EMR 6500
Survey Research
Spring 2015

Course Description

This course is an advanced graduate seminar covering the principles and practice of survey research design for internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on reducing coverage, sampling, nonresponse, and measurement errors. Also covered in the course are probability sampling methods, including simple random sampling, stratified random sampling, systematic sampling, cluster sampling, and two-stage cluster sampling for means, proportions, and totals. Students will learn the principles and practice of developing survey objectives, designing survey research studies that account for and reduce sources of error, designing appropriate sampling strategies, assessing the reliability and validity of self-administered questionnaires and interview protocols, administering surveys, and analyzing and reporting results of survey research.
Credit and Course Hours

3 semester hours

This class meets from 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM on Mondays beginning January 12, 2015 and ending April 27, 2015.

The course meets in Ellsworth Hall, on the fourth floor in the Evaluation Center’s large conference room (#4410).

Instructor

Chris L. S. Coryn, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Evaluation, Measurement, and Research
Director of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation
Telephone: 269-387-5906
E-mail: chris.coryn@wmich.edu
Website: http://www.wmich.edu/evalphd/2010/05/chris-coryn/

Teaching Assistant

Lyssa N. Wilson
Doctoral Associate and student in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation
E-mail: lyssa.n.wilson@wmich.edu

Course Website

The website for this course is located at http://www.wmich.edu/evalphd/courses/emr-6500-survey-research/. From this site students can access the course syllabus, homework assignment instructions, data sets, and other materials related to the course.

Office Hours

By appointment.

Course Objectives

This course has multiple student learning objectives. Students will be expected to develop the following knowledge, skills, and abilities, including but not limited to:

1. How to design surveys
2. How to develop and ask survey questions
3. How to sample in surveys
4. How to assess survey reliability and validity
5. How to conduct self-administered internet and mail surveys
6. How to analyze survey data
7. How to report on surveys
Required Textbooks

Two textbooks are required for this course. Additional readings may be assigned.


Course Components

Grades will be based on (1) class attendance and participation, (2) a survey research project (3) performance on three homework assignments, and (4) performance on two examinations. Students should not put their names on homework, other assignments, or examinations, but rather only use their WIN numbers, so that homework, other assignments, and examinations can be graded blind to student identity.

Class Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend class regularly, participate in class discussions, and provide constructive feedback for others in the course. Your overall class participation grade will be based on (1) voicing your reflections on the readings (e.g., by noting positive contributions and constructive criticisms), (2) getting others in the class involved (e.g., by asking questions, having stimulating discussion/debate), (3) contributing information and experiences that supplement the readings, (4) providing fair and balanced feedback to others, and obviously (5) attending class and being on time. Class attendance and participation is worth 10% of the total course grade.

Survey Research Project

Each student, or small group of students upon instructor approval, will develop and design a small survey research project. The survey research project consists of the four parts enumerated below and is worth 35% of the course grade. Instructions for each of the project components is available from the course website.
1. *Survey research project prospectus*. The prospectus for the survey research project is worth 10% of the project grade.

2. *Item development*. The item development portion of the survey research project is worth 10% of the project grade.

3. *Survey administration and sampling plan*. The survey administration and sampling plan portion of the survey research project is worth 10% of the project grade.

4. *Presentation of survey project*. Each student, or group, will give a 15-minute PowerPoint-facilitated presentation of their survey research project. The presentation is worth 5% of the project grade.

*No late project assignments will be accepted.* All project assignments must be submitted via eLearning by 5:00 PM on the day they are due. Details for each of the survey research project assignments are available from the course website.

**Homework**

Each section of the class on the course schedule has readings you should do, and problems associated with those readings. There are three homework assignments for the course—one for simple random sampling, one for stratified random sampling, and one for cluster sampling. Each homework assignment is worth 10% of the course grade (30% combined). Instructions for each homework assignment are available from the course website.

*No late homework will be accepted.* All homework must be submitted via eLearning by 5:00 PM on the day they are due.

**Examinations**

There are two examinations in this class, the first is worth 10% of your total course grade and the second is worth 15% (25% combined). The two examinations will consist of multiple-choice items.

