

Spring 2005

SOCIOLOGY 112

SAMPLE SURVEYS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

**Thursday 4:00-6:20 pm
CIT 265**

Professor David Lindstrom, Instructor
206 Maxcy Hall, ext. 3-3765
Office Hours: Friday, 3:00-5:00
TA: TBA

Course Objectives

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of survey research, and is designed to provide students with the basic skills and experience needed to design, direct, and evaluate sample survey research. Students will learn about questionnaire design and formatting; sample design and selection; interviewing techniques; data base design and data entry; and elementary data analysis and report preparation. These objectives will be achieved through student involvement in the design and execution of a sample survey of the Brown student population. Students will work in groups on questionnaire design and construction, and data entry; and individually on interviewing, data analysis, and research write-up.

Sample surveys are widely used in the social and biomedical sciences, although interest in the theory and methods of survey research and the use of survey generated data is most prevalent in Sociology. This course will address three fundamental issues in sample survey design: validity, reliability, and representativeness: Do questions measure what they are purported to measure, do related questions elicit consistent results, and can we confidently make inferences from our sample to our population of interest. These issues are relevant not only to survey research but to other methods of observational and experimental research. In addition to developing research skills this course will enhance students' analytical skills and prepare them for conducting professional interviews and presentations.

Student Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on class participation (5%), completion of individual assignments within group sections (5%), a mid-term exam (25%), five written reports (60%), and a class presentation (5%).

Texts

The following three texts are available at the Brown Bookstore and are also on reserve at the Rockefeller Library.

Babbie, Earl R. 1990. *Survey Research Methods*, 2nd Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Babbie, Earl R. 1995. *Adventures in Social Research: Data Analysis Using SPSS for Windows*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Peterson, Robert A. 2000. *Constructing Effective Questionnaires*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

The lectures and assignments will draw heavily from the Babbie and Peterson texts. It is recommended that you purchase these texts. Selected readings will be taken from Czaja et al. and Tourangeau et al., which are listed below. These two texts are on reserve at the Rockefeller Library.

Czaja, Ronald and Johnny Blair. 1996. *Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Tourangeau, Roger, Lance J. Rips, and Kenneth Rasinski. 2000. *The Psychology of Survey Response*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
1	1/27	Introduction to Survey Research <i>Distribute Assignment 1</i>	Babbie, Chs. 1-3
2	2/3	Steps in Survey Research LAB: <u>Interview Clients</u>	Czaja and Blair, Chs. 2-3 Peterson, Chs. 1-2
3	2/10	Survey Design QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION LAB: <u>Determining Information Needs</u> <i>Assignment 1 Due</i>	Babbie, Chs. 4 and 7 Czaja and Blair, Ch. 5
4	2/17	Constructing Questions QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION LAB: <u>Define Questions</u> <i>Distribute Assignment 2</i>	Peterson, Chs. 3-6; Babbie, Ch. 8 Tourangeau et al., Ch. 8
5	2/24	General Interviewing Techniques QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION LAB: <u>Finalize Questions</u> <i>Assignment 2 Due</i> <i>Draft Questionnaires Due Monday, February 28</i>	Babbie, Ch. 10 Tourangeau et al., Ch. 9

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
6	3/3	Introduction to Sampling PRETEST LAB: <u>Discuss Questionnaire</u> <i>Distribute Draft Questionnaire for Pretest</i> <i>Distribute Assignment 3</i>	Babbie, Chs. 5 and 11
7	3/10	More on Sampling PRETEST LAB: <u>Discuss Pretest</u>	Babbie, Ch. 6
8	3/17	Research Ethics INTERVIEWING LAB: <u>SPSS Training</u> <i>Distribute Final Questionnaire</i> <i>Assignment 3 Due</i>	Babbie, Ch. 19 Babbie and Halley, Chs. 1-8
9	3/24	MID-TERM EXAM INTERVIEWING LAB: <u>SPSS Training</u>	Babbie and Halley, Chs. 9-10
10	3/31	SPRING RECESS	
11	4/7	Analysis of Survey Data INTERVIEWING / DATA ENTRY LAB: <u>SPSS / Entering Data</u> <i>Distribute Assignment 4</i>	Babbie, Chs. 13-14, 16-17 Babbie and Halley, Chs. 11-13
12	4/14	Analysis of Survey Data DATA ENTRY LAB: <u>SPSS / Data Analysis / Graphics</u> <i>Distribute Assignment 5 – Final Report</i> <i>Assignment 4 Due</i>	Babbie, Ch. 18 Babbie and Halley, Chs. 14-16
13	4/21	Alternative Methods of Data Collection DATA ANALYSIS LAB: <u>Preparation of Group Reports</u>	Tourangeau et al., Ch. 10
14	4/28	Practice Class Presentations REPORT PREPARATION	
15	5/5	Presentation of Results to Client REPORT PREPARATION	
16	5/19	<i>Assignment 5 - Final Report Due</i> – Maxcy Hall, Room 101	