



**Sociology 2206A (530): Research Methods in Sociology
Fall 2021
(Online Teaching – Synchronous)**

Dr. Stephen Lin
Email: clin64@uwo.ca
Class time
Thursdays 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the tools which scientists use to conduct research on society and produce knowledge – in other words, how to *be* sociologists. Many of the fundamental issues of research will be covered in this course, including the scientific method and research process, ethical dilemmas that may arise, and some of the procedures used to collect and analyze data, i.e., quantitative and qualitative approaches to social research. During the course, students will learn how to carry out a scientific investigation from the formulation of hypotheses, to the selection of an appropriate methodology, to the implementation of a study. Enhancing students' ability to critically examine sociological research is an important part of this course.

Antirequisites: Social Work 2206A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, or Political Science 3324F/G.

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

Course Objectives and Competencies

- Identify key aspects of qualitative and quantitative research and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Distinguish between poor and well-crafted research methods in sociology (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Design a realistic research project that incorporates key elements of the research process (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Thoughtfully analyze and evaluate published research from a methodological perspective (critical thinking level 2, problem solving level 2, communication level 3, inquiry and analysis level 3).

Required Text(s):

Carr, Deborah, Elizabeth Heger Boyle, Benjamin Cornwell, Shelley Correll, Robert Crosnoe, Jeremy Freese and Mary C. Waters. *The Art and Science of Social Research*. W.W. Norton. ISBN: 9780393644791

Where to get the text book:

You have two options, both from the UWO bookstore.

- Option 1: The first is to order a hard copy from the UWO bookstore. You can order through their website and they will ship the book directly to you.

- Option 2: The second option is to buy digital access to the book through the UWO bookstore.

Note: These two options are comparable. The e-book is less expensive than the print copy. Choose the one that works for you.

Link to the Textbook Inquiry:

https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=BR&term=N2021&courses%5B0%5D=530_BR/SOC2206A

Course Delivery Method

The content of this course will be delivered fully online via a **synchronous learning format**. This means that the instructor and the students in the course engage with the course content and each other **at the same time**, but from different locations. The instructor interacts with students in real time by means of tools such as Zoom to livestream audio, video, and presentations. Although I do not take attendance online, it is important for you to attend the online class and take your own responsibility to learn from the instructor.

The link to our zoom meeting is: <https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/3825666064>

Method of Evaluation

Online Quiz (September 29)	15%
Assignment #1 (October 4)	5%
Online Midterm Exam (October 21)	25%
Research Proposal (December 8)	25%
Online Final Exam (TBA)	30%

Evaluation Breakdown

Online Quiz (15%) - Wednesday, September 29

This quiz is worth 15% of your total grade and test materials from Sept 8 to 26. This quiz consists of multiple-choice questions only. This quiz is in an open-book format. It will be available at 8:00am on Wednesday, September 29 via Tests & Quizzes on OWL until 11:55pm on the same day. Each of you, regardless of your accommodation status, will be given 2 hours to complete it.

Assignment #1 (5%) – Monday, October 4 Due by 4:00pm

In this course, you will be paired up with two other students and complete a research proposal. This assignment is designed to get your research ideas started and going. See details in the instruction sheet available on OWL.

Online Midterm Exam (25%) - Thursday, October 21

This online midterm exam is worth 25% of your total grade and covers materials from September 8 to October 10 (both the textbook chapters and lectures). This exam consists of multiple-choice questions only. This exam is in an open-book format. It will be available at 8:00am on Thursday, October 21 via Tests & Quizzes on OWL until 11:55pm on the same day. Each of you, regardless of your accommodation status, will be given 4 full hours to complete it.

Research Proposal (25%) – Wednesday, December 8 Due by 11:59pm

Based on Assignment #1, you will complete a research proposal by going through a series of steps that will help you to understand the key process of conducting a sociological or criminological study. The requirement for this written assignment is listed as follows:

- Introduction & Research Rationale (1 page)
- Social Importance (1 page)
- Literature Review (2.5 pages)
- Research Design (1.5 pages)

Important Reminders

- Length: **6 pages** max., double spaced
- Late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless you provide legitimate reasons for late submission
- One submission per group via the Assignment Tab on OWL.

