

**Research Methods II**  
Sociology 404-02  
Rhode Island College, Spring 2009

Mondays and Wednesdays, 4-6:50 PM, Craig-Lee Room 228/Gaige 165 as indicated  
Prerequisite: Soc 302, Pol 300, or consent of instructor

*Instructor Information*

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401. 456. 8681

Office: Craig Lee Hall room 451

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00-4:00 PM, Wednesdays 6-6:30 PM, and by appointment

Course Website: <http://www.ric.edu/faculty/marthur/classes.html>

*Course Description*

This course is a continuation of Research Methods I. This semester, we will shift our focus from the design of research and the collection of data to the analysis and presentation of data. We will spend time on both qualitative and quantitative analytical strategies, with a particular focus on the use of computer technology in data analysis. Students will gain skills including the use of SPSS statistical processing software to conduct data analysis, the use and management of large datasets, the construction and analysis of tables, and the analysis and description of qualitative data.

*Course Materials*

Earl Babbie, Frederick Halley, and Jeanne Zaino. **2007**. *Adventures in Social Research: Data Analysis Using SPSS 14.0 and 15.0 for Windows*. Pine Forge Press.

\*This book is available in the bookstore and online in **two versions**:

**1)** If you have a computer that can run Windows-based software at home, get the one with ISBN Number **9781412940825**; this edition costs \$70-\$80 and comes with a copy of the student version of SPSS that you can use at home for 6 months.

**2)** If you plan to complete all of your SPSS homework on campus because your computer at home will not run the software or you are pinching pennies, get the one with ISBN Number **9781412940832**, this one comes without the software and costs about \$50.

There will be readings and assignments that draw on material available in a CD that comes with the book. If you bought a used copy that did not come with the CD, please see me.

Emily Steir Adler and Roger Clark. **2007**. *How It's Done: An Invitation to Social Research*. **3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**. Wadsworth Publishing. → For those who do not already have a copy of this book from research methods I, there is no need to go out and purchase a new copy. You can read the assigned sections in the library or purchase Chapter 15 (the key chapter for this course) for \$5.49 from iChapters.com. The book may be useful to help you review, however, so I would not recommend selling it back to the bookstore until this course is over.

Additional readings will be made available on ereserves or distributed via other means as is appropriate. All texts will also be available on reserve in the library.

NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

### **Course Requirements**

1. **PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE.** You are expected to come on time for every class meeting and let me know as soon as possible (preferably in advance) if you must miss class for a legitimate reason. Part of your attendance is the expectation that you will participate in class sessions by contributing something to our discussions. If you have significant problems speaking in class, I strongly urge you to come speak to me privately as soon as possible to develop alternative participation mechanisms (such as private meetings or e-mail discussions) so that you can meet this requirement. Remember that there are few stupid questions, but that all questions and comments should be made in a spirit of respect for other students and their contributions to the class. **(10% of final course grade)**
2. **IN-CLASS EXERCISES/HOMEWORK.** Throughout the semester, there will be various in-class exercises and out-of-class homework assignments. These may include group activities, short writing assignments, in-class quizzes, and exercises using the SPSS statistical software. If you will not be able to use the software at home, please be sure to schedule time to come to campus to complete your homework. These assignments, with exceptions that will be noted, cannot be made up. However, there will be opportunities to earn more points than are necessary. **(30% of the final course grade)**
3. **MIDTERM QUALITATIVE RESEARCH EXERCISE.** The first portion of the course will be spent studying qualitative analytical strategies. At the end of this portion of the course, you will complete an exercise and short paper in which you develop a research question, perform your own qualitative analysis, and present the results. **(15% of the course grade)**
4. **FINAL QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH PAPER.** You will write a final research paper on the model of a sociological journal article. This paper will require you to identify a theory to be tested, conduct a short literature review on the topic, perform a quantitative analysis using a pre-existing data set, and explain your results. **(25% of the course grade)**
5. **FINAL EXAM.** There will be an open-book and open-notes in-class final exam during the regular exam period. Pending arrangements, this exam may be scheduled in a computer lab. The exam will test your ability to create and analyze quantitative research results as well as your knowledge of the terms and concepts we covered during the semester. **(20% of the course grade)**
6. **READING.** You are expected to complete all assigned course readings prior to the date for which they are assigned. Remember that normal expectations for a college course are that you should do two to three hours of work outside class for every one hour in class—since you are spending four hours a week in this class, that means you should expect to work on reading, writing and homework assignments, and studying for this class for eight or more hours a week outside of class. Especially due to the heavier load of homework, reading assignments will generally be short. However, you are expected to be familiar enough with the material to draw on it in the completion of in-class assignments.

