

The University of Texas at El Paso  
Sociology 3311-28904  
METHODS OF RESEARCH  
Spring 2019 (January 22<sup>nd</sup> - May 9<sup>th</sup>)

*Weeks start on Monday mornings (12:01am, MST) and end on Sunday nights (11:59pm, MST)*

**Instructor:** Trinidad Morales III

**Office Location:** I do not have a physical office on the UTEP campus, but you can reach me via Blackboard and we can set up a call to discuss your course concerns.

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm (Mountain Time), I will be available to you. You can also make an appointment to speak to me outside of these office hours. Email me in advance and I will call you or speak to in a dedicated chat room.

**Office Phone:** I don't have an office phone, but your e-mails go to my cell phone so I can respond quickly.

**E-mail address:** tmorales1@utep.edu (or the e-mail client in Blackboard; I check both but tmorales1@utep.edu goes to various e-mail clients and I can reply much quicker)

**Class website:** Blackboard account (students can start viewing in early January)

**Course Description:** To provide an overview and introduction to methods of research, to assist you with any projects (school or personal) and to prepare you for your Master's thesis and PhD dissertation in the near future.

**Required Texts:**

- Neuman, W. Lawrence. Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Third Edition, 2012. Pearson Education Inc. ISBN 0-205-76261-1

- Additional articles may be placed on Blackboard throughout the semester.

**Other Required Material:**

**\*\*You will need to have access to a computer with a high speed internet connection, a microphone, speakers, and a webcam\*\***

Access to a printer or copier. You will be printing out material and handing in to me for grading or distributing to your peers for feedback.

**Course Goal and Learning Objectives:** To understand, apply, discuss, compare, and critically evaluate methods of research in the social sciences.

**Grading:**

1) Attendance: For this class, you are required to submit assignments by the required deadlines. Although this is a virtual environment, class discussions, assignments, and presentations need to be done when they are due or you will be penalized points (see below).

Blackboard will capture time stamps when assignments were submitted to designate an assignment as turned in “on-time” or “late” or “no submission”. Assignments turned in after 11:59pm on the day they were due will not be accepted.

- Assignments turned in after assignment deadline, but before the end of the day (11:59pm) the assignment was due: 30 point assignment deduction
- Assignments turned in after assignment deadline and after the end of the day (11:59pm) the assignment was due: Assignment will not be graded and student will not receive any credit for the assignment.
- For every two (2) assignments not submitted on the day they are due (and thus, receiving no credit), a student will lose a letter grade. For example, if a student fails to turn in four (4) assignments during the semester and they finish the semester with a B, they will be deducted two (2) letter grades and will finish the semester with a D.

***Only university sanctioned excuses will be accepted and MUST BE SUBMITTED TO ME THE DAY YOU RETURN TO CLASS. I WILL NOT ACCEPT THESE LATER IN THE SEMESTER.***

2) Midterm and final: 0% of total grade. No midterm or final, just class discussion, mini-quizzes, and assignments.

3) Class discussion: 30% of total grade. Every week you will be split into one of seven groups consisting of about 4-5 students. Once throughout the semester you will be in a group that will lead the week’s discussion. On the week you are in a group that will lead the discussion, you and your group will be assigned a chapter and/or article to discuss in the class discussion/chat room. Groups leading the discussion will need to be the first ones to post to the class discussion/chat room and students not leading the discussion will respond to comments and discussion should ensue for the week on the class topic.

1 point for first week introduction; 7 points for the week your group is leading the discussion; 2 points for each week (6 weeks total) you participate, but do not lead the discussion; 2 points for weeks (5 weeks total) you will participate, but not discuss book chapters or articles.

4) Mini-quizzes: 30% of total grade. You will have a mini-quiz on various chapters (I like to jump around so the material is relevant to the lecture and assignments), for a grand total of seven (7) mini-quizzes. The first quiz is worth 2 points. This is to help you view the format of the quizzes and not adversely affect your grade should you do poorly on the first few quizzes. No mini-quiz will be worth more than six (6) points. Keep in mind all material may be on the mini-quiz (book material, lectures, discussion, articles, etc.).

5) Assignments, eighteen (18) in total: 40% of total grade. Throughout the semester you will have various assignments of various weights. I release these assignments (via Blackboard) several days before they are due, and usually with accompanying guides to assist you. Of course, you can always e-mail me with questions.

