



**BHS 240 Research Methods
Fall 2011
Instructor: Joel Thiessen, Ph.D.**

CONTACTING THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR(S)

Class Time: TUE/THU 2:30pm-3:45pm

Office Hours: TUE/THU 1:00-2:15pm or by appointment

Email Address: jathiessen@ambrose.edu

Location: A2210

Office: L2092

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Lab Time: MON 1:00pm-2:15pm

Brianne Collins Office Hours: MON 12:00-1:00pm and 2:15-3:15pm

Email: bcollins@ambrose.edu

Location: A2133

Office: L2078

REQUIRED TEXT

Del Balso, Michael, and Alan Lewis. 2008. *First Steps: A Guide to Social Research. 4th Edition*. Toronto, ON: Thomson Canada Limited.

ON RESERVE

American Psychological Association. 2010. *Mastering APA Style: Instructor's Resource Guide. 6th Edition*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2004. "Grounded Theory." Pp.496-521 in *Approaches to Qualitative Research: a Reader on Theory and Practice*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Creswell, John W. 2003. "Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations." Pp.49-54 in *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. 2nd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jick, Todd. 1979. "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (4): 602-611.

Johnson, William A., Jr., et al. 2010. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual. 6th Edition*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Miller, William L., and Benjamin F. Crabtree. 2004. "Depth Interviewing." Pp.185-202 in *Approaches to Qualitative Research: a Reader on Theory and Practice*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Neuman, W. Lawrence, and Karen Robson. 2012. "Ethics in Social Research." Pp.42-62 in *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. 2nd Canadian Edition*. Toronto, ON: Pearson.

Yin, Robert K. 2003. "Conducting Case Studies: Collecting the Evidence." Pp.83-108 in *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the concepts and processes of both qualitative and quantitative social research. Research processes include problem definition, data collection and analysis. Students are expected to develop research skills through practical application. Lecture and laboratory components.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Gain an understanding of the logic and many stages of social research.
2. Become acquainted with research design and a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
3. Apply quantitative and qualitative techniques through “hands-on” exercises.
4. Draft a research proposal that accounts for theory and method.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic and Reading
<i>September 8</i>	Course Introduction
<i>September 12 - LAB</i>	<i>*NO LAB</i>
<i>September 13</i>	Why Know about Social Science Research? (Ch.1)
<i>September 15</i>	What is Social Science Research? (Ch.2: p.19-34)
<i>September 19 - LAB</i>	<i>*LIBRARY TOUR AND OVERVIEW</i>
<i>September 20</i>	What is Social Science Research? (Ch.2: p.34-45)
<i>September 22</i>	Finding and Refining the Topic (Ch.3: p.46-60)
<i>September 26 - LAB</i>	<i>*LITERATURE REVIEW LAB (Ch. 3: p.60-69)</i>
<i>September 27</i>	Ethics (Neuman and Robson Article)
<i>September 29</i>	<i>*NO CLASS (Program Day)</i>
<i>October 3 - LAB</i>	<i>*ETHICS LAB</i>
<i>October 4</i>	Sampling: Choosing Who or What to Study (Ch.4)
<i>October 6</i>	Social Survey (Ch.5: p.97-115)
<i>October 10 - LAB</i>	<i>*NO LAB (Thanksgiving)</i>
<i>October 11</i>	Social Survey (Ch.5: p.115-129)
<i>October 13</i>	Research Proposal (Creswell Article)
<i>October 17 - LAB</i>	<i>*SOCIAL SURVEY LAB</i>
<i>October 18</i>	Midterm Exam
<i>October 20</i>	Statistics Canada Presenter - Darren Lezubski
<i>October 24 - LAB</i>	<i>*NO LAB</i>
<i>October 25</i>	Interviews (Miller and Crabtree Article)
<i>October 27</i>	Grounded Theory (Charmaz Article)
<i>October 31 - LAB</i>	<i>*INTERVIEW LAB</i>
<i>November 1</i>	Experimental Research (Ch.6: p.130-145)
<i>November 3</i>	Experimental Research (Ch.6: p.145-154)
<i>November 7 - LAB</i>	<i>*NO LAB</i>
<i>November 8</i>	Field Research (Ch.7: p.155-165)
<i>November 10</i>	Field Research (Ch.7: p.165-179)
<i>November 14 - LAB</i>	<i>*PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION LAB</i>

<i>November 15</i>	Indirect or Nonreactive Methods (Ch.8)
<i>November 17</i>	Case Study (Yin Article)
<i>November 21 - LAB</i>	*CONTENT ANALYSIS LAB
<i>November 22</i>	Mixed Methods (Jick Article)
<i>November 24</i>	What are the Results? (Ch.9: p.205-223)
<i>November 28 - LAB</i>	* NO LAB
<i>November 29</i>	What are the Results (Ch.9: p.223-238)
<i>December 1</i>	The Research Report: The End and the Beginning (Ch.10: p.239-244)
<i>December 5 – LAB</i>	*INTERPRETING QUANTITATIVE DATA RESEARCH LAB
<i>December 6</i>	The Research Report: The End and the Beginning (Ch.10: p.245-261)
<i>December 8</i>	Research Presentations (BHS Faculty)

LEARNING AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

In the Behavioural Science Department we believe that learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and teacher and between student and student (i.e., learning is not just “downloading” information from teacher to student). Therefore, it is expected that professors will come to each class well read and prepared to engage students on the topic at hand, giving students the utmost attention and respect. In turn, it is expected that students will take an active role in the learning process. This includes: (a) regular class attendance, (b) reading course material in advance of class, (c) showing up to class on time, and (d) attentively and proactively being “present” at class (i.e., not on the internet, not texting, not conversing with the person beside you). Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian ethos of excellence and respect that lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. Therefore, students will receive an automatic 10% deduction from their final grade each time that they violate any of the above offenses after the 2nd offense, and the professor has the right to ask the student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

* Failure to submit all assignments will result in an automatic failing final grade.