## Course Schedule

Readings and assignments are due on the day under which they are listed. Readings and assignments in *Adventures in Social Research* are noted with an **A**, those in *How It's Done* are noted with an **H**, and those available through e-reserves are noted with an **E**. Other readings will be available on websites as listed below—links to all websites with required readings are available on the course website.

Wednesday, January 21  
**CL 228**

### First Class Meeting

Monday, January 26  
**CL 228**

### What is Data Analysis?

Adler & Clark, 431-434 **A**

Babbie, 1-23 **A**

\*\*\*Student information sheets due

## PART I: QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

Wednesday, January 28  
**CL 228**

### Introduction to Qualitative Analysis

Adler & Clark, 453-461 **A**

Website: <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~mid/edr725/class/mess/highlights/reading1-2-1.html>

Monday, February 2  
**CL 228**

### Formulating and Selecting Qualitative Data

Adler & Clark, 461-466 **A**

Berg, Excerpts from *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, pp. 146-50, 180-1, and 228-36 **E**

Wednesday, February 4  
**CL 228**

### Generating Relationships from Qualitative Data

Miles and Huberman, "Making Good Sense" from *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 245-287 **E**

Monday, February 9  
**CL 228**

### Presenting and Interpreting Qualitative Analysis

Adler & Clark, 466-475 **A**

Grbich, "Writing Up and Data Display" from *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 205-222 **E**

Wednesday, February 11  
**Gaige 165**

### Computer Applications in Qualitative Analysis

Gibbs, Friese, and Mangabeira, "The Use of New Technology in Qualitative Research," *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 3(2).

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/847/1840>

Monday, February 16  
**Gaige 165**

### Qualitative Research Exercise Due

Student Presentation of results

Mid-term quiz

PART II: QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

Wednesday, February 18 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Introduction to Quantitative Analysis</b> Adler & Clark, 434-436 <b>A</b> Babbie, 27-32 <b>B</b>
Monday, February 23 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Introduction to SPSS</b> Babbie, 32-51 and 367-388 <b>B</b>
Wednesday, February 25 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>More on Dataset Management</b> Babbie, 103-146 <b>B</b>
Monday, March 2 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Descriptive Statistics</b> Adler & Clark, 436-446 <b>A</b> Website: <a href="http://colfa.utsa.edu/Sociology/masters/centraltend.html">http://colfa.utsa.edu/Sociology/masters/centraltend.html</a>
Wednesday, March 4 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Descriptive Statistics with SPSS</b> Babbie, 53-99 <b>B</b>
Monday, March 8	<b>No Class—Spring Break</b>
Wednesday, March 10	<b>No Class—Spring Break</b>
Monday, March 16 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Correlation</b> Website: <a href="http://malaspina.edu/~johnstoi/maybe/maybe4.htm">http://malaspina.edu/~johnstoi/maybe/maybe4.htm</a>
Wednesday, March 18 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Bivariate Correlation with SPSS</b> Babbie, 165-186 <b>B</b> Wagner, <i>Using SPSS for Social Statistics and Research Methods</i> , excerpts: 57-9, 71-85
Monday, March 23 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Multivariate Correlation with SPSS</b> Babbie, 307-320
Wednesday, March 25 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Measures of Association &amp; Statistical Significance</b> Aneshensel, “Associations & Relationships” from <i>Theory-Based Data Analysis for the Social Sciences</i> , 47-68 <b>E</b> Babbie Lab Exercise 9.1 Due
Monday, March 30 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Association &amp; Significance with SPSS</b> Babbie, 223-250 <b>B</b> Babbie, 269-292 <b>B</b>

