

Sociology 202 - Research Principals and Practices  
Department of Sociology, St. Francis Xavier University

Professor: Dr. Norine Verberg	<u>Class times: X4/X5</u>	<u>Student office hours</u>
Phone/voice mail: 867-5077	Tuesdays, 11:15-12:30	Tuesdays, 2:15-4:45
E-mail: <a href="mailto:nverberg@stfx.ca">nverberg@stfx.ca</a>	Fridays, 12:45-2:00	Wednesdays, 3:15-4:45
Office location: NT606		Fridays, 2:15-3:45
Until further notice, I will use Teams/phone for office hours		or by appointment

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Course Description

This course addresses how various philosophic assumptions shape the aims and practices of research in Sociology. It provides students with empirical research design principles and an introduction to methods of collecting and recording data, assessing reliability and validity, and conducting data analysis. Different research strategies are introduced and ethical implications of research will be discussed. 3 credits

What to do if we have to go online?

We will continue to meet as a class using Collaborate which is set up in Moodle. My lectures would be presented in our usual class time.

Required Reading

Textbook: Jackson, Winston and Norine Verberg. 2007. *Methods: Doing Social Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Journal articles: A few research studies posted on Moodle will be used for class exercises and as preparation for the exams and assignment. Print them and bring them to all classes.

Evaluation

❖ Participation	25%	This include Moodle homework submissions
❖ Midterm	20%	Friday, October 23 (Chapters 1-4, 5C, 12, 13, 14,18B)
❖ Assignments	25%	Friday, November 27 at 12:30 pm
❖ Final exam	30%	TBA (all chapters but emphasis on Chapters 6-8, 10-13, 15)

Class Attendance and Participation

You are encouraged to participate in class by asking questions and contributing to class discussion. Class attendance will be taken; multiple unexplained class absences will be reported to the Dean. Missing many classes is likely to impact your performance on the exams and the assignment. If you miss class, you are responsible to find out what you missed (e.g., lectures, announcements, etc.) but not by email. Expect to be tested on material done as ‘homework’ and taken up in class.

Office Hours and Communication

You are encouraged to see me during office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. If you contact me by email, please write SOCI202 in the subject line. In the message, please use email etiquette, including a proper salutation and please sign with your name and student ID number.

## The Tramble Rooms – Centre for Accessible Learning

If you are registered at the Tramble Rooms: Centre for Accessible Learning, please contact me with any instruction. [http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible\\_learning/](http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/)

## Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy spelled out in the university calendar. <http://www.stfx.ca/services/registrar/academic-integrity-document.pdf>

## Course Organization

You will do several small homework assignments to apply what is taught in this course. Your work provides preparation for the exams and it informs the work you will do for the assignment.

## Schedule of Readings and Topics\*

Date	Chapter	Topic
September 15/18	1 & 12B	<i>Course Introduction</i> : variables and models
September 22/25	2 & 18B	organizing research reports: variables and models
Sept. 29/Oct. 2	13A & 8A	measurement; validity & reliability; levels of measurement
September 25/27	12A&3A	<i>Assignment introduction</i> ; experimental design
October 6/9	3B-D	quasi-experimental design; field experiment; observation
October 13/16/20	4, 14 & 13E	survey design and questionnaire development
<b>Friday, October 23</b>	<b>midterm</b>	<b>Ch.1-4, 8A 12A-B, 13A&amp;E,14, 18B lectures &amp; readings</b>
October 27/30	15 & 8B & C	sampling, describing and analyzing data
November 3/6	10 & 11&5B	bias and research ethics
November 10/13	6 & 5C	qualitative designs & content analysis
November 17/20	6	qualitative approaches sampling & data analysis
November 27/29	7	critical and applied approaches
December 2	-	review

\* The professor reserves the right to make minor alterations to the dates material will be covered or to bring in material such as class exercises or tutorial sessions.

## Course Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, you will have grounding in the following research areas:

- Different philosophic approaches to studying the social world
- Theory development and developing causal models
- Quantitative, qualitative and critical approaches to research design
- Strategies for describing qualitative or quantitative data and drawing inference
- Qualitative and quantitative approaches to measurement and sampling
- Standards and principles established for ethical practices in research
- Strategies for recognizing and avoiding research bias
- Approaches to writing research proposals or reports
- How to critique peer-reviewed research (journal articles)