Midterm Exam (<u>October 18</u>)	15%
Lab Assignments (<u>Throughout the semester</u>)	49%
Research Proposal (<u>Due November 30</u>)	21%
Final Exam (<u>Saturday, December 10 @ 1:00pm – A2210</u>)	15%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

1) Midterm Exam (15%) – October 18

50 multiple choice questions based on class readings, lectures, and labs (Chapters 1-5 and Supplemental Readings).

2) Lab Assignments (49%)

Brianne Collins is the lab instructor for this course. Labs are compulsory for all students. Absences from labs will result in a 3% reduction per missed lab in the final grade. Details and expectations for each lab assignment will be handed out during each lab gathering, with assignments typically due at the following lab class. Each lab assignment is worth 7% of your final grade.

3) Research Proposal (21%) – November 30 at 11:55pm on Moodle*

Following the template outlined in class, students will prepare an 8 page research proposal (excluding title page and bibliography) of a hypothetical study you might conduct based on your exposure to various research designs during the course of this term. Proposals should be double spaced, with 1” (2.54cm) margins on all sides, 12 point font, and ASA or APA formatting. Students will be graded for grammar and writing and social scientific content. Therefore, ensure that your document is well-written, clearly and logically organized, and explicitly draws on lecture notes, course readings, and external resources. This means that all theories and concepts should be clearly defined and explained prior to using them as an explanatory and analytical tool, and all statements must be supported with empirical and rational evidence. Late assignments will lose 10% per day.

4) Final Exam (15%) - Saturday, December 10 @ 1:00pm – A2210

50 multiple choice questions based on class readings, lectures, and labs (Chapters 6-10 and Supplemental Readings).

Students may request revised final exams if they have three exams in one 24-hour period or two exams at the same time. Final exam schedule revision request forms are available at the Registrar’s Office and must be handed in by Monday, November 28, 2011 (Fall semester) or Monday, April 9, 2012 (winter semester). If you do not have your request in by this date, all exams within a 24-hour period will have to be written as scheduled. If you have two exams at the same time, you will be given four hours to write both exams.

Graded final examinations will be available for supervised review at the request of the student. Please contact your instructor. Please note that final grades will be available on the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

GRADING ASSIGNMENTS

The available letter grades and percentages for course grades are as follows. A detailed chart of what constitutes an ‘A,’ ‘B,’ or ‘C,’ etc. is also included below:

A	96% and above	(GPA – 4.0)	C	63 - 67%	(GPA – 2.0)
A	91 - 95%	(GPA – 4.0)	C-	60 - 62%	(GPA – 1.7)
A-	86 - 90%	(GPA – 3.7)	D+	56 - 59%	(GPA – 1.3)
B+	82 - 85%	(GPA – 3.3)	D	50 - 55%	(GPA – 1.0)
B	75 - 81%	(GPA – 3.0)	F	Below 50%	
B-	72 - 74%	(GPA – 2.7)			
C+	68 - 71%	(GPA – 2.3)			

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – Sunday, September 18, 2011 (Fall semester) or Sunday, January 22, 2011 (winter semester). These courses will not appear on the student’s transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date.
- Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the “audit” up to the “drop” date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a **new policy**, beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year.
- Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (**withdraw**) – Monday, November 14, 2010 (Fall semester) or Friday, March 23, 2011 (Winter semester). A grade of “W” will appear on the student’s transcript.
- Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.
- An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.
- It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.
- Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension” from the Registrar’s Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”
- We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else’s ideas, words, or work as one’s own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person’s ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student’s permanent record.
- Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

	Articulation of social scientific thinking that is clear, precise, and well-reasoned (i.e. accurate use of paradigms in analysis)	Correctly employs key social scientific paradigms, theories, concepts, and research	Clear demonstration of important implications and consequences	Logical and coherent argument that flows from beginning to end	Grammar and spelling
A	Consistently achieved	Consistently achieved – paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are used accurately and in relevant ways	Can clearly state how the chosen topic bears on the development of social scientific thought Incorporates a balance of social scientific description and analysis	Clearly states central thesis and purpose of paper Good knowledge of topic with considerable originality of thought Carefully selected details which support general statements and central thesis	No spelling, grammar, or other writing errors. Words, sentences, and paragraphs flow smoothly
B	Mostly achieved	Mostly achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are used fairly accurately.	Some idea of how chosen topic bears on the development of social scientific thought Some elements of social scientific description or analysis	Clear central thesis Adequate engagement with topic, but some originality Appropriate details most of the time. Adequate synthesis evident	Some spelling, grammar, and writing errors Some awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs
C	Inconsistently achieved <i>And so on....</i>	Inconsistently achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and research are often used inaccurately	Little connection made to the development of social scientific thought No balance between social scientific description and analysis	Adequately limited central thesis Adequate knowledge; ideas are conventional Details may be repetitious. Little synthesis evident	Several spelling, grammar, and writing errors Several awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs