

The University of Texas at El Paso

Sociology 3311- 21562/26456

METHODS OF RESEARCH

-ONLINE-

(January 19<sup>th</sup> – May 6<sup>th</sup>, but we'll actually finish May 1<sup>st</sup>)

Each week (except the very first week) starts on Sunday morning (12:01am, MST) and ends on Saturday night (11:59pm, MST), except the last week, which ends on a Thursday.

**Instructor:** Trinidad Morales III, PhD (please call me 'Trinidad')

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

**Class website:** Blackboard account (students can start viewing January 19<sup>th</sup>)

**Course Description:** To provide an overview and introduction to methods of research, to assist you with any projects (school or personal) you may be working on 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. For the first half of the semester, 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 the beginning of January, I have about 30 students enrolled, which may lead to seven groups with about four to five 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 Board 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 19<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends January 23<sup>rd</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Topic: Course introduction, syllabus, and overview.

Due by January 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:59pm- Class discussion #1, introduce yourself in the Discussion Boards. 2 points.

Due by January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59pm- ASSIGNMENT #1: Describe your modified hypothesis, worth 1 point.

Due by January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59pm- ASSIGNMENT #2: 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.

**YOU WILL CERTAINLY NEED THE BOOK FOR NEXT WEEK'S READING ASSIGNMENTS AND FOR THE REST OF THE SEMESTER.**

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

### -----Week 2-----

- Week starts January 24<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends January 30<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by January 26<sup>th</sup> -(1 of 7) Group #1 will be leading the discussion on Chapters 1 and 4. They will post by January 26<sup>th</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #1.

Due by January 28<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading the discussion will need to respond to Group #1 by January 28<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by January 30<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #1- Quiz #1 covering Chapters 1 and 4 will be released January 29<sup>th</sup> and due on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Worth 2 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 1 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by January 30<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #3: Literature review of one article. 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! You will only submit one article summary for my review, but you will need to do at least five total

for your final paper. I'll give you feedback on one of your summaries and then you can proceed to work on the other four summaries.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 2 for Week 3 class.

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

- Week starts January 31<sup>st</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 6<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by February 2<sup>nd</sup> -(2 of 7) Group #2 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 2. They will post by February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #2.

Due by February 4<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #2 by February 4<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by February 6<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #2- Quiz #2 covering Chapter 2 will be released February 5<sup>th</sup> and due on February 6<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 2 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by February 6<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #4: Critique an unethical study. Trinidad will release a handout for this assignment in the Discussion Boards. Worth 2 points.

Due by February 6<sup>th</sup> - 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 this week, he will probably cry. I will create a Discussion Board and you will give me feedback on the first three weeks of class.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 3 for Week 4 class.

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

- Week starts February 7<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 13<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by February 9<sup>th</sup> -(3 of 7) Group #3 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 3. They will post by February 9<sup>th</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #3.

Due by February 11<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #3 by February 11<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by February 13<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #3- Quiz #3 covering Chapter 3 will be released February 12<sup>th</sup> and due on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Worth 4 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 3 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by February 13<sup>th</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 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 7 for Week 5 class.

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

- Week starts February 14<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 20<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by February 16<sup>th</sup> -(4 of 7) Group #4 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 7. They will post by February 16<sup>th</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #4.

Due by February 18<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #4 by February 18<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by February 20<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #4- Quiz #4 covering Chapter 7 will be released February 19<sup>th</sup> and due on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Worth 5 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 4 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 8 for Week 6 class.

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

- Week starts February 21<sup>st</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends February 27<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by February 23<sup>rd</sup> -(5 of 7) Group #5 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 8. They will post by February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #5.

Due by February 25<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #5 by February 25<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by February 27<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #5- Quiz #5 covering Chapter 8 will be released February 26<sup>th</sup> and due on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Worth 5 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 5 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by February 27<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, this may need to be modified depending on the state of the pandemic at the time this assignment is released and due. Worth 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 11 for Week 7 class.

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

- Week starts February 28<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 6<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by March 2<sup>nd</sup> -(6 of 7) Group #6 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 11. They will post by March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #6.

Due by March 4<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #6 by March 4<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by March 6<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #6- Quiz #6 covering Chapter 11 will be released March 5<sup>th</sup> and due on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Worth 5 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 6 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by March 6<sup>th</sup> - ASSIGNMENT #7 Create a small survey to test your hypothesis and submit to Trinidad and a peer for feedback. Worth 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** Read Chapter 10 for Week 8 class.

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

- Week starts March 7<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 13<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by March 9<sup>th</sup> -(7 of 7) Group #7 will be leading the discussion on Chapter 10. They will post by March 9<sup>th</sup>. Worth 10 points for Group #7.