**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 100**

**\*\*A note about Assignments #16, #17, and #18. While you may be able to calculate your grades throughout the semester, keep in mind you MUST do Assignments #16, #17, and #18 or you will not complete the course. Let’s assume you calculate your grades and figure you**

are in safe territory to earn an A or a B as your final grade with optimum performance on all your class discussion, quizzes and assignments up to Assignment #15. You may assume you do not have to turn in any other assignments and you do not have to do a presentation and/or submit a final paper to keep your A or B final grade. Not submitting Assignments #16, #17, and/or #18 will result in losses of letter grades for each assignment (total loss of three letter grades if all three are not submitted). Assignments must have substance relative to the course. Meaning if your presentation (Assignment #16) consists of you reading from a magazine, you will receive no credit and loss of a letter grade. If your final paper (Assignment #18) is your grocery shopping list, then no credit and loss of a letter grade.\*\*

Quizzes and assignments are based on the following scale:

- A = 89% and above
- B = 79% - 88%
- C = 69% - 78%
- D = 59% - 68%
- F = Below 59%

The above grading is curved 1% in your favor. This also applies to your final grade. University policies (adopted from Sociology professor's syllabi)

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the professor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable.

Guidelines for Courtesy and Respect: In order to create a positive learning environment for all students in this class, please note we will cover a range of topics in this course. Observing norms of courtesy and openness to diverse perspectives will ensure the class runs in everyone's best interests. Absolutely NO online bullying will be tolerated and let's keep comments "PG-13", which means we can and certainly will have adult conversations.

Class schedule and assignments:

-----Week 1-----

- Week starts January 22<sup>nd</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends January 27<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Course introduction, syllabus, and overview. Read Chapters 1 and 4 for next class: Doing Social Research and Reviewing the Scholarly Literature and Planning a Study (Neuman, 2012).

I would like for you to introduce yourself to the class this week. See the chat rooms for guidance. Worth 1 point.

READING ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapters 1 and 4 for Week 2 class.

QUIZ: No quiz this week.

ASSIGNMENT #1: Describe your modified hypothesis, worth 1 point. Due 1/24 by noon.

ASSIGNMENT #2: National Institutes of Health training, worth 1 point. Due 1/28 by noon, but start today as it will take you some time to complete. Here's the website: <https://phrp.nihtraining.com>, you will create an account and then take the "Protecting Human Research Participants" training. Print out the certificate with your name at the end of the training and submit to me for credit. Due 1/28 by noon.

-----Week 2-----

- Week starts January 28<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 3<sup>rd</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(1 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not Leading discussion will need to respond to groups Leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Doing Social Research and Reviewing the Scholarly Literature and Planning a Study, Chapters 1 and 4 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Chapter 3, but also you will be working on your literature review, due next week.

QUIZ: FIRST QUIZ (Q#1), WORTH 2 POINTS OVER CHAPTERS 1 AND 4, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 2/1.

ASSIGNMENT #3: Literature review of five articles. This may take some time, worth 2 points. The book will guide you and the OWL website can also guide you (here's the OWL site I'm talking about: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Just make sure you follow APA formatting! Due 2/4 at noon.

-----Week 3-----

- Week starts February 4<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 10<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(2 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not Leading discussion will need to respond to groups Leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Wellness check! Today is our wellness check. Today you tell Trinidad what is working, what is not working about the class. Trinidad is in the hot seat today, bring

Kleenex because he will probably cry. We will also be reviewing your hypothesis/literature review.

Ethics in Social Research, Chapter 3 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapter 2 for Week 4 class.

QUIZ: SECOND QUIZ (Q#2), WORTH 3 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 3, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 2/8.

ASSIGNMENT #4: Critique an unethical study. Trinidad will give this handout in the discussion room and it is due 2/11 at noon. Worth 2 points.

-----Week 4-----

- Week starts February 11<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 17<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(3 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to groups leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Theory and Social Research, Chapter 2 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapter 11 for Week 5 class.

QUIZ: THIRD QUIZ (Q#3), WORTH 4 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 2, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 2/15.

ASSIGNMENT #5: Pick a theory for your paper. We will discuss a few theories in class from Chapter 2, but there are other theories you can use in your semester paper. This assignment will entail you picking a theory and using it in your paper. Due 2/18 at noon, worth 2 points.

-----Week 5-----

- Week starts February 18<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 24<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(4 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to groups leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Field Research and Focus Group Research, Chapter 11 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapter 7 for Week 6 class

QUIZ: FOURTH QUIZ (Q#4), WORTH 5 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 11, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 2/22.

