

## 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 and approaches to sociological research.

**Dr. Michelle Meyer**  
Office 20 Stubbs Hall  
Hours: T 3-5 & TH 12-1  
[mmeyer@lsu.edu](mailto:mmeyer@lsu.edu)

**GAs**  
**Trish Davis**  
Office 17A Stubbs Hall  
Hours M 1-4  
[Pdavi28@lsu.edu](mailto:Pdavi28@lsu.edu)

**Carlee Smith**  
Office 123 Stubbs Hall  
Hours M 11-1  
[Jsmi488@tigers.lsu.edu](mailto:Jsmi488@tigers.lsu.edu)

**Matt LeBlanc**  
[Mlebl83@tigers.lsu.edu](mailto:Mlebl83@tigers.lsu.edu)

## 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 work our thinking skills to learn and understand the research process. This course requires development of a well-reasoned argument and thorough thought process, 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* 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Online reading articles - Citation will be provided, you will find the article through the library yourself.

**Evaluation** (additional information will be provided during the semester)

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

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.

\*Extra Credit is available for attending research presentations by professors on campus. Each presentation is worth 1% toward your final grade. Up to 4 presentations can be attended. I require a selfie of you and the presentation/speaker and a 1 page review of the presentation like we do for the popular press research.

## 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 to not 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](http://www.lsu.edu/ods).

## Schedule

Dates	Reading	Assignments
August 26	Introductions and Syllabus Review	
August 28	Chapters 1 & 2	
September 2	Chapter 15	
September 4	Chapter 3	
September 9	Chapter 3 + online reading	
September 11	Chapter 4	
September 16	Chapter 4 & 6	
September 18	Chapter 6	Popular Press 1 Due
September 23	Work Day on Proposals	[Bring laptop, research question, 3 research articles]
September 25	Library Research Presentation	
September 30	Movie and in-class assignment	
October 2	--	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS
October 7	Chapter 5	Popular Press 2 Due
October 9	Chapter 5	
October 14	--	Mid Term Exam
October 16	Chapter 7 + online reading	
October 21	Chapter 8	
October 23	Chapter 8 + online reading	
October 28	Chapter 9	
October 30	Chapter 9	Research Critique 1 Due
November 4	Chapter 10 + online reading	
November 6	Chapter 11	
November 11	Chapter 12 + online reading	
November 13	Chapter 13	
November 18	Chapter 13 + online reading	
November 20	Chapter 14	
November 25	Chapter 14	Research Critique 2 Due
November 27	--	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
December 2	Work Day on Proposals and Exam Review	
December 4	#tbt Chapter 15 (Or catch up)	
December 11	<b>7:30-9:30 AM</b>	Final Exam & Research Proposal Due