

**Department of Sociology, Social Work, and
Family Sciences**

SWF3006 Research Basics

3 Units

SPRING 2023

Meeting days: Tu-Th	Instructors titles and names: Dr. Jamie Gates
Meeting times: 1:30-2:45	Phone: (619) 849-2659
Meeting location: Rohr Sociology 112	Email: jgates@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Thursday, May 4, 1:30pm	Drop-in location and hours: In person Rohr Sociology 107 or via Zoom: Tuesdays 11am-12pm; Tuesday drop-in zoom with Dr Gates Thursdays 3-4pm; Thursday drop-in zoom with Dr Gates OR by appointment! Normally if you want to meet with me, I'd love to meet in person . But there are times where it works better for one or both of us to meet via zoom, so this is a link where anyone in the class can drop in to meet with me on zoom. Drop by for some formal or informal help, or just to connect and for us to get to know one another better! If you're waiting in the zoom waiting room, it's likely that I'm in a private conversation with someone else and will let you in to the zoom room as soon as I can. If that doesn't happen, please email me that you are/were waiting and I'll reach out for another time that works for both of us. Feel free to email at any time to set up a time that works better for you.

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.

Department Mission

PLNU's Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Family Sciences exists to nurture servant scholars who critically evaluate social systems, cultural patterns, and basic human needs to constructively engage as agents of hope with individuals, families, and communities.

Statement of Inclusivity and Commitment to Anti-Racism

Point Loma Nazarene University is a Christian community committed to cultivating an inclusive and welcoming environment. In fulfillment of our Christian mission, we strive to value and honor all people because we believe that our diverse identities, experiences, and abilities enrich our learning community. We are committed to explicitly challenging and dismantling racism in all of its forms. If you witness or experience an incident that could be considered unfair, bias, or discriminatory please report this to your most trusted staff or faculty member and/or to the Office of Diversity and Belonging, biasincident@pointloma.edu. You may also use this [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement

For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As a class we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land; the land of the Kumeyaay. (This statement borrowed from [SDSU's Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement](#))

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 - Preliminary 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 FOR THIS COURSE

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.

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

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND DISCRIMINATION

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix

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

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

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain, or if you have prayer requests, you can contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

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.