Sociology 424 and 497
Statistical Methods and Social Research
Spring 2020

Course Website

https://canvas.csun.edu/courses/69872

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You are enrolled in two courses, each consisting of a three-unit class and a one-unit laboratory and each having a separate ticket number (i.e. Sociology 424, 424L, 497 and 497L). However, it is the intent of this course to combine the best of both Sociology 424 and 497 into one palatable format meeting each Sunday from 12:00 pm to 6:00 pm in Sierra Hall 180. Accordingly, the class will be divided into four separate 75 minute segments, with a 10 minute break between segments 1/2and 3/4, and a 40 minute food break between segments 2/3.

The goal of this course portends mastery of both the procedures for conducting social research, and the statistical tools found in SPSS for analyzing such social research. But in a larger sense, this course is intended to be an experience born out of the necessity to step back from our personal prejudices and stereotypes, and as a student of higher learning, to evaluate the myriad of information being generated at all levels of our society, intelligently synthesizing such information, in an effort to become a more informed critical social thinker.

How will we accomplish these larger goals? The basic learning outcomes will involve improving your ability to read, write, and do the simple arithmetic necessary to carry out and evaluate statistical information and to organize that information in a manner that activates long term memory. The more complex learning outcomes involve developing critical thinking tools through the ability to identify, define, evaluate, analyze and summary both the quantitative and non-quantitative information that will be presented to you in this class and in your everyday life.

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning This Class

Textbooks: The text is *Social Research Methods, 2nd Ed* by H Russell Bernard, Sage Publications. In addition, there is the lab manual *How to Use SPSS* by Brian C. Cronk. However, do not purchase this lab manual until after the first day of class, when we have had the opportunity to discuss possible cost cutting measures. This will include a discussion of ability to use SPSS and its tutorials by taking take advantage of an online version at MyCSUNSoftware or its tutorials at Lynda.com.

Grading: The class portion of the 424 and 497 classes will consist of lecture/discussion (real time and virtual) and readings, involving three noncumulative quizzes (50 points each) and a cumulative final (100 points). There are no make-up exams. However, the lowest quiz score will be dropped. Hence, your score, out of 200 points, will comprise your class grade for both classes. The lab grade will consist of laboratory and statistical exercises submitted and/or discussed each week, as well as demonstrated mastery of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Plus/minus grading will be used. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated, period! Check here for further information on University rules governing cheating and plagiarism. Those students with qualified disabilities may seek additional services here.

Communication: In addition to real time class attendance, a variety of virtual techniques will be implemented. As part of class communications, you will be utilizing the Internet, emails, virtual blogs, Canvas, and ZOOM to facilitate interaction during the course of the semester, and to supplement the hours not formally held in the lab. Some of the programs are unique to campus and are best used by installing VPN on your home or laptop computer. As well, you may follow events on the class website on Canvas class page (we are using Soc497 only).

Office hours: Office hours will be held in SH180 both Friday and Sunday evening at 6:00 pm; otherwise by appointment. For those unable to meet in person, we will be holding discussions via telephone at 818-677-4049 and/or periodically through ZOOM. If several of you wish to form a study group, we can arrange routine alternative meeting times to review material.

Classroom Expectations: You are required to attend each Sunday session. The dates listed on the attached syllabus, contained herein, are immutable. That is, the dates will not be altered. Therefore, plan your social calendar accordingly. As well, as many of you are aware, the CSU faculty does not normally teach on Sundays during the semester, and students have all manner of social activities surrounding that day. While I will attempt to ensure that no Sunday class will ever be cancelled, I expect that you do your best to be in attendance on time and to stay the entire day. To that end, roll will be taken and chronic absence/tardiness will have consequences.

Study Habits: This class is, in fact, two classes with associated labs. That is, a total of eight units. Therefore, you must recognize and relate to those eight units in spite of the integrated nature of the lectures, as two separate courses. This will necessitate planning for study time of at least 15-20 HOURS PER WEEK. As well, it will require pro-activity in planning these hours. Read the materials in advance of the lecture, review on a regular basis and establish friendship groups with whom you can study. Come to class well rested and ready to ask questions.

Sociology 424/497 – Course Outline

Statistical Research Part I – The What and Who of Science. This section is a general discussion of the nature and history of science and how it differs from our everyday life. Moreover, it addresses how we measure such a world and how we describe these measurements so as to create testable assertions (i.e. hypotheses).

