

**College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline**

1. **COURSE ID:** SOCI 121 **TITLE:** Introduction to Research Methods **C-ID:** SOCI 120

Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours

Method of Grading: Grade Option (Letter Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisite: SOCI 100, or PSYC 100

Recommended Preparation:

MATH 120, or PSYC 121

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**

Degree Credit

Transfer credit: CSU; UC

AA/AS Degree Requirements:

CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5b. Social Science

CSU GE:

CSU GE Area D: SOCIAL SCIENCES: DSI - Social Institutions

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**

Catalog Description:

Students examine fundamental elements of empirical research and the ways sociologists think critically. Includes attention to the nature of theory, hypothesis, variables, and ethics of research. Application of qualitative and quantitative analytic tools, including logic and research design, such as survey, observational, experimental, case study, and comparative historical research. Computer applications are introduced.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. Explain the basic principles of the scientific method.
2. Critically evaluate research findings in terms of quality, credibility, and applicability.
3. Conceptualize and operationalize social variables in formulating testable hypothesis.
4. Examine various research designs, the role of quantitative techniques, and data reduction in sociological analyses.

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Explain the basic principles of the scientific method
2. Understand the relationship between social theory and research.
3. Critically evaluate research findings in terms of quality, credibility, and applicability.
4. Conceptualize and operationalize social variables in formulating testable hypothesis.
5. Examine various research designs, the role of quantitative techniques, and data reduction in sociological analyses.
6. Identify and review qualitative approaches in current use.

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**

Lecture Content:

1. Scientific inquiry in the social sciences.
2. Paradigms, theory, and social research.
3. The ethics and politics of social research.
4. Research design.
5. Conceptualizing and operationalizing measurement.
6. Indexing and scale construction.
7. Sampling.
8. Observational modes: Survey research, field research, unobtrusive research, evaluation research.
9. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of data, including use of statistical software.
10. Reading and writing social research.

7. **REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Other (Specify): Lecture, research activity, writing assignments, in-class presentation synthesizing theory and research. During the portion of the course that deals with statistical software (web-based tools and spreadsheets), lectures will take place in a computer lab.

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Students pose original research questions and collect original data, analyze existing data, and practice both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Students write research reports/papers using appropriate disciplinary styles.

Reading Assignments:

Weekly readings from the assigned textbook. Sociological research articles (peer-reviewed) related to the students research project(s).

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Quizzes
- B. In -class quizzes and assignments including both qualitative and quantitative analysis, research paper assignments. Research article presentation, notebooks.

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Adler and Clark. *An Invitation to Social Research*, 4th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2009
- B. Babbie. *The Basics of Social Research*, 5th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2009
- C. Gravetter and Forzaono. *Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences*, 4th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010
- D. Monette, Sullivan, DeJong. *Applied Social Research*, 8th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010
- E. Hoover, Donovan. *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, 10th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010
- F. Murphy, Dillon. *Interviewing in Action in a Multicultural World*, 4th ed. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010

Origination Date: November 2014

Curriculum Committee Approval Date: February 2015

Effective Term: Fall 2015

Course Originator: Kevin Henson