

The University of Texas at El Paso
Sociology 3311-21759
METHODS OF RESEARCH
-ONLINE-
(January 21st – May 7th)

Each week (except the very first week) starts on Sunday morning (12:01am, MST) and ends on Saturday night (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: Saturdays and Sundays 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 you in a dedicated Discussion Board within Blackboard.

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

Class website: Blackboard account (students can start viewing January 21st)

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.

- Other Required Material: You will need access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection, a microphone, and speakers.

- You will need to create a YouTube account to upload video(s) you will record via your computer. You can just create one for this class and delete it at the end of the semester. Do NOT use your personal YouTube account/channel, unless you are okay with the class being able to view all other videos that are not related to the course. YouTube accounts are free, all they require is an e-mail address.

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, you are required to submit assignments by the deadlines. Although this is a virtual environment, class discussions, assignments, and presentations need to be submitted when due. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED!** 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 are due will not be accepted, meaning **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: 30% of total grade. Every week you will be split into groups (the number of students in each group is dependent on how many students are enrolled in the course; as of mid-December, I have 26 students enrolled, which may lead to seven groups with about three to four students per group). Once throughout the semester you will be in a group that will lead the discussion. On the week you are in the group leading the discussion, you and your group will be assigned a chapter(s) and/or article(s) to discuss in the class discussion/chat room (Blackboard calls these 'Discussion Boards'). Groups leading the discussion will need to be the first ones to post to the Discussion Boards and students not leading the discussion will respond to questions/comments and discussion should ensue for the class topic. 2 points for first week introduction; 10 points for the week your group is leading the discussion; 3 points for each week (6 weeks total) you participate, but do not lead the discussion.

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 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.

Class schedule and assignments:

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

- Week starts January 21st (at 12:01am MST) and ends January 25th (at 11:59pm MST)

January 21st FIRST DAY OF CLASS!

-Go into Blackboard and look for Week 1 folder, there you will introduce yourself to the class. I'll give you the whole week to introduce yourself, but make sure you do this as you will receive 2 points for introducing yourself.

- Due by January 23rd at 11:59pm- 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 January 24th at 11:59pm- 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. This and most assignments this semester will be submitted via Blackboard. Worth 2 points.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

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

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

- Week starts January 26th (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 1st (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Doing social research

THINGS WE ARE DOING THIS WEEK:

- Group #1 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by January 28th and everyone else not in Group #1 will post replies by January 29th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 1 in Neuman.

- Quiz #1 (worth 2 points) released on January 31st and due February 1st over Chapter 1, Discussion Board, the week's lecture, and the YouTube video.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapter 4 for next week.

-----**Week 3**-----

- Week starts February 2nd (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 8th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: *Reviewing the scholarly literature and planning a study*

THINGS WE ARE DOING THIS WEEK:

- Group #2 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by February 4th and everyone else not in Group #2 will post replies by February 5th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 4 in Neuman.
- Wellness check on February 6th! This week is our wellness check. This week you tell Trinidad what is working, what is not working about the class. Trinidad is in the hot seat this week, he will probably cry. This is the only time in the semester where we can make changes to the course.
- Due by February 6th - 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!
- Quiz #2 (worth 3 points) released on February 7th and due February 8th over Chapter 4, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapter 3 for next class

-----**Week 4**-----

- Week starts February 9th (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 15th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: *Ethics in social research*

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Group #3 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by February 11th and everyone else not in Group #3 will post replies by February 12th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 3 in Neuman.
- Due by February 13th - ASSIGNMENT #4: Critique an unethical study. Trinidad will release a handout for this assignment early in the week. Worth 2 points.
- Quiz #3 (worth 4 points) released on February 14th and due February 15th over Chapter 3, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapters 2 and 7 for next class

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

- Week starts February 16th (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 22nd (at 11:59pm MST)

