiries must be in person during office hours or by appointment.

Plagiarism: All work must be completed with academic integrity. Please review the Lakehead University policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty; it can be accessed from the LU homepage or the course information module of the course website. Please discuss with me any questions or concerns about this policy prior to handing in assignments or taking the tests.

Ignorance of LU policy will not be accepted as an excuse if violations occur.

Copyright compliance: I understand and agree that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials to which I am given access in this course (the course materials), whether they consist of text, still or kinetic images, or sound, whether they are in digital or hard copy formats, and in whatever media they are offered, are protected in their entirety by copyright, and that to comply with this copyright and the law.

1. I may access and download the course materials only for my own personal and non-commercial use for this course; and
2. I am not permitted to download, copy, store (in any medium), forward or share, transmit, broadcast, show, post or play in public, adapt, or change in any way any text, image, or sound component of the course materials for any other purpose whatsoever except as expressly authorized, and only to the extent



authorized, in writing, by the course instructor. I further understand and agree that, if I infringe the copyright of the course materials in any way, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct—Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviors that support the University's academic values.

Exam/assignment integrity

Plagiarism: All work must be completed with academic integrity. Please review the LU policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty, accessible from the LU homepage or the course information folder on the website. Please come to me with any questions or concerns about this policy prior to handing in assignments or taking the tests. I understand and agree that:

1. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments in this course without the assistance of anyone else.
2. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.
3. I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct—Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviors that support the University's academic values.

Accommodations: LU is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. This commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as early as possible.

Please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

Mental Health Resources: As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, **Student Health and Wellness** is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at: lakeheadu.ca/shw

Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.



WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1: Welcome!

Course introductions and *BSR* Ch. 1, "Doing Social Research"

Week 2: Theory and Methodology

BSR Ch. 2, "Theory and Social Research"

Week 3: Ethical Considerations

BSR Ch. 3, "Ethics in Social Research"

Week 4: Research Design

BSR Ch. 5, "Designing a Study"

Week 5: Measurement Considerations

BSR Ch. 6, "Qualitative and Quantitative Measurement"

Week 6: Reading Week

No class, no assigned readings

Week 7: Test 1

Test review; Test 1

Week 8: Sampling Strategies

BSR Ch. 7, "Qualitative and Quantitative Sampling"

Week 9: Surveys and Questionnaires

BSR Ch. 8, "Survey Research"

Week 10: Secondary Analysis

BSR Ch. 10, "Nonreactive Research and Secondary Analysis"

Week 11: Interviewing Strategies

BSR Ch. 12, "Interviewing"; Assignment 1 due

Week 12: Ethnography

BSR Ch. 13, "Field Research"

Week 13: Coding Data and Test 2

BSR Ch. 15, "Analysis of Qualitative Data" and Test 2

Week 14: Course Conclusion

Assign 2 discussion