

The University of Texas at El Paso  
Sociology 3311-27534  
METHODS OF RESEARCH  
Spring 2020  
Saturdays, 8am to 10:50am  
(January 21<sup>st</sup> – May 7<sup>th</sup>)  
\*we should be done by May 2<sup>nd</sup>\*  
MAIN 102

**Instructor:** Trinidad Morales III

**Office Location:** I do not have a physical office on the UTEP campus, but we can set up a time to meet on or off campus to discuss any concerns you may have. Also, you can usually speak to me before or after every class.

**Office Hours:** Again, I do not have a physical office on the UTEP campus, but we can set up a time to meet on or off campus to discuss any concerns you may have. Also, you can usually speak to me before or after every class.

**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](mailto:tmorales1@utep.edu)

**Class website:** Blackboard account (students can start viewing January 21<sup>st</sup>)

**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/Material:**

- 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.

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

**Grading:**

1) Attendance: **THIS IS A MAJOR PART OF YOUR GRADE. EVERY SEMESTER A SMALL NUMBER OF STUDENTS FAIL THE COURSE BECAUSE OF EXCESSIVE ABSENCES. PLEASE REVIEW THE POLICY BELOW AND IF YOU THINK YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ADHERE TO THE POLICY, I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU DROP THE COURSE.**

For this class, **attendance matters**. For every unexcused absence, you will lose a letter grade. You are required to show up to class on time every class session. Every two (2) days you are tardy (late), you will be

deducted a letter grade. Every unexcused absence will result in a loss of a letter grade.

All work will need to be submitted at the beginning of class. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.** 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: We'll discuss the material every week to assist you in preparing for the quizzes and assignments.

4) Mini-quizzes: 40% 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 seven (7) points. Keep in mind all material may be on the mini-quiz (book material, lectures, discussion, articles, etc.).

5) Assignments, eighteen (18) in total: 60% of total grade. Throughout the semester you will have various assignments of various weights. I release these assignments (in class or 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 lose 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 professors' 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.

-----**Week 1**-----

January 25<sup>th</sup> FIRST DAY OF CLASS!

TODAY WE WILL ALL MEET. SORRY, I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU HATE DOING THIS. ☹ ☹

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by February 1<sup>st</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #1: National Institutes of Health training, worth 1 point. All you need to do is watch this short video. You will see a few questions on the first quiz over the video, so I suggest you watch it closely. Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8fme1boEbE> Everyone gets credit for this assignment, I will assume you watched the video, you do not need to submit any proof to me that you watched the video.
- Due by next class (February 1<sup>st</sup>). ASSIGNMENT #2. You will write a few sentences on the relationship between money and happiness. Do you believe there is a relationship between money and happiness? If so, does happiness increase or decrease when money increases or decreases? Also, tell me why you believe in this relationship, is this perhaps related to your youth? Using Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, write about half a page to a full page on your take on the relationship between money and happiness. Please be prepared to submit your work at the beginning of February 1<sup>st</sup> class and also be prepared to talk about your paper in class as well. Worth 2 points.

- Get the textbook (Neuman) and read Chapter 1 for next class. You will take a quiz next class over Chapter 1, Week 2 lecture, and also the YouTube video I asked you to watch.

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

February 1<sup>st</sup> **Topic: Doing social research**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #2
- Quiz #1 (worth 2 points) today over Chapter 1, today's lecture, and the YouTube video.

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by February 8<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #3: Literature review of five articles. This assignment 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 for this assignment!
- Read Chapter 4 for next class.

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

February 8<sup>th</sup> **Topic: Reviewing the scholarly literature and planning a study**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #3
- 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, he will probably cry. This is the only time in the semester where we can make changes to the course.
- Quiz #2 (worth 4 points)

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by February 15<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #4: Critique an unethical study. Trinidad will release a handout for this assignment today. Worth 2 points.
- Read Chapter 3 for next class

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

February 15<sup>th</sup> **Topic: Ethics in social research**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #4
- Quiz #3 (worth 6 points)

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by February 22<sup>nd</sup> - 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 paper. This assignment will entail you picking a theory and using it in your paper. Worth 3 points.
- Read Chapters 2 and 7 for next class

-----**Week 5**-----

February 22<sup>nd</sup> **Topics: Theory and social research AND Survey research**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #5
- Quiz #4 (worth 7 points)