Topics: Theory and social research AND Survey research

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Group #4 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by February 18th and everyone else not in Group #4 will post replies by February 19th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapters 2 and 7 in Neuman.
- Due by February 20th - ASSIGNMENT #5: Pick a theory for your paper. We will discuss a few theories 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 2 points.
- Quiz #4 (worth 5 points) released on February 21st and due February 22nd over Chapters 2 and 7, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapter 8 for next class

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

- Week starts February 23rd (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 29th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Experimental research

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Group #5 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by February 25th and everyone else not in Group #5 will post replies by February 26th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 8 in Neuman.
- Due by February 27th- ASSIGNMENT #6: Observation of people who may be affected by money (possession or lack of). I'll release a guide in Blackboard to assist you. Worth 2 points.
- Quiz #5 (worth 5 points) released on February 28th and due February 29th over Chapter 8, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapter 11 for next class

-----**Week 7**-----

- Week starts March 1st (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 7th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Field research and focus group research

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Group #6 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by March 3rd and everyone else not in Group #6 will post replies by March 4th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 11 in Neuman.
- Due by March 5th - ASSIGNMENT #7 Create a small survey to test your hypothesis and submit to Trinidad and a peer (I'll pair you up) for feedback. Worth 2 points.
- Quiz #6 (worth 5 points) released on March 6th and due March 7th over Chapter 11, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- Read Chapter 10 for next class

-----**Week 8**-----

- Week starts March 8th (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 14th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Analysis of quantitative data

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Group #7 will post questions in the Discussion Boards by March 10th and everyone else not in Group #7 will post replies by March 11th. 10 points if your group is leading the discussion, 3 points if you are not leading the discussion, but participate. 3 to 4 questions will cover Chapter 10 in Neuman.
- Due by March 12th- 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 2 points.
- Quiz #7, the final quiz! Hooray! (worth 6 points) released on March 13th and due March 14th over Chapter 10, Discussion Board, and the week's lecture.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

-----**Week 9**-----

- Week starts March 15th (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 21st (at 11:59pm MST)

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

-----**Week 10**-----

- Week starts March 22nd (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 28th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Experiments and data analysis

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Due by March 24th- 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 2 points.
- Due by March 27th- 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 2 points.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

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

- Week starts March 29th (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 4th (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: An entire week of data collection

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Due by March 31st- ASSIGNMENT #11 (in-class assignment, Assignment #11 is worth 2 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 the end of this week) for credit. Worth 2 points.
- Due by April 2nd- ASSIGNMENT #12 (out of class assignment, worth 2 points): You will be interviewing someone 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 the end of this week) for credit. Worth 2 points.
- Due by April 4th- Summaries of ASSIGNMENTS #11 and #12 Each summary is worth 2 points, 4 points total for both summaries.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

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

- Week starts April 5th (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 11th (at 11:59pm MST)

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Due by April 7th- ASSIGNMENT #13: Hello Kitty limitations/future research assignment. I'll release a guide for this assignment. Worth 2 points.
- Due by April 10th- 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. To get the full 2 points, you need to submit a paper and also review someone else's paper. Worth 2 points.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

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

- Week starts April 12th (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 18th (at 11:59pm MST)

THINGS WE ARE DOING IN CLASS THIS WEEK:

- Due by April 15th- ASSIGNMENT #15: Submit to Trinidad your PowerPoint electronically for critique. This is the PowerPoint you will be using for your final presentation. I'll return it to you with my feedback by the end of the week. Worth 2 points.

THINGS TO DO FOR NEXT CLASS:

- No reading from Neuman required, only review for assignments.

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

- Week starts April 19th (at 12:01am MST) and ends April 25th (at 11:59pm MST)

This week we'll start the presentations. Trinidad will discuss how to record your presentation and upload it to YouTube.

Assignment 16 is your actual presentation that you will upload to YouTube. It is due on the 22nd of April. Worth 3 points.

Assignment 17 is your critique of someone else's presentation. This is due on the 24th of April. Worth 4 points.

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

- Week starts April 26th (at 12:01am MST) and ends May 2nd (at 11:59pm MST)

Assignment 18 is your final paper, worth 4 points. It's due May 1st.

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