Topics	Date/Readings
Week One – Introduction, Logistics, Policies and Procedures	**01-26-20**
Week Two – Science and the Everyday World	**02-02-20**
• Methodological Thinking – Defining Characteristics of Science	Chapter 1, 3
• Statistical Thinking – Library and Internet Procedures	Assignment
Week Three – Measurement, Variables and Hypotheses	**02-09-20**
• Methodological Thinking – Creating operational concepts	Chapters 2,11,20
• Statistical Thinking – Measurement and descriptive statistics	Assignment
Week Four – Testing, Feedback and lab Work Presentation	**02-16-20**
• Collaboration and the First of Four Tests (non-cumulative)	
• Lab Assignments presented and problems sets submitted	

Statistical Research Part II – The How of Science. This section discusses how we attempt to control measurement to be assured we are assessing the proper population and that we are correctly measuring the relationship between our independent and dependent variable.

Topics	Date/Readings
Week Five – Sampling Designs	**02-23-20**
• Methodological Thinking – Getting to the "Right" People	Chapter 5
• Statistical Thinking – Probability Distributions and z-tests	Handout
Week Six – Experimental Designs	**03-01-20**
• Methodological Thinking – Isolating Independent Variables	Chapter 4
• Statistical Thinking – t-tests and Analysis of Variance	Chapter 15-I
Week Seven – Testing, Feedback and lab Work Presentation	**03-08-19**
• Collaboration and the Second of Four Tests (non-cumulative)	
• Lab Assignments presented and problems sets submitted	

Statistical Research Part III – The Where of Science. This section focusses on data collection sources and statistical methods for analyzing them. Surveys, observation techniques and nonreactive methods, and their respective statistical analysis techniques, will be discussed.

Topics	Date/Readings
Week Eight – Data Collection – Surveys	**03-15-20**
• Methodological Thinking - Creating and Conducting Surveys	Chapter 6,7,15-II
• Statistical Thinking - Crosstab and Correlational Analysis	Assignment
Week Nine – Data Collection – Observation	**03-29-20**
• Methodological Thinking - Relying on Third Party Information	Chapter 9, 10, 12
• Statistical Thinking - Coding and Inter-rater Reliability	Assignment
Week Ten – Data Collection – Simulation and Existing Data	**04-05-20**
• Methodological Thinking - Using Non-reactive measures	Chapter 12
• Statistical Thinking - Themes and Modeling Information	Assignment
Week Eleven – Testing, Feedback and Lab Work Presentations	**04-12-20**
• Collaboration and the Third of Four Tests (non-cumulative)	
• Lab Assignments presented and problem sets submitted	

Statistical Research Part IV – The When of Science. This section extends the discussion of measurement and correlation to causal inference among variables. It begins with a discussion of the statistical elaboration model and ends with an analysis of how we present findings

Topics	Date / Readings
Week Twelve – Finding Cause - Multivariate Analysis - Part I	**04-19-20**
• Methodological Thinking - The Nature of Causation	Chapter 16-I
• Statistical Thinking - The Statistical Elaboration model	Assignment
Week Thirteen - Finding Cause - Multivariate Analysis - Part II	**04-26-20**
• Methodological Thinking - Complex Causal Systems	Chapter 16- II
• Statistical Thinking - Multiple Regression / Path Analysis	Assignment
Week Fourteen – Presenting Findings in Written Form	**05-03-20**
• Methodological Thinking - Formatting Journal Articles	Handout
• Statistical Thinking - Presenting Tables, Graphs and References	Assignment
Final Examination (cumulative)	**05-10-20**

Class Schedule for the Blended Sociology 424 and 497 Class

12:00 - 1:15 pm	**First Class Segment – Lecture Format**
1:15 - 1:25 pm	**First Short Break**
1:25 – 2:40 pm	**Second Class Segment – Lecture / Discussion**
2:40 – 3:20 pm	**Food Break**
3:20 – 4:35 pm	**Third Class Segment – Lecture Format**
4:35 - 4:45 pm	**Second Short Break**
4:45 – 6:00 pm	**Fourth Class Segment – Laboratory Discussion format**

Ten Steps to a Successful Class

Wednesday – Thursday

1. Check weekly the homepage for lecture highlights and text notes
2. Review the text chapter outlines and summaries

Friday – Saturday

3. Read the Chapters
4. Compile questions – preferably the last thing the night before class

Sunday

5. Come to class with a full night's sleep
6. Compare text to lecture notes – track differences and ask others for resolution

Monday - Tuesday

7. Take the practice quiz and refer to notes and lectures for those items missed
8. Reread the chapter for specific answers
9. Check the web and library for new resources and convey findings to others
10. Go online or otherwise complete the assignment