



**BHS 240 Research Methods (3)  
Fall 2012  
Instructor: Joel Thiessen, Ph.D.**

**CONTACTING THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR(S)**

**Class Time:** TUE/THU 9:45-11:00am

**Office Hours:** TUE/THU 2:00-4:00pm or by appointment

**Email Address:** [jathiessen@ambrose.edu](mailto:jathiessen@ambrose.edu)

**Location:** A2133

**Office:** L2105

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**Ryan Matchullis (Lab Marker) Office Hours:** By appointment

**Ryan Matchullis Email:** [r.mathchullis@ucalgary.ca](mailto:r.mathchullis@ucalgary.ca)

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Del Balso, Michael, and Alan Lewis. 2012. *First Steps: A Guide to Social Research. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.* Toronto, ON: Thomson Canada Limited.

**ON RESERVE**

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

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

Johnson, William A., Jr., et al. 2010. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual. 6<sup>th</sup> 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. 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Edition.* Toronto, ON: Pearson.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An introduction to the concepts and processes of both qualitative and quantitative social research. Research processes include problem definition, designing a study, selection and development of theory, literature review, data collection, interpretation and analysis of data, and writing the research report. Students will develop research skills through the practical application of material covered in class, in the text readings, and in weekly labs.

## **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**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and Reading</b>
<i>September 6</i>	Course Introduction
<i>September 11</i>	Why Know about Social Science Research? (Ch.1)
<i>September 13</i>	What is Social Science Research? (Ch.2: p.20-33)
<i>September 18</i>	What is Social Science Research? (Ch.2: p.33-44)
<i>September 20</i>	Library Tour and Overview (Sandy Ayer)
<i>September 25</i>	*Finding and Refining the Topic (Ch.3)
<i>September 27</i>	<i>NO CLASS (Spiritual Emphasis Days)</i>
<i>October 2</i>	Sampling: Choosing Who or What to Study (Ch.4)
<i>October 4</i>	*Ethics (Neuman and Robson Article)
<i>October 9</i>	*Social Survey (Ch.5: p.97-116)
<i>October 11</i>	Social Survey (Ch.5: p.116-129)
<i>October 16</i>	Research Proposal (Creswell Article)
<i>October 18</i>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
<i>October 23</i>	Interviews (Miller and Crabtree Article)
<i>October 25</i>	*Interviews (Miller and Crabtree Article)
<i>October 30</i>	Experimental Research (Ch.6: p.130-142)
<i>November 1</i>	Experimental Research (Ch.6: p.142-155)
<i>November 6</i>	Field Research (Ch.7: p.156-166)
<i>November 8</i>	*Field Research (Ch.7: p.166-181)
<i>November 13</i>	Indirect or Nonreactive Methods (Ch.8)
<i>November 15</i>	*Indirect or Nonreactive Methods (Ch.8)
<i>November 20</i>	What are the Results? (Ch.9: p.210-224)
<i>November 22</i>	*What are the Results? (Ch.9: p.224-242)
<i>November 27</i>	The Research Report: The End and the Beginning (Ch.10)
<i>November 29</i>	The Research Report: The End and the Beginning (Ch.10)
<i>December 4</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. Failure to adhere to this will result in the professor either asking the student to leave the classroom for the remainder of the lecture or, in extreme cases, to possibly withdraw from or fail the entire course.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING**

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

Midterm Exam ( <b><u>October 18</u></b> )	15%
Lab Assignments ( <b><u>Throughout the semester</u></b> )	50%
Research Proposal ( <b><u>Due Friday, November 23 @ 9:00am - Moodle</u></b> )	20%
Final Exam ( <b><u>Thursday, December 6 @ 1:00pm – A2210</u></b> )	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 (50%)**

There are seven lab assignments in this course. Details for each lab assignment will be given in the classes with an asterisk (\*) beside them on the Course Outline above. Ryan Matchullis will grade each lab assignment for this course and all questions pertaining to grading should be directed to Ryan.

### **3) Research Proposal (20%) – Friday, November 23 at 9:00am on Moodle**

More details to be provided in class, but students will prepare a 6 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, writing, social scientific content, the accuracy and level of detail in their methodology, and their ability to fulfill the various objectives in the detailed assignment. Therefore, ensure that your document is well-written, clearly and logically organized, and explicitly draws on lecture notes, course readings, and external resources. Late assignments will lose 10% per day.

**4) Final Exam (15%) – Thursday, December 6 @ 1:00pm – A2210**

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

Please note: 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, October 29, 2012 (Fall semester) or Monday, March 4, 2013 (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.

**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**

- Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.
- 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](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).
- Course changes, including adding or dropping a course, may be made during the Registration Revision period, as outlined in the Calendar of Events. All course changes must be recorded on a Registration

form, available from the Office of the Registrar. Due to circumstances such as class size, prerequisites or academic policy, the submission of a Registration form does not guarantee that a course will be added or removed from a student's registration. Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit up to the date specified in the Calendar of Events, although students are not entitled to a tuition adjustment or refund after the Registration Revision period.

- The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – Sunday, September 16, 2012 (Fall semester) or Sunday, January 20, 2013 (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**, that came into effect 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 12, 2012 (Fall semester) or Friday, March 22, 2013 (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.
- 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."
- Please note that final grades will be available on the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.
- 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.
- 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.

	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
<b>A</b>	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>B</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
<b>C</b>	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