ASSIGNMENT #6: Observation of people who may be affected by money (possession or lack of). We will talk about this in class to assist you. Due 2/25 at noon, worth 2 points.

-----Week 6-----

- Week starts February 25<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 3<sup>rd</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(5 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to groups leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Survey Research, Chapter 7 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Chapter 8 for Week 7 class.

QUIZ: FIFTH QUIZ (Q#5), WORTH 5 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 7, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 3/1.

ASSIGNMENT #7 (you will do this during the week in the discussion rooms): Create a small survey to test your hypothesis and submit Trinidad. Worth 2 points.

ASSIGNMENT #8 Create a quantitative survey/qualitative questions to test your hypothesis. A guide will be distributed to assist you in creating this larger survey. Due 3/4, worth 2 points.

-----Week 7-----

- Week starts March 4<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 10<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(6 of 7) Group Leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to groups leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Experimental Research, Chapter 8 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: Chapter 10 for Week 8 class.

QUIZ: SIXTH QUIZ (Q#6), WORTH 5 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 8, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 3/8.

ASSIGNMENT #9: Design an experiment, due 3/11, worth 2 points.

-----Week 8-----

- Week starts March 11<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 17<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*(7 of 7) Group leading discussion will need to post by Tuesday at noon of this week.*

*Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to groups leading discussion by Wednesday at noon of this week.*

*Trinidad will post his final replies by Thursday at 11:59pm.*

*This week's quiz will be available starting Friday morning (12:01am) and will close Friday night (11:59pm).*

Topic: Analysis of Quantitative Data, Chapter 10 (Neuman, 2012).

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE. HOORAY!

QUIZ: FINAL QUIZ (Q#7), WORTH 6 POINTS OVER CHAPTER 10, WHICH WILL OPEN AND CLOSE THIS FRIDAY, 3/15.

-----Week 9-----

- Week starts March 18<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 24<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

NO CLASS THIS WEEK, SPRING BREAK! OH YEAH!!

-----Week 10-----

- Week starts March 25<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 31<sup>ST</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*There will be no more group discussions on the book chapters and/or articles from this point going forward. However, we will still be meeting in the class discussion/chat room to discuss assignments from this point until the end of the semester. Your participation to the class discussion in the chat room will be worth 3 pts.*

Topic: Collecting data and analyzing data

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE

ASSIGNMENT #10: UTEP employee salary assignment using Excel. You will need Excel to complete this assignment, the UTEP libraries all have Excel installed to assist you. Due 4/1, worth 2 points.

Also, we're going to discuss Assignment #8 in the discussion rooms, I will probably ask you to trade with a peer to get their feedback at the beginning of the week (probably Monday and Tuesday).

By Wednesday, I will place you into groups and you will be collecting data via the survey and the qualitative interview. The qualitative interview will require you speak to your peer using your webcam.

ASSIGNMENTS #11 AND #12 (in-class assignments, Assignment #11 is worth 2 points and Assignment #12 is worth 2 points): Collecting data from your peers. This week will be devoted entirely to data collection. I will coach you on how to collect data, maybe you will make last minute revisions to your survey, but today you will leave with data to include in your final paper. You will interview one peer in a one-on-one setting and you will also distribute several surveys to a group of your peers.

ASSIGNMENT #13: Hello Kitty limitations/future research assignment, due 4/1. Worth 2 points.

-----Week 11-----

- Week starts April 1<sup>st</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 7<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*There will be no more group discussions on the book chapters and/or articles from this point going forward. However, we will still be meeting in the class discussion/chat room to discuss assignments from this point until the end of the semester. Your participation to the class discussion in the chat room will be worth 3 pts.*

Topic: Start putting your paper together, talk about everything you need to include to get the best grade possible on your final paper.

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE

ASSIGNMENT #14: First draft of your final paper will be due next week. Trinidad will guide you on all the parts needed for your first draft, which you have worked on throughout the semester. It will be peer reviewed electronically, meaning you will e-mail me your paper 4/3 and I will e-mail it to someone else for review. This means you have to first submit YOUR first draft by 4/3 (Wednesday) by e-mail and then also check your e-mail for someone else's paper and grade it by 4/5. You have to do both parts to get full credit for this assignment, worth 2 points.