**Detailed instruction of this group research proposal will be provided on OWL.

Final Exam (December Exam Period) – 30%

The final exam is worth 25% of your total grade. It will be **cumulative** from the beginning of this course. However, 20% of the questions will target on information before the midterm and 80% will cover information after the midterm. This exam will consist of multiple-choice questions only. Specifics of this exam will be released once the office of registrar releases the date for the final exam. You can expect the same format as the midterm exam (e.g., open-book, asynchronous access).

How to get important information:

OWL (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) will be used to post course information, content, and instructions regarding deadlines, expectations, requirements, etc. You should check OWL regularly to ensure that you are kept up to date on new and revised course content. During the course, I may post or email additional content and/or materials that may aid in your learning and understanding of course topics.

Course Reading & Schedule

<i>Part I: The Fundamentals of Research</i>			
1	September 9	Introduction to the Course Theory & Social Research	Chapter 1, 2
2	September 16	Theory & Social Research (Continued) Designing a Study	Chapter 1, 2
3	September 23	Conceptualization, Operationalization & Measurement	Chapter 4
<i>Part II: Modes of Observation</i>			
4	September 30	Experimental & Survey Research How to Write Good Survey Questions **Online Quiz (September 29)	Chapter 7,8
5	October 7	Sampling **Assignment 1 Due on October 4 by 4:00pm	Chapter 6
6	October 14	How to Conduct Literature Review	Handout on OWL

7	October 21	Online Midterm Exam (October 21)	None
8	October 28	In-depth Interviewing & Focus Groups Ethnography	Chapter 10, 11
9	November 4	Fall Reading Week (No Class)	None
10	November 11	Materials-Based Methods	Chapter 12
11	November 18	Ethics in Social Research	Chapter 3
<i>Part III: Understanding Research Results</i>			
12	November 25	Quantitative Data Analysis	Chapter 13
13	December 2	Qualitative Data Analysis	Chapter 17
14	December 8	Work on Research Proposal **Research Proposal Due on December 8 by 11:59pm	None

2021-22 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The complete policy regarding [Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12) can be found at https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12 .

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services (https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10).

Personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. Submitting a **Self-Reported Absence** form provided that the conditions for submission are met;
2. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
3. For non-medical absences, submitting **appropriate documentation** (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

Requests for Academic Consideration Using the Self-Reported Absence Portal

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance of 48 hours or less that is sufficiently severe to render them unable to meet academic requirements should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours. Note that the excused absence includes all courses and academic requirements within the up to 48 hours, it is not intended to provide an excused absence from a single course while students fulfill their academic responsibilities in other courses during that time.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:

1. Students will be allowed a **maximum of two self-reported absences** between September and April and one self-reported absence between May and August;
2. The duration of the absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30 am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30 pm;
3. The excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period if the student undertakes significant academic responsibilities (writes a test, submits a paper) during that time;
4. Self-reported absences will **not** be allowed for scheduled final examinations; midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations scheduled during the final week of term;
5. Self-report absences may **not** be used for assessments worth more than 30% of any course;
6. Any absences in excess of 48 hours will require students to present a Student Medical Certificate (SMC), or appropriate documentation;
7. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form** to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence.

Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. An SMC can be downloaded from http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf ;
2. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period;

3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;
4. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;
5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

The [full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness](#) can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor (https://www.brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment_services/academic_advising/index.php). If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please refer to <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>).

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Please note that for asynchronous online courses, attendance or participation requirements may be different than for synchronous or in-person courses.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work, and arrange academic accommodations if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory

(http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written Special Permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Skills Services at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>)

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through **Health & Wellness at Brescia** (https://brescia.uwo.ca/student_life/health_and_wellness/index.php) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe_campus/sexual_violence/index.php.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy, and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.