Wednesday, April 1 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Bivariate Regression</b> Babbie Lab Exercise 12.1 Due
Monday, April 6 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Bivariate Regression with SPSS</b> Babbie, 250-270 <b>B</b>
Wednesday, April 8	<b>No Class—Passover</b>
Monday, April 13 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Multivariate Regression</b> <a href="http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stmulreg.html">http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stmulreg.html</a> Babbie Lab Exercise 15.1 Due
Wednesday, April 15 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Multivariate Regression with SPSS</b> <a href="http://abacus.bates.edu/acad/depts/psychology/SPSSPC/spsspcanalmv.html">http://abacus.bates.edu/acad/depts/psychology/SPSSPC/spsspcanalmv.html</a>
Monday, April 20 <b>Gaige 165</b>	<b>Make-Up Day/SPSS Lab Time</b> Final Paper Proposal & Annotated Bibliography Due

### SECTION III: PRESENTING RESEARCH RESULTS

Wednesday, April 22 <b>CL 228</b>	<b>Writing the Research Report</b> Adler & Clark, 481-484 (see me for a photocopy if necessary) <b>A</b> Babbie <b>CD</b> , Appendix D: The Research Report <b>B</b>
Monday, April 27 <b>CL 228</b>	<b>Understanding and Interpreting Research Results</b> Table for presentations due today
Wednesday, April 29 <b>CL 228</b>	<b>Quantitative Research Papers Due Today</b> Come to class prepared to talk about your research results
Monday, May 5 <b>CL 228</b>	<b>Last Day of Class</b> Optional Make-Up Exercise: Babbie Lab 19.1 Due Today
Date TBA	<b>Final Exam</b>

## Course Policies

### *Academic Honesty*

All students enrolling in this course are expected to abide by the Rhode Island College guidelines on academic honesty, which can be located in the Student Handbook and other official documents. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarizing written work, including copying some or all of your work from a book, a website, or another student's paper. Think about how you would feel if someone passed off your hard work as their own.
- Using sources without proper attribution. Remember that all claims in a paper that did not spring fully formed from your own head need attribution, regardless of whether or not they are paraphrased, and all direct quotes should appear in quotation marks. If you are unsure how to document sources, please see me or reference the sociology department term paper guide, available at <http://www.ric.edu/sociology/termpaperguide.php>.
- Turning in work completed for other classes without prior permission.
- Working together with another student on an assignment, or seeking assistance with the content of your work from professionals, parents, or peers, without prior permission. (The exception to this policy is proofreading.)
- Copying off of another student or off of materials you have brought without permission during an exam. This includes text messaging and use of the internet during exams.
- Destroying course materials or otherwise preventing other students from achieving fully in this course.

You should be aware that I have caught many students who have engaged in academic dishonesty. Cheating successfully is often harder than you think, and you might as well just put your effort into doing the assignment legitimately. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and include receiving a 0 on the assignment for the first minor offense, receiving an F for the class for a repeated offense, and report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs at RIC. If you feel the urge to engage in academic dishonesty, stop and think about what you are doing, and then come see me so we can work out a plan together to ensure your success in the course.

### *Extensions, Absences, and Attendance*

You are expected to attend class regularly, but I am aware that emergencies do come up and that this class is not the only priority in your life. If you know in advance that you will be absent for a legitimate reason, please let me know via email so that you can be excused. If something unavoidable comes up, it is your responsibility to let me know as soon as possible afterwards. Regardless, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate (I do not provide notes to students) and to meet with me to clarify what you have missed. If you must be late to a class or if you must leave early, you should try to let me know in advance, and you should always be sure not to disturb other students with your comings and goings. Be aware that repeated absences, even if excused, may imperil your ability to do well in the course, and that you can not earn participation points if you are not present.

