

## SOC 1401 Social Research Spring 2023 Course Syllabus

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### Course Information

Credit Hours: 3	Instructor: Professor Yumei Li
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	Office: Zone 3, 317B
	Tel (Main Office): 28-6259-6919
	Office hours: M, T, and Th 11:00 am-13:50 pm, 4:30 pm-5:00 pm (and other times by appointment)
Room: 4-204	Prerequisites: None

### Required Texts:

Course pack prepared by the instructor.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We as humans have always wondered why and how our social world operates in particular ways. You might have asked yourself: How do other students choose their majors and minors? Why do engineering classes attract more men than women? How do students benefit from a college education?

This class will provide students with useful tools to explore such questions about the social world. In an interactive classroom learning environment, students will be introduced to basic empirical research methods typically used in the social sciences. Students will learn the relationship between research and theory and evaluate a variety of case studies in social sciences. Students will design and implement a research project addressing a challenge currently encountered in the world of practice. Broadly, this class will: (1) introduce students to ideas about what social science is and the various methods used to study it; (2) guide students to evaluate specific case studies in social sciences and understand the purpose of social research; (3) direct students in using social research methods to examine real-world social problems; (4) help students develop critical thinking, public presentation, and team-work skills.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) work as a team to examine the social world;
- 2) understand different research paradigms and social theories;
- 3) evaluate and critique social research;
- 4) develop a research question and plan for development;
- 5) learn about ways to collect and analyze data;
- 6) give a public presentation on a social issue or question;
- 7) compose qualitative research projects following proper style guides.

### CLASS ASSESSMENT and GRADING

There are no exams or quizzes in this course. This course is project-based and will require a significant commitment of your time. This course includes a combination of readings, writings, in-class discussions, and hands-on experiences. The following three components are

vital to the successful completion of this course, and they figure into assessments and grades. Details of the assignments will be uploaded to the Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENT 1 Class Participation and Routine Writing*	This will include attendance, in-class activities, and homework. This will be graded holistically.	30%
ASSIGNMENT 2 Project Presentation	A paper presentation on students' final research projects.	10%
ASSIGNMENT 3 Final Research Paper	A qualitative research paper that could be a senior thesis or similar.	60%
Total		100%
*Your participation is key to success in this class. After two unexcused absences, students will lose 3 points or half a letter grade from their final grade. Students with five absences and above will fail the course.		

#### Tentative Schedule

(subject to change based on the needs of the class at the instructor's discretion)

### PART I LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

#### Week 1 (2/20)

##### **Introduction to the course; Foundations of social research**

Discussion of syllabus, reading materials, course requirements and grading policy.

What is social research?

#### Week 2 (2/27)

##### **Research ethics and politics**

How do we behave ethically as researchers? What are the rules that we must observe as ethical researchers? What are the possible ethical dilemmas in social scientific research?

Homework 1 Researcher story

#### Week 3 (3/6)

##### **Research paradigms and social theory**

What are the fundamental models or frames of reference we use to organize our observations and reasoning? What is deductive theory construction? What is inductive theory construction? How do we deal with the bias in our study?

Modes of inquiry: Quantitative and Qualitative

Homework 2 Exploring a research project

#### Week 4 (3/13)

##### **Selection of a research approach An overview of quantitative research**

Homework 3 Research planning

#### Week 5 (3/20)

##### **Selection of a research approach cont'd**

**Qualitative approaches to inquiry**

What are the three research approaches to research? What factors affect a choice of one approach over another for the design of a proposal?

Why qualitative research for this course?

Nature of qualitative research

Homework 4 Research design

**PART II CONDUCTING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

**Week 6 (3/27) Ethnography and participatory observation**

How to do field observations?

Homework 5 Observation practice

**Week 7 (4/3) Interviewing and focus group in qualitative research**

Homework 6 Interview/Focus group practice

**Week 8 (4/10) Documents as sources of data**

Homework 7 Collecting Documents

**Week 9 (4/17) Qualitative data analysis**

Coding and thematic analysis

Homework 8 Coding practice

**Week 10 (4/24) Qualitative data analysis Cont'd**

Narrative analysis

Homework 9 Narrative analysis practice

**Week 11 (5/1) May Day No Class**

**Week 12 (5/8) Qualitative data analysis software**

Homework 10 Data revisit

**Week 13 (5/15) Discuss your findings**

**Week 14 (5/22) Research paper draft**

Roundtable edit

**PART III PRESENTING YOUR RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**Week 15 (5/29) Research paper presentation**

Presenting your research

**Week 16 (6/5) Research paper presentation**

Presenting your research

**Week 17 (6/12)      Wrap up the course**  
DUE: Final Research Paper

**Student Use of Electronic Technology Policy:**

Students must use electronic technology (including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and iPads) in appropriate ways during classes. Out of respect, cell phones should generally be turned off or on silent and stored out of sight. They should not be used during classroom activities unless the instructor has given permission. Electronic devices are forbidden during quizzes, tests or other in-class graded assignments, unless the instructor has given permission.

Technology use in this class is meant to improve the learning environment for all students. Please be respectful of your instructor and classmates and use the technology appropriately.

If you have questions about what this means, please talk to your individual instructor.

**Recording:**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may NOT record classroom lectures, discussions, and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly recorded in advance can be used solely for the student's own private study.

**Make-up Policy for Missed Assignments and Tests:**

Students are responsible for the assignments in their classes. Assignments include in-class activities, quizzes, tests, homework, and any other work related to classes.

- If you are absent from class, you should try to contact one of the students in your class to find out what work was missed.
- If you cannot find out from another student about what work you have missed, when you return to class you must talk to your instructors about the missed work and if/when you can make up the work. You are responsible for talking to your teacher; your teacher is not responsible for reminding you about missed work.
- If you are absent from class on the due date of an assignment, you must hand in the assignment and be prepared to make up tests the day that you return to class or on a date decided with your teacher.
- If you know you will be absent, talk to your teacher before you leave or email your teacher to find out about the work that you will miss while you are away.
- If you have not been absent from class and you want to hand in an assignment late, you must first discuss the reason with your teacher before or on the due date. Do not assume that your teacher will accept late assignments. Also, you may lose points for late work based on teacher discretion.
- If you and your teacher arrange to meet so that you can make up an assignment and you miss that meeting, you may receive a "0" for that assignment.

**SCUPI Honor Code:**

Students in this course must follow the SCUPI Honor Code. This includes:

- must not get help from anyone to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.

- must not get help from any outside sources to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.
- must not copy the words of another and present those words as his/her own work.

Participating in these activities can result in an F. Turning in work that is not your own can result in an F.

Writing Center Policy: first instance will result in failure in assignment with option of re-write; second instance will result in failure of assignment and meeting with Writing Center director; third instance will result in failure in the course and referral to university officials for Honor Code violation.

**Participation:**

Active participation is crucial for language learning. Participating in class makes you an engaged learner of English. In this class, participation means:

- arriving to class on time
- staying on task (including appropriate use of technology)
- actively listening to your classmates and teacher when they speak in class
- asking questions
- bringing all class materials
- attending class regularly
- completing all homework on time
- actively and constructively participating in class activities
- being prepared to answer questions
- using only English in class

**Student Responsibility**

This syllabus is a contract between you and the instructor. It is the first place you should look for answers to your questions about course requirements, expectations, and policies. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to adhere to the requirements, expectations and policies outlined in this syllabus, including sections on the SCUPI Honor Code. Students who fail to submit their work on time or miss more than 5 classes (including 5) could receive a failing grade and may not graduate.