Due by March 11<sup>th</sup> -Groups not leading discussion will need to respond to Group #7 by March 11<sup>th</sup>. Worth 3 points.

Due by March 13<sup>th</sup> -Quiz #7 THE FINAL QUIZ, HOORAY!- Quiz #7 covering Chapter 10 will be released March 12<sup>th</sup> and due on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Worth 6 points. Quiz will cover Trinidad's lecture, the Neuman chapters, and also the discussion led by Group 7 in the Discussion Boards. **YOU CANNOT USE NOTES, YOUR BOOK, OR ANY OUTSIDE MATERIAL OR PERSON WHEN TAKING THE QUIZ!**

Due by March 13<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 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

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

- Week starts March 14<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 20<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

**SPRING BREAK ALL THIS WEEK, NO CLASS! HOORAY!!**

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

- Week starts March 21<sup>st</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends March 27<sup>th</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

**NO CLASS ON MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup>, CESAR CHAVEZ HOLIDAY.**

Due by March 23<sup>rd</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 2 points.

Due by March 27<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #10: Data analysis assignment using Excel. You will need Microsoft Excel to complete this assignment, the UTEP libraries all have Excel installed to assist you (you can access the UTEP libraries remotely as well). Worth 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

-----**Week 11**-----

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

Drop deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup> (not an April Fool's joke), if you wish to drop the course, this is the last day to drop with a W.

**NO CLASS ON APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>, SPRING STUDY DAY.**

The due dates below are when the assignments should be completed, but the summary that you will submit for credit for Assignments 11 and 12 (they will have the same grade) will be due on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Due by March 30<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #11 (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 for credit. Assignments 11 and 12 will have the same grade. Worth 2 points.

Due by April 1<sup>st</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #12 (out of class assignment, worth 2 points): You will be interviewing someone on the phone to gather qualitative data for your final paper. I will provide a guide and I will pair you up with a peer, depending on how the pandemic situation is at the time this assignment is due. You will submit a summary of the data to Trinidad for credit. Assignments 11 and 12 will have the same grade. Worth 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

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

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

Due by April 6<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #13: Hello Kitty limitations/future research assignment. I'll release this via Blackboard. Worth 2 points.



Due by April 8<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 electronically, meaning you will email me your paper and I will e-mail it to someone else for review. To get the full 2 points, you need to submit a paper and also review someone else's paper. Worth 2 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

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

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

Due by April 13<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #15: Submit to Trinidad your PowerPoint for critique. This is the PowerPoint you will be using for your final presentation. Worth 2 points.

Trinidad will return EVERYONE'S PowerPoint (Assignment #15) with his feedback by April 17<sup>th</sup>. Do NOT record your final presentation until you get feedback from Trinidad. Trinidad will release a guide on how to do the presentations, how to upload them to YouTube, and anything else needed for the presentations.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

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

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

Due by April 20<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #16: Your presentation on YouTube. You will submit the YouTube link to Trinidad for credit. Worth 4 points.

Due by April 24<sup>th</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #17: Your critique of several presentations on YouTube. You will submit the grading rubric/guides for credit for this assignment. The person who created the presentation will not know who is critiquing their presentation. Worth 3 points.

**READING ASSIGNMENT:** NONE, WE'RE DONE WITH OUR QUIZZES.

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

- Week starts April 25<sup>th</sup> (at 12:01am MST) and ends May 1<sup>st</sup> (at 11:59pm MST)

Due by May 1<sup>st</sup>- ASSIGNMENT #18: Your final paper! Worth 5 points. No late papers accepted after May 1<sup>st</sup>.

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

Oh, hello there! Yeah, it's a lot of work. But, we're all in this together. The best way to pass this class is simply to keep up. Once you skip an assignment, or skip your reading, you'll quickly fall behind. Not

turning in assignments or completing quizzes, or not posting to the discussion board will hurt your grade immensely. If you look at the grade values, they are all low. This is so you can have a bad assignment and not totally ruin your semester average. Students who do the best in this course are the ones who just do everything. They may trip on a few assignments, but they do not get discouraged and keep fixing and turning in their work. If you just look at the syllabus as a whole, yeah, it seems like a ridiculous amount of work. But if you just follow it week by week, day by day, you'll manage. And after 15 weeks, you'll be done. My job is to turn you into good researchers in 15 weeks. I don't want you to leave the class without a clue on how to write a survey. Or how to interview someone. Then I have failed YOU. And I'm always here for you, you can always e-mail me with concerns, questions (just not late at night, I'm 42 years old, I go to sleep around 9:30pm nightly!). This is a marathon, not a race. We'll take a break for Spring Break and a few other days throughout the semester. Just pace yourself, do the work, and you'll get to the finish line in early May.