All assignments are due in class at the start of class. While I understand that you may occasionally experience printer problems, these are not an excuse for late work. It is my preference that all work be turned in on paper, but in unavoidable situations you may email me your work. If you must email me your work, it must be sent at least 15 minute prior to the start of class (you may not skip class to finish your work) in \*.rtf, \*.doc, \*.docx, \*.pdf, or \*.html format (try “Save As” to select one of these formats). I will write back to you letting you know that I received and could open your work. If I do not receive it or can not open it, it does not count as having been submitted, so I encourage you to try your best to get me a paper copy. If unavoidable circumstances require you to seek an extension on your work, I am generally open to providing one. However, you will need to request the extension via email at least 24 hours prior to the due date unless the extension is due to a major emergency (health crisis, death in the family, etc.) – so plan ahead.

### *Course Technology*

Students are expected to check their RIC email addresses frequently, at a minimum twice a week before each class meeting. If you primarily use another email account, I would suggest you arrange for your RIC email to be forwarded, as I do use email to disseminate important information about the course. Students are also responsible for being able to access the WebCT site for this course (through which you can access the course website), as course documents and information will be made available there. If you are not able to access email, WebCT, or the course website, you should seek assistance from User Support Services (<http://www.ric.edu/uss/> or x8886) right away so that you do not fall behind in the course.

### *Supplemental Services*

During the semester, you may discover that you would benefit from supplemental services of various kinds. I would encourage you to take your written work to the writing center at least once this semester—information about the writing center is available at <http://www.ric.edu/writingcenter/>. Spending time thinking about writing and revising your writing will only help you learn and perform at your best. If you find yourself struggling academically, OASIS can help you with test taking, reading comprehension, note taking, time management, and/or ESL skills, and you can find out more about OASIS at <http://www.ric.edu/oasis>. Sociology courses in particular have the capacity to bring up emotionally troubling issues, and if this occurs I encourage you to visit the Counseling Center. Information about the Counseling Center, which provides confidential services, can be found online at <http://www.ric.edu/counselingctr/>, and there are even online screening tests available.

### *Students with Disabilities*

If you have a disability that might interfere with your ability to perform at your best in this course, it is your responsibility to come and speak with me as early as possible in the semester so that we can develop a plan together. All reasonable accommodations will be made. Students with disabilities should be sure that they are registered with Disability Services in order to ensure access to the full range of services available at Rhode Island College. Information about these services and about registration is available at <http://www.ric.edu/disabilityservices/>

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During the semester, you may discover that you would benefit from supplemental services of various kinds. I would encourage you to take your written work to the writing center at least once this semester—information about the writing center is available at <http://www.ric.edu/writingcenter/>. Spending time thinking about writing and revising your writing will only help you learn and perform at your best. If you find yourself struggling academically, OASIS can help you with test taking, reading comprehension, note taking, time management, and/or ESL skills, and you can find out more about OASIS at <http://www.ric.edu/oasis>. Sociology courses in particular have the capacity to bring up emotionally troubling issues, and if this occurs I encourage you to visit the Counseling Center. Information about the Counseling Center, which provides confidential services, can be found online at <http://www.ric.edu/counselingctr/>, and there are even online screening tests available.

## Student Information Sheet

Please complete this sheet and return it to me at the second class meeting of the semester, or if you join the class late please turn it in as soon as possible after you join the course.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Class Year (circle one):    Freshman        Sophomore        Junior        Senior

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Major/Minor: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred email address (I will send vital course information to this address. You should expect to receive a test email from me by the third week of the semester; if not, please email me to confirm your address):

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One thing you'd like me to know about you (can be an interesting personal fact, a detail about your life or work responsibilities, a concern or strength you have with respect to the course, or anything else you want to tell me):

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What research methods/statistics courses have you already taken and with whom did you take them?

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Please be sure to provide me with a (recent, if possible) photo of yourself. You may attach a printed photo or a photocopy of your ID to this form, or you may email me a digital picture. Be sure that any email clearly identifies your name, and if there are multiple people in the photo tell me which one is you.