Soci. 300  Sociological Analysis Mini-syllabus handout

Dr. Whitney Garcia

Catalog course description: SOCI 300 SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS (3) Sociological perspectives, data and techniques needed to identify and interpret social and cultural patterns. Develops computer and writing skills. Prerequisites: SOCI 101, ENGL 102 or ENGL 190, or consent of instructor. No prior computer training is required and students do not need to have taken statistics before completing this course. You do not have to be a major in Sociology to be successful in this class.

Course objectives:

- Introduce students to quantitative data analysis using SPSS.
- Cultivate students’ ability to develop meaningful interpretations of data.
- Develop students’ ability to write critically and effectively from a Sociological perspective.
- Guide students in the construction of research papers using a format with utility in undergraduate and graduate studies as well as in professional work.
- Afford students an opportunity to apply sociological perspectives learned in other courses.
- Foster students’ comfort with oral communication.

This course is focused on the acquisition of specific skills which are useful in academia and other professional contexts. Successful completion of this course typically yields more than a grade on the transcript. The skills which students have an opportunity to develop are concrete, useful, and marketable. In order to develop these skills, this class requires a substantial investment of time. While most students are amazed with what they master in this course, no one does so easily. If you do not have the time to invest in this class, it is better to register when your schedule permits. In this way you will be able to enjoy the course when you have the time to give to it and you can offer your seat to someone who is ready to complete the class.

Required Texts and materials: There is not course text. Outside readings are available through e-reserves or on my web page. Save your work to either your TU web disk or bring a flash drive to class. You are required to download and print assignment packets weekly from my web page https://tigerweb.towson.edu/garcia. A Three ring binder and colored highlighters are recommended.

Attendance is critical in this course. It is vital to your acquisition of skills and to the flow of the class for all of the other students. Most student do not miss any classes in this course and absenteeism is strongly associated with an inability to successfully complete the course. Therefore, there are attendance polices in this course.

- Attendance at every class is expected.
- I do not want the responsibility of determining if an absence is valid/excused or not valid/unexcused. It still has the same impact on your learning and on the class if you get behind. However, since I realize that in life we can all expect the unexpected, two absences are allowed with no imposed grade penalty. IF you meet with me or an ULA BEFORE the next class period.
- If you fail to meet with me or with an ULA BEFORE the next class period, each of the first two absences will result in a 3 point deduction from your final course grade. While absences are not always within your control, contacting me and/or the ULAs is. It is your responsibility to email me and let me know that you were absent and have met with the ULA.
- The third and fourth absences in excess of the two allowed will result in a final grade deduction of 3 points per absence IF you meet with me or the ULA BEFORE the next class and a 5 point per absence deduction is you do not. The fifth absence and all subsequent absences will result in a 10 point deduction per absence and a conference with me to discuss the feasibility of your staying in the class. The advanced option is not open to students with absenteeism deductions.
- Attendance means being on time and staying for the whole period. Please make an effort not to be late, especially on SPSS days.
There are two sections of the course. If you are unable to attend your regular section, please speak with me about attending the other section as an alternative to being absent. As well, there are two ULAs with tutorial sessions at different times and you are free to meet with either ULA and attend either or both tutorial periods.

**Course Components and grading:** Maximum course points = 330

This course is composed of two main content components:

1) SPSS data analysis and 2) Writing quantitative data analysis papers

These content components are learned and demonstrated in two segments of the course:

1) A required foundation in both of the content components and 2) completion of a term project which demonstrates proficiency in both content components.

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<tr>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>SPSS</th>
<th>WRITING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>140 points</td>
<td>Weekly SPSS homework- 20 pts</td>
<td>Writing a literature review &amp; other chapters together- 20 pts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SPSS midterm exam-50 pts</td>
<td>Completed CAPPUN paper- 50 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Project research</td>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>WRITING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC RESEARCH OPTION</td>
<td>No new SPSS</td>
<td>Individual research building on CAPPUN paper with new data sets (or topic of choice) using BASIC &amp; BASIC+ SPSS skills 100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>140 points</td>
<td>Final SPSS exam covering BASIC &amp; BASIC+ SPSS- 30 pts</td>
<td>Presentation or poster- 10 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADVANCED RESEARCH OPTION</td>
<td>Advanced SPSS working with interval/ratio level variables- Homework -10 pts</td>
<td>Individual research building on new topic of choice using BASIC, BASIC+, and advanced SPSS skills- 120 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>190 points</td>
<td>Final SPSS exam covering BASIC, BASIC+, &amp; ADVANCED SPSS-50 pts</td>
<td>Presentation or poster- 10 pts</td>
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**The basic research option** contains no new SPSS skills, a research project and paper that may build on the CAPPUN paper, a poster or brief presentation of the research, and a final SPSS exam. The maximum course grade achievable with this option is a B+.

**The advanced research option** contains two weeks of new SPSS skills, a research project and paper on a new topic of your choosing, a poster or presentation of the research, and a final SPSS exam. The maximum course grade achievable with this option is an A.

This option is open to students who:
- Completed a satisfactory CAPPUN paper
- Completed all of the foundational homework
- Satisfactorily completed the midterm exam
- Have no absenteeism deductions and have not missed more than two classes (except under very special circumstances). Attendance is considered throughout the semester. Therefore, if a student taking the advanced option exceeds the absences later in the semester, he or she will be moved to the basic option. If there is an emergency that affects attendance, please see me immediately.

**Please note:** I will only accept final papers from students who have had at least one individual term project conference with me.

Please see the full syllabus for statements about academic integrity, illness and bereavement policies, disability accommodations, and other classroom policies.