

	Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Family Sciences SWF3006 Research Basics 3 Units
Spring 2022	

Meeting days: Tu-Th	Instructor title and name: Dr. Jamie Gates
Meeting times: 1:30-2:45	Phone: (619) 849-2659
Meeting location: Rohr Sociology 108	Email: jgates@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Tu, May 3, 1:30pm	Office location and hours: Rohr Sociology 107; Tu or Th, 11am-12pm, or by appointment

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with the practical tools of doing social science research, and the theoretical background for critiquing and designing research on social issues. We engage in a wide range of methods throughout the term (including basic statistical analysis, interviewing, and ethnographic observations), and enable students to design a research project that addresses specific and testable questions. This course focuses on assisting students to develop the skills necessary to interpret, critique, and conduct social science research.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Exhibit knowledge of major themes, theories, and debates in social research.
- Successfully design ethical research as determined by PLNU's Institutional Review Board.
- Compare how social scientists choose among qualitative and quantitative social research methods to create and disseminate knowledge.
- Understand and articulate the importance of applied and theoretical research in the social sciences.
- Identify research strategies to promote social and economic justice.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Blackstone, Amy. 2012. *Principles of Sociological Inquiry: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*. Washington, D.C.: Saylor Foundation. This book is located free of charge at <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/principles-of-sociological-inquiry-qualitative-and-quantitative-methods> under the Creative Commons license.

Additional readings made available on an ongoing basis.

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3.0 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Participation and Discussions (20%):

You will be responsible for participating in a weekly synchronous meetings and occasional online discussions. A significant part of these participation points will be your regular full participation in our synchronous class; be sure to show up regularly and participate fully in each class. Part of your participation grade will be for the quantity and quality of your engagement in discussions on Canvas. Specific instructions will be given on the discussions as the class unfolds.

Research Methods Practice (20%):

Each week we will spend Thursdays practicing the research methods lessons we learn on Tuesday. Some of this practice will be in-class and some will be completed online. You will need to upload evidence that you have completed the practice assignments.

Exams (20%):

There will be a Mid Term and a Final Exam that will each account for 10% of the course grade. Students will be responsible for all material covered in the text, lectures, and assignments; the exams will test your ability to analyze and apply material presented in the course. Per university policy, successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day.

Scaffolding a Research Project Proposal (25%):

Students will be placed with a research partner based on general interest in a common subject. Research partners will work together to produce six papers as part of the scaffolding building up to their final Research Project Proposal.

- Developing an Empirical Research Question
- Evaluating Quantitative Research Methods
- Quantitative Research - Preliminary Design and Survey
- Evaluating Qualitative Research Methods,
- Qualitative Research Design and Interview Guide

These papers, will allow the research partners to get feedback on these components as they build toward the Research Project Proposal. Each of these papers account for 5% of the course grade. The purpose of these is to help you develop the research writing skills used by professional researchers, to encourage you to keep up with the reading, allow the sharing of information and observations with others in the class, and make progress toward the design and completion of your own Research Project Proposal. It is vital that each be completed on time. Further details will be provided on Canvas and in class.

Signature Assignment - Research Project Proposal (15%):

The signature assignment is designed as a learning tool to bring all of the components of the course into sharp focus and to put your learning into professional practice. Students will be placed with a research partner based on general interest in a common subject. Research partners will work together on writing and pilot testing a research project proposal. This Research Project Proposal should clearly, systematically, and precisely describe your proposed project with preliminary findings and analyses of a pilot test of your quantitative and qualitative research instruments. After reading your report, any competent researcher should be able to follow your step-by-step instructions and conduct a study comparable to yours. Further details will be provided on Canvas and in class.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grades will be based on the following:

Assignment Weight

Participation and Discussions	200
Research Methods Practice	200
Exams	200
Scaffolding a Research Project Proposal	250
Signature Assignment - Research Project Proposal	150
Total	1000

Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages				
A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	F Less than 59.9
A- 90-92.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9	
	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D- 60-62.9	

LATE POLICY

All assignments are expected to be turned in by the scheduled due dates for full credit. Assignments turned in after the due date will lose 10% per day after the assigned due date and time. Late days are counted in 24-hour periods. When the time due is 11:59pm, submitting between 12am and 11:59pm the next day is one day late, and so on.

You are given 3 self-granted extensions (grace days) which you can use to give yourself extra time without penalty. You may use all three days on one assignment, or a day each on up to three separate assignments. You must notify the professor in writing to indicate the late assignments to which you want to apply these extensions.

Choose these extensions wisely, as instructor-granted extensions are only considered after all grace days are used and only given in highly exceptional situations. You will need to contact the professor in person if requesting this extra level of extension. Students often go to great lengths to meet deadlines and conserve self-granted extension days: pull all-nighters, ignore other classes, miss events they wanted to attend, work when feeling poorly, submit unpolished assignments, or even cancel key time with friends and family. It would not be respectful of their efforts to hand out extra days to students who were less committed to meeting deadlines or not as cautious in conserving grace days. If asking for an instructor-granted extension, you will be expected to legitimize how all of your grace days were used, and make a compelling case for additional accommodation beyond the grace days everyone else receives. I use this information to find an appropriate balance between providing relief to you and maintaining fairness to others.

Remember, late work handed in when you have run out of self-granted extensions is discounted 10 % per day late.

(ideas in this late policy borrowed from Stanford, <https://stanford.edu/class/ee365/late.html> ([Links to an external site.](#)))

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. (DRC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 (a) prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all synchronous class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered asynchronously and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#)

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the *Technology and System Requirements* information.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

ASSIGNMENTS AT-A-GLANCE

The table below lists our assignments and their due dates. Click on any assignment to review it.