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by February 29<sup>th</sup> - 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. Worth 3 points.
- Read Chapter 8 for next class

-----**Week 6**-----

February 29<sup>th</sup> **Topic: Experimental research**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #6
- Quiz #5 (worth 7 points)

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by March 7<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #7 Create a small survey to test your hypothesis and submit to Trinidad and a peer for feedback. Worth 3 points.
- Read Chapter 11 for next class

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

March 7<sup>th</sup> **Topic: Field research and focus group research**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #7
- Quiz #6 (worth 7 points)

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by March 14<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #8 Create qualitative questions to test your hypothesis. A guide will be distributed to assist you in creating these questions. You will submit to Trinidad and a peer for feedback. Worth 3 points.
- Read Chapter 10 for next class

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

March 14<sup>th</sup> **Topic: Analysis of quantitative data**

*THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:*

- Turn in Assignment #8
- Quiz #7... the final quiz (worth 7 points)! Hooray!!

*THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:*

- Due by March 28<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #9: Design an experiment. You will not actually be doing an experiment in this class, but you will design an experiment, to tell Trinidad and a peer how an experiment could be used to test your hypothesis. Worth 3 points.
- Due by March 28<sup>th</sup>- 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. Worth 3 points.
- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

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

March 21<sup>st</sup>

**SPRING BREAK! NO CLASS THIS WEEK. SEE YOU LATER, TRINIDAD!**

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

March 28<sup>th</sup> **Topic: An entire day of data collection**

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:

- Turn in Assignments #9 and #10
- Due by March 28<sup>th</sup> (today!)- ASSIGNMENT #11 (in-class assignment, Assignment #11 is worth 4 points): Collecting data from your peers. I will place you in groups to collect data using the survey you designed (Assignments #7 and #8). I will coach you on how to collect data, maybe you will make last minute revisions to your survey, but this week you will collect data to include in your final paper. You will distribute several copies of your survey to a group of your peers. You will submit a summary of the data to Trinidad (by next week) for credit. Worth 4 points.
- Due by March 28<sup>th</sup>(today!)- ASSIGNMENT #12 (in-class assignment, worth 4 points): You will be interviewing a peer to gather qualitative data for your final paper. I will provide a guide and you will conduct an interview that should last between 15 to 30 minutes. You will submit a summary of the interview to Trinidad (by next week) for credit. Worth 4 points.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Due by April 4<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #13: Hello Kitty limitations/future research assignment. I'll release a guide for this assignment. Worth 4 points.
- Due by April 4<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #14: First draft of your final paper will be due. 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 in class. To get the full 4 points, you need to submit a paper and also review someone else's paper. Worth 4 points.

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

April 4<sup>th</sup>

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS TODAY:

- Turn in Assignments #13 and #14 **and also the summaries of the survey and interview you conducted in class last week!**
- Today you will also submit your final paper first draft (Assignment #14) to Trinidad and a peer will review it. You will also need to review someone's final paper first draft.
- Trinidad will discuss how to put your PowerPoint draft together today and you will submit a draft to Trinidad electronically by Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> for review.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS... well, actually by Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>:

- Due by April 7<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #15: Submit to Trinidad your PowerPoint electronically for critique. This is the PowerPoint you will be using for your final presentation. Worth 4 points.

-----**Week 12**-----

April 11<sup>th</sup>

Today Trinidad will discuss how to do the presentations and prepare students for their presentations.

We may even start the presentations today... maybe a few. Maybe.

Assignment 16 is your actual presentation that you will do in class. It is due on the day you are assigned to present. Worth 5 points.

Assignment 17 is your critique of someone else's presentation. This is due on the day that your peer presents. Worth 5 points.

Assignment 18 is your final paper, worth 5 points. It's due May 2<sup>nd</sup> and you need to submit it by e-mail and by 11:59pm.

-----**Week 13**-----

April 18<sup>th</sup>

First day of presentations.

-----**Week 14**-----

April 25<sup>th</sup>

Second day of presentations.

-----**Week 15**-----

May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Third day of presentations (if needed). Final papers are due electronically, in case we do not meet today for presentations. E-mail them to [tmorales1@utep.edu](mailto:tmorales1@utep.edu) by 11:59pm. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**

CLASS IS DONE! HOORAY! IT WAS A MARATHON, BUT YOU DID IT! CONGRATS!

**ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!**