

Dr. Michelle Meyer

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T 3-4 & TH 10:30-12:30
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Graduate Assistant

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Course Description

This course provides a general overview of social science research. We will survey the core methods of data collection and analysis to understand how social knowledge is generated. This course is meant to introduce students to the diversity of thought in and approaches to sociological research.

Course Objectives

1. Understand the logic of social science inquiry, strategies of research design, and a variety of research methods.

We will review how social scientists conduct research including their epistemologies, design strategies, and tools used for both quantitative and qualitative research. We will cover material including research questions, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations to begin developing our own research projects.

2. Become an informed consumer of social science research.

We will understand the research process so that we can evaluate the questions, designs, and research tools used by others and be able to analyze research claims made by other researchers and the media.

3. Become critical thinkers.

We will use our critical thinking skills to learn and understand the research process. This course requires development of well-reasoned arguments and thorough thought processes, all which contribute to the higher-order thinking involved in university study.

Required Text

Schutt, Russell K. 2012. *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research* 7thed. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Online reading articles - Citations or full-text articles are on Moodle

Evaluation (assignment details will be provided during the semester)

Assignment	% of Overall Grade
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
2 Research Critiques	20% total
2 Popular Press Research Reviews	15% total
Research Proposal	25%
In Class Projects	10%

*Extra Credit is available for attending research presentations on campus. Each presentation is worth 1% toward your final grade. Up to 3 presentations can be attended. I require a “selfie” of you at the presentation or with the speaker and a 1-page review of the presentation similar to a popular press assignment.

A: 90-100, B: 80-89, C: 70-79, D: 60-69, F: under 60

This is a required course for sociology majors. All sociology majors must earn a grade of “C” or higher.

Commitment to Community

Louisiana State University is an interactive community in which students, faculty, and staff together strive to pursue truth, advance learning, and uphold the highest standards of performance in an academic and social environment.

In the current age where it seems debate is only vicious and malicious, this class is a place where everyone is expected to express their thoughtful opinions, questions, and suggestions as a way to think through the material. We are all respected for who we are and what ideas and experiences we bring to the table. Thus, I encourage everyone to engage in active debate *with the material*; this means asking for clarity of someone else's comments and discussing and debating the *perspective* they present. I expect everyone to try on different perspectives, like trying on different clothes, and see whether something you always discounted may fit pretty well. There is an enormous difference between disagreeing with someone's perspective and attacking them as a person. The first is the hallmark of scientific inquiry; the second is for talk shows and reality TV and will not be tolerated in this space.

Class starts promptly at 1:30. Be respectful of your classmates and don't interrupt by being late. No cheating or plagiarism. We will learn the importance of our intellectual property in the course and honor ourselves by doing our own work. Suspected cases will be dealt with individually through department and university channels.

Disabilities

If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please let me know early in the semester. Please see Disability Services to register for accommodations at 115 Johnston Hall (www.lsu.edu/ods).

Schedule

Date	Reading	Assignments
1/15	Introductions and Syllabus Review	
1/20	Chapters 1 & 2	
1/22	Chapter 15	Popular Press 1 Due: Last Name A - E
1/27	Chapter 3	Popular Press 1 Due: Last Name F - J
1/29	Chapter 3 + online reading	Popular Press 1 Due: Last Name K - O
2/3	Chapter 4	Popular Press 1 Due: Last Name P - S
2/5	Chapter 4 & 6	Popular Press 1 Due: Last Name T - Z
2/10	Chapter 6	Popular Press 2 Due: Last Name A - E
2/12	Library Research Presentation in Class	Popular Press 2 Due: Last Name F - J
2/17	-----	MARDI GRAS – NO CLASS
2/19	Work Day for Proposals [Bring laptop, research question, 3 research articles]	Popular Press 2 Due: Last Name K - O
2/24	Chapter 5	Popular Press 2 Due: Last Name P - S
2/26	Chapter 5	Popular Press 2 Due: Last Name T - Z
3/3	-----	MIDTERM EXAM
3/5	Chapter 9	
3/10	Chapter 9	
3/12	Chapter 10 + online reading	Research Critique 1 Due
3/17	Chapter 8	
3/19	Chapter 8 + online reading	
3/24	Chapter 7 + online reading	
3/26	Movie and in-class assignment	
3/31	Chapter 13	
4/2	Chapter 13 + online reading	
4/7-4/9	-----	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
4/14	Chapter 11	Research Critique 2 Due
4/16	Chapter 12 + online reading, Oral History Presentation in Class	
4/21	Chapter 14	
4/23	Chapter 14	
4/28	Review and Work Day on Proposals	
4/30		Research Proposals and Mini-Presentations Due
5/9	12:30-2:30	FINAL EXAM (no early exams allowed)