

FCSC 400: RESEARCH METHODS IN FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

Alex Jakubow
Spring 2015
M 17:00-19:30
Domenici Hall 223

Email: ajakubow@nmsu.edu
Skype: dr.jakubow
Office: Breland Hall 341
Office Hours: T W 17:00-18:30, and by appointment

OVERVIEW

As members of a media-saturated society, we all come into contact with research on a regular basis—the results of polls and surveys, *New York Times* interviews, reports of findings from academic research—but many of us do not think too much about how that research was produced. Even as students of social science, we are much more likely to read others' research than to conduct it ourselves. However, learning how research is conducted—both the general theories that underlie good research and the more specific practices of particular research methods—will make you not only a better researcher and working professional, but also a better consumer of academic and popular research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Explore the major methodological concerns common to all social science research
- Develop theoretical and practical familiarity with a range of social science methods
- Evaluate both academic and popular research for methodological soundness
- Use computers to access, organize, analyze, and display social science data

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Discussion (20%)

In addition to faithful attendance, each student is expected to complete all assigned readings and contribute to class discussions.

Assignments (20%)

Students will be required to submit 11 small homework assignments during the course of the semester. Each assignment will be due at the beginning of the session for which it is assigned. Students are encouraged to work in groups, but every student must submit his/her own work individually. If a student attempts *all* assignments in good faith, his/her lowest homework assignment score will be dropped.

Projects (20%)

Students will complete two small, applied research projects during the course of the semester. Project instructions will be provided at a later date.

Midterm (20%)

The midterm exam will be a hand-written, in-class exam on March 2. It will test student knowledge of key course concepts and themes through a series of short answer and essay questions. A study guide will be provided.

Final (20%)

The format of the exam will be similar to that of the midterm. The final exam will be *cumulative*.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A+	97–100
A	93–96
A-	90–92
B+	87–89
B	83–86
B-	80–82
C+	77–79
C	73–76
C-	70–72
D	60–69
F	0–59

REQUIRED TEXTS

There is one required textbooks for this course:

- Remler, D. K. and Van Ryzin, G. G. (2014). *Research Methods in Practice: Strategies for Description and Causation*. SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, 2nd edition

All other materials will be made available online and/or placed on reserve at the Zuhl Library.

OTHER POLICIES

Late Work

As a general principle, late work will not be accepted and missed exams cannot be made up at a later date. Exceptions can be made in the case of valid, extenuating circumstances.

Computer Use

Computers are to be used *solely* for the purpose of taking notes and actively participating in class discussion. I reserve the right to ask you not to use your computer if I have reasons to suspect that you are using it to surf the web, check email or engage in other non-course-related activities.

Academic Conduct

All students are bound by the Student Code of Conduct as detailed in the *NMSU Student Code of Conduct*. The Student Code of Conduct is found on the NMSU web site at <http://deanofstudents.nmsu.edu/student-handbook/1-student-code-of-conduct/>. It is recognized by New Mexico State University that students are adults and expected to obey the law and take personal responsibility for their conduct. Academic misconduct and nonacademic misconduct can result in disciplinary procedures being instituted against the student. Refer to the *Student Code of Conduct* for more detailed information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using another person's work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one's own. Intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism are considered instances of academic misconduct and are subject to disciplinary action such as failure on the assignment, failure of the course or dismissal from the university. The NMSU Library has more information and help on how to avoid plagiarism at <http://lib.nmsu.edu/plagiarism/>

Students with Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) covers issues relating to disability and accommodations. If a student has questions or needs an accommodation in the classroom (all medical information is treated confidentially), contact:

Trudy Luken, Director
Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
Corbett Center, Rm. 244
Phone: (575) 646-6840
E-mail: sas@nmsu.edu
Website: www.nmsu.edu/~ssd/

NMSU policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, serious medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation and protected veterans status. Furthermore, Title IX prohibits sex discrimination to include sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment and retaliation. For more information on discrimination issues, Title IX or NMSU's complaint process contact:

Gerard Nevarez, Executive Director or Agustin Diaz, Associate Director
Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)
O'Loughlin House
Phone: (575) 646-3635
E-mail: equity@nmsu.edu
Website: <http://www.nmsu.edu/~eeo/>

Email Communications

Your NMSU email account is the official means of communicating with the university. Information critical to your success at NMSU is delivered to you via this account, and you are expected to follow rules and policies provided to you via this communication method. Any email from you to the instructor should be sent either through the CANVAS course management system or through your official NMSU email account. Please be advised that due to privacy and security concerns, we are unable to respond to emails from or about students that do not originate from an official NMSU email address.

Important Dates

The last day to withdraw from this class with a "W" is Monday, March 16. The last day to with-

draw from the University is Friday, April 17. The midterm exam is in class on Friday, March 13. The final exam is TBD.

Adaptability

Please note that this syllabus is a *working* document. The course schedule and reading list are subject to change.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

Monday, January 19th: No Class

Monday, January 26th: Philosophy of Science

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 1 (All)

Monday, February 2nd: Thinking Theoretically

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 2 (All)
- No Class Meeting
- Assignment 1 Due: Exercises 2.1–2.4

Monday, February 9th: Qualitative Methodology

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 3 (All)
- Assignment 2 Due: Exercises 3.1–3.4

Monday, February 16th: Measurement, Sampling & Secondary Data

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 4 (All)
- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 5 (pp. 141–168)
- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 6 (pp. 180–187; 194–207)
- Assignment 3 Due: Exercises 4.1–4.4; 5.1–5.4, 5.6; 6.4

Monday, February 23rd: Surveys

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 7

- Assignment 4 Due: Survey Exercise (posted online)

Monday, March 2nd: Midterm Exam

Monday, March 9th: Descriptive Statistics

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 8 (All)
- Assignment 5 Due: Exercises 8.1–8.9

Monday, March 16th: Inference

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 9 (pp. 280–303)
- Assignment 6 Due: Exercises 9.1–9.9

Monday, March 23rd: Spring Break

Monday, March 30th: Causation

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 11 (All)
- Assignment 7 Due: Exercises 11.1–11.2, 11.7–11.8
- Project Due: Survey Analysis

Monday, April 6th: Observational Studies

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 12 (All)
- Assignment 8 Due: Exercises 12.1–12.3

Monday, April 13th: Linear Regression

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 8 (pp. 313–327)
- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 13 (pp. 403–415)
- Assignment 9 Due: Exercises 13.3–13.4
- Project Due: Elite Interviewing

Monday, April 20th: Experiments

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 14 (pp. 427–452; 455–460)

- Remler and Van Ryzin 2014, Chapter 15 (pp.467–484; 492–495)
- Assignment 10 Due: Exercises 14.1–14.3, 15.1–15.3

Final Exam: Date To Be Determined

REFERENCES

Remler, D. K. and Van Ryzin, G. G. (2014). *Research Methods in Practice: Strategies for Description and Causation*. SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, 2nd edition.