**Policy on missing examinations:**

- Make up examinations are *never* given.
- If you miss an examination and present an acceptable excuse such as a physician’s excuse, notification of family death or illness, your course grade will be based on the grades that are available.
- If you miss an examination and do not present an acceptable excuse, you will be assigned the lowest raw score that was obtained on that examination.
- All excuses must be in writing and should (1) identify your name and course, (2) identify the date of the missed examination, and (3) provide a reasonably complete explanation of why the examination was missed. Supporting documentation should be provided. The excuse should be turned in as soon as possible after the examination, but in any event no later than two weeks after the examination (except for the final examination, for which an excuse must be turned in immediately). The excuse becomes a part of your course record and will not be returned.
- Any excuse, either in-person, by e-mail, or on the telephone, is not acceptable. Do not for any reason call the instructor to tell him that you are going to miss an exam.
It is crucially important in this class that you read the books. Study them carefully. The reason is not that examination items will be taken directly from the book—they will not be. The reason is that you will need a great deal of exposure to the difficult concepts and methods we will cover. Simply attending class, and reading the books one time, will not be enough to do well. You will have to study the examples and the concepts in the books more than once to really do well on the examinations.

Teaching Philosophy

Cognitive science suggests that students learn most effectively when they actively construct the meaning of material by articulating and applying the information. Consequently, this course emphasizes active learning.

- Before class, students will need to read material to be applied in class, and in particular they should learn the key terms and concepts for the assigned reading
- In the first half of the class, the instructor will lecture on the assigned material and related material, but not always on the assigned material
- Students will do well in this course if they come prepared to ask questions about the material during this time
- In the second half of the class, students will engage in structured class discussions and activities

Suggestions for Succeeding in this Course

There is an extensive amount of reading and several major work products required for this course and we will be covering several related and unrelated topics, with which you may or may not be familiar. Therefore, in order to succeed in this course it is imperative that you do not fall behind. (1) Carefully study and repeatedly read the book and other assigned readings. The concepts in this class are often complex, and learning to apply them is a crucial skill to acquire. Reading the books helps with both problems. (2) Organize and participate in a study group. Such groups can help you check your understanding of concepts and their application, and to see that you are doing assigned homework and other assignments correctly.
## Course Schedule

Topics, readings, and assignments tentatively follow the schedule below. Due dates for class assignments (i.e., assessments) will not change, but dates for seminar topics might. All assignments are due by 5:00 PM on the date indicated in the course schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 12</td>
<td>Course overview</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>Course pretest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 19</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Day—no class</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Introduction to the tailored design method &amp; coverage and sampling</td>
<td>TDM Chapters 1, 2 &amp; 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>(1) Elements of sampling problems &amp; review of basic statistical concepts (2) Simple random sampling &amp; crafting good questions</td>
<td>EES Chapter 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4</td>
<td>Survey prospectus</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Constructing open- and closed-ended questions</td>
<td>TDM Chapter 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>Stratified random sampling</td>
<td>ESS Chapter 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Examination #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>From questions to questionnaires</td>
<td>TDM Chapter 6</td>
<td>Item development</td>
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<td>March 9</td>
<td>Spring recess—no class</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Implementation procedures &amp; multiple survey modes</td>
<td>TDM Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Homework #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Estimation</td>
<td>ESS Chapter 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>Systematic &amp; cluster sampling</td>
<td>ESS Chapters 7, 8, &amp; 9</td>
<td>Survey administration and sampling plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Delivery, sponsorship, and other issues</td>
<td>TDM Chapters 10, 11, 12, &amp; 13</td>
<td>Homework #3</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Student survey research project presentations</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Student survey research project presentations &amp; semester review</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
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<td>Examination #2</td>
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ESS = *Elementary Survey Sampling.*  
TDM = *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method.*
Grading and Weighting of Course Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination #1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination #2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey research project</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where:

- 100% – 95% = A
- 94% – 90% = BA
- 89% – 85% = B
- 84% – 80% = CB
- 79% – 75% = C
- < 75% = F

Need for Accommodation

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the professor and the appropriate Disability Services office at the beginning of the semester. The two disability service offices on campus are: Disabled Student Resources and Services (269-387-2116) and the Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities (269-387-4411).

Diversity Statement

EMR maintains a strong and sustained commitment to the diverse and unique nature of all learners and high expectations for each student.

Academic Integrity

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. [The policies can be found at http://www.wmich.edu/catalog under Academic Policies, Student Rights and Responsibilities.] If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with your instructors if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

To access the Western Michigan University Code of Honor and general academic policies on such issues as diversity, religious observance, and students with disabilities, please visit http://osc.wmich.edu/ and www.wmich.edu/registrar.