

WORKSHOP ON SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
SOCIOLOGY 302
Fall 2010

Professor David Brady
Monday 10:05 am-12:35pm
Sociology/Psychology 329

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Welcome to the first semester of the two-semester 2nd year proseminar! This class aims to train graduate students to write professional, scientific research papers. Students will select a topic, data source, method of analysis, and scholarly literature. Students will present several times, work on their analyses, draft key sections, and engage our intellectual community in helping others to complete their projects. Ultimately, this class should be the first steps to writing a publishable sociological paper that should be submitted to a scientific journal. Moreover, this class should be the first steps in developing your research agenda and participating actively as a sociologist in a scholarly debate. My goal is for you to end the class with a draft of a majority of your research paper – that you will revise and complete in the spring.

READINGS:

The books are available at The Regulator Bookstore on 9th Street.

Firebaugh, Glenn. 2008. *Seven Rules for Social Research* Princeton University Press.

Luker, Kristin. 2008. *Salsa Dancing Into the Social Sciences* Harvard University Press.

EVALUATION:

All students will be graded on drafts of key parts of their paper, presentations, meeting deadlines for making progress, and class participation. The key parts of the paper will be finalized by October 4. These key parts will reflect the nature of the students' research and the best strategy for progress. For example, some may write a short introduction, the methods and results sections. Others might write the theory and methods section. The deadlines are established in the calendar below. Active class participation can take a variety of forms, including enthusiastic and intellectually rigorous discussion, constructive criticism and comments for classmates, and regular class attendance. The presentations will normally last 30 minutes. Students should plan on presenting for roughly 20 minutes and answering questions for roughly 10 minutes. Time will be strictly enforced. The composition of final grades is as follows:

Draft of Parts of Paper	45%
Presentations	25%
Class Participation	20%
Meeting Deadlines	10%

I do not give incomplete grades, except under extreme circumstances. In the case an incomplete is warranted, you should contact me **before** the deadline.

CALENDAR of Topics and Assignments:

August 30 Introduction to Course
5 minute presentation of question, importance and data
Preparing for job market, the challenge of getting stuff done, and
developing a research agenda

September 6 Choosing a topic, making a contribution
Read Luker
One page summary of proposed project due
Human subjects applications submission deadline

September 13 No Class! Get some rest after qualifying exams.

DATA AND DATA COLLECTION PRESENTATIONS: This should be a thorough description of archival/secondary dataset; concrete strategy for or summary of data collection; specific discussion of field sites/entry into field or data access issues; and initial work with data including preliminary analyses. These presentations should be formally organized and formally delivered. As discussed, always start all presentations with concise summary of question and importance.

September 20 Schleifer, Feng, Eagle

September 27 Doxilly, Brown, Baker

October 4 Writing the Methods section
Read Firebaugh
Commitment for planned draft of key parts of paper

October 10 No Class – Fall Break!
Think about submitting an abstract to a regional sociological association meeting: Eastern Sociological Society (www.essnet.org); Southern Sociological Society(<http://www.msstate.edu/org/sss/>); Midwest Sociological Society (<http://www.themss.org/>); Pacific Sociological Society (<http://www.pacificsoc.org/>)

WORKING SESSIONS: This should be an intensive discussion with the class. The student should update us, address problems confronted, consider methodological concerns, show further analyses and discuss coding and operationalization issues, etc. These presentations should be less formal (no power point allowed) but should be organized potentially with handouts.

October 18 Writing the Results section
Working session: Schleifer, Feng

October 25 Theory-Methods-Results Integration
Working session: Eagle, Doxilly

November 1 The Submission and review process

Working session: Brown, Baker

Draft of Methods section due (reprieve for Brown and Baker)

ANALYSES PRESENTATIONS: This should be an initial presentation of further efforts of data analyses. Students may present drafts of tables or a summary of key findings. The class will make suggestions for further analyses, think over modeling and measurement decisions, discuss specification and estimation concerns, etc.

November 8 Eagle, Doxilly, Brown

November 15 Baker, Feng, Schleifer

FINAL PRESENTATIONS: This should be similar to a conference presentation. The student should present relatively polished key results, give a concise presentation of theoretical debates and methods, and articulate their potential contributions. Although substantial revision will be needed after these presentations, these should be fairly advanced and mature projects. These presentations should be formally organized and formally delivered.

November 22 Eagle, Doxilly, Brown

December 6 Baker, Feng, Schleifer

December 17 **DRAFT OF PARTS OF PAPER DUE, Friday 2pm**