-----Week 12-----

- Week starts April 8<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 14<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

*There will be no more group discussions on the book chapters and/or articles from this point going forward. However, we will still be meeting in the class discussion/chat room to discuss assignments from this point until the end of the semester. Your participation to the class discussion in the chat room will be worth 3 pts.*

Topic: Today you will be reviewing the paper you submitted, with comments from a peer. As a class, we will discuss the papers, I will give you feedback on what you need to do to submit a strong paper. We will also discuss the PowerPoint you will create from your paper to use during the presentations. We will also select the presentation order today.

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE.

ASSIGNMENT #15: Submit to Trinidad your PowerPoint for critique by Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Worth 2 points.

-----Week 13-----

- Week starts April 15<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 21<sup>st</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

I will speak to IT at UTEP in advance of the presentations to make sure you all can do live presentations. I anticipate (just being realistic) that software will crash on the days of the presentations. But, I think with enough time, the disruption due to technology should be minimal.

These last two weeks of class will require the class agree on a day of the week and time (about 3 hours) to be online at the SAME time to do the presentations. The rest of the semester your participation can be staggered and obviously not everyone has to be online at the same time. But the last two weeks, it is absolutely required. We will discuss this way in advance.

First week of presentations (10 presentations). Assignment #16 is your actual presentation (worth 4 points) and Assignment #17 will be your critique of someone else's presentation (worth 3 points).

Topic: NONE.

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE

ASSIGNMENT #18: Finalize your papers and submit them early for extra-credit. Keep reading (see Week 14) to see how many points you get if you submit early and also how many points you get if you submit late. Your final paper is worth 5 points.

-----Week 14-----

- Week starts April 22<sup>nd</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 28<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

I will speak to IT at UTEP in advance of the presentations to make sure you all can do live presentations. I anticipate (just being realistic) that software will crash on the days of the presentations. But, I think with enough time, the disruption due to technology should be minimal.

These last two weeks of class will require the class agree on a day of the week and time (about 3 hours) to be online at the SAME time to do the presentations. The rest of the semester your participation can be staggered and obviously not everyone has to be online at the same time. But the last two weeks, it is absolutely required. We will discuss this way in advance.

Second week of presentations (10 presentations). Assignment #16 is your actual presentation (worth 4 points) and Assignment #17 will be your critique of someone else's presentation (worth 3 points).

Topic: NONE.

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE

ASSIGNMENT #18: Finalize your papers and submit them early for extra-credit. Keep reading (see Week 14) to see how many points you get if you submit early and also how many points you get if you submit late. Your final paper is worth 5 points.

-----Week 15-----

- Week starts April 29<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends May 5<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

I will speak to IT at UTEP in advance of the presentations to make sure you all can do live presentations. I anticipate (just being realistic) that software will crash on the days of the presentations. But, I think with enough time, the disruption due to technology should be minimal.

These last two weeks of class will require the class agree on a day of the week and time (about 3 hours) to be online at the SAME time to do the presentations. The rest of the semester your participation can be staggered and obviously not everyone has to be online at the same time. But the last two weeks, it is absolutely required. We will discuss this way in advance.

Final week of presentations (10 presentations). Assignment #16 is your actual presentation (worth 4 points) and Assignment #17 will be your critique of someone else's presentation (worth 3 points).

Topic: NONE.

READING ASSIGNMENT: NONE

QUIZ: NONE

ASSIGNMENT #18: Finalize your papers and submit them early for extra-credit. Keep reading (see Week 14) to see how many points you get if you submit early and also how many points you get if you submit late. Your final paper is worth 5 points.

-----Week 16-----

- Week starts May 6<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends May 12<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)
- Final papers (Assignment #18, worth 5 points) may be submitted electronically to tmorales1@utep.edu on the following dates (below). Papers must contain some substance related to the class topic in order to earn bonus points. I use the day and time that your e-mail shows when it arrives in my inbox, and this is Mountain Time on the UTEP server. Check your 'sent items' to make sure your paper was sent out on time and that it is included the attachment.

BONUS POINT SCHEDULE. IF SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING DATES AND TIMES, YOU GET THE CORRESPONDING BONUS POINTS:

- Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> by noon- 10 point bonus (up to a 110)
- Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> by noon- 6 point bonus (up to a 106)
- Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> by noon- 3 point bonus (up to a 103)
- Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> by noon- 0 point bonus (up to a 100)

Any papers submitted after noon on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> will not be graded and will be given a zero. No exceptions. Trinidad is a jerk.