

January 2015

University of British Columbia
Department of Educational Studies

EDST 515 (022)

Survey Research Methods: A Mixed Methods Approach

Time: Mondays, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Room: West Mall Annex 110

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Overview of the Course

In this course we will examine survey research strategies – from a mixed methods perspective – employed in contemporary social science research. We will begin with an overview of history of survey research methods, debates, different perspectives on what constitutes survey research, ethical issues, and the advantages and disadvantages of surveys relative to alternative research designs. Next, the key elements in survey research design and analysis will be covered in detail, including the following: problem formulation; problems of measurement; scale construction; sampling; questionnaire construction; piloting; approaches to survey administration (mail and telephone surveys, face to face interviews, online surveys); issues of reliability, validity, trustworthiness, goodness; enhancing response rates; assessing costs of questionnaire administration; data clean-up and processing; preliminary analyses of results; coding and analysing open-ended responses and interview data; and comparisons of survey results with existing data bases (*e.g.*, Census, Statistics Canada data bases). Finally, we will address the following topics: gaining access to and analysing secondary data sources, triangulation of survey research with other methods, and conducting longitudinal studies.

The focus of this course is on survey research design. The course is intended to teach students the skills required to employ survey methods in their masters and doctoral theses, to devise research projects related to their employment, as well as those who want to be able to examine this type of research critically.

Upon completion of this course, you will

- * understand the required elements of survey research
- * design a survey research project, including formulation of problem, development of a sampling strategy, completion of ethics approval forms, development of a survey instrument, preparation of a budget and schedule, and a strategy for analysis and report writing
- * be familiar with a) secondary data analysis techniques, b) triangulation of methods, data, and analyses, and c) longitudinal research designs.

Prerequisites

Students should have a basic understanding of social science research design. Completion of EDUC 500 or equivalent and other research methods courses (*e.g.*, EPSE 482; EPSE 596) is recommended.

Assignments and Grading

1. Assignments

Assignments are designed to assist students in carrying out projects using survey methods, including initial formulation of the research problem, design of the survey instrument, data entry and analysis, and report writing.

Nine mini-assignments will be completed during the course. Assignment 4, worth **40%** of the final grade, entails a revision of assignments 1 – 3. *A grade for Assignment 4 will not be given unless Assignments 1-3 have been submitted at least once.* The final assignment will consist of revision and synthesis of the 9 previous assignments into a portfolio and represents **50%** of the final grade. *A grade for the final assignment will not be given unless Assignments 5-9 have been submitted at least once.*

Assignments must be handed in on the dates specified on page 6.

2. Participation

The course is designed as a seminar and active student participation in classroom discussions and activities is expected. The grade for participation will be based on three criteria: 1) attendance, 2) evidence of having read the relevant readings, and 3) meaningful contributions in class. A total of **10%** of the grade may be earned through participation.



Academic Misconduct

Please ensure that you read the UBC academic integrity policies:

<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/>
<http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/policies.htm>
www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct are serious academic offences. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask me.

Required Reading

Andres, L. (2012). *Designing and doing surveys*. London: Sage.

Recommended Reading

Palys, A. (2008). *Research decisions. Quantitative and qualitative perspectives*. Toronto: Nelson.

A fee of **\$10.00** may be collected at the beginning of the term to cover costs of additional readings and handouts to be distributed over the term.

Outlines for each class will be available beforehand on WebCT.

Additional Readings

- Babbie, E., & Halley, F. (1995). *Adventures in social research: Data analysis using SPSS*. Pine Forge Press.
- Bell, J. (2005). *Doing your research project. A guide for first-time researchers in education and social science*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Bergman, M.M. (2008). *Advances in mixed methods research*. London: Sage.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2006). *How to research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bradburn, N.M., & Sudman, S. (1988). *Polls and surveys. Understanding what they tell us*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Braverman, M.T., & Slater, J.K. (Eds.) (1996). *Advances in survey research. New Directions for Evaluation #70*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Czaja, R., & Blair, J. (2005). *Designing surveys: A guide to decisions and procedures*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- De Vaus, D. (2002). *Analyzing social science data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- De Vaus, D. (2002). *Surveys in social research*. London: Routledge.
- Devellis, R.F. (1991). *Scale development*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Foddy, W. (1994). *Constructing questions for interviews and questionnaires*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fowler, F. J. J. (2009). *Survey research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Groves, R.M., Fowler, F.J., Couper, M.P., Lepkowski, J.M., Singer, E., & Tourangeau, R. (2004). *Survey methodology*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Guppy, N. & Gray, G. (2008). *Successful surveys*. Toronto: Nelson.
- Igo, S. E. (2007). *The averaged American: Surveys, citizens, and the making of a mass public*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Lazarsfeld, P. (1944). The controversy over detailed interviews - An offer for negotiation. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 8(1), 38-60.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Nardi, P.M. (2006). *Doing survey research. A guide to quantitative methods*. Toronto: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Norusis, M. J. (2010). *PASW (SPSS) 18.0 Guide to data analysis*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.
- Payne, S. (1951). *The art of asking questions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A. (2005). *Designing and conducting survey research. A comprehensive guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sapsford, R. (2007). *Survey research*. London: Sage.
- Saris, W.E., Gallhofer, I.N., & Sirkin, R.M. (2006). *Design, evaluation, and analysis of questionnaires for survey research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Sudman, S., & Bradburn, N. M. (1982). *Asking questions. A practical guide to questionnaire design*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Viswanathan, M. (2005). *Measurement error and research design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Weisberg, H.F. (2005). *The total survey error approach*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



EDST 515 Class Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Class 1 Jan. 12	Introduction to the course Confessions of a survey researcher History and contemporary issues related to survey research	Andres, Ch. 1	
Class 2 Jan 19	Overview of the survey research process	Andres, Ch. 2	
Class 3 Jan 26	Types of surveys and designs Advantages and disadvantages of surveys	Andres, Ch. 4	
Class 4 Feb 2	Developing a research problem Developing hypotheses Formulating a model Developing a “blueprint” Anticipating analyses of the results	Andres, Ch. 3	
Feb 9	BC Family Day – no class		
Feb 16	UBC Reading Week – no class		
Class 5 Feb 23	Ethics Sampling theory and practice	Andres, All chapters Andres, Ch. 6	Assignment 1. Formulation of a research problem, hypotheses, and model - draft
<p>BREB form and guidance notes: http://rise.ubc.ca/ TCPS document http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf TCPS tutorial http://tcps2core.ca/welcome</p>			
Class 6 March 2	Non-response and sources of error	Andres, Ch. 6	Assignment 2. Ethical review form - draft
Class 7 March 9	Developing survey questions Questionnaire construction Wording of questions Format and design Questionnaire construction Measurement Scale construction Multiple indicators Piloting	Andres, Ch. 5	Assignment 3. Description of the sampling strategy - draft

Class Schedule (continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Class 8 Mar 16	Validity and reliability Schedule Budget estimates	Andres, Ch. 7 & 8 *Palys, Ch. 9 & 10	Assignment 4. Revised formulation of the research problem, hypotheses, model, of the sample, ethical review
Class 9 Mar 23	Survey formats: Mail-return self-report Telephone Interviews “Online” surveys Web based survey administration	Andres, Ch. 4	Assignment 5. Budget and schedule Assignment 6. Survey instrument – draft
Class 10 March 28 ** Note: Saturday Class 9:30 am- 1:30pm Computer Lab SCARFE	Code book construction Data transfer and entry Preparing data for analysis Coding open ended questions Basic data analysis using SPSS An overview of analyses of open ended questions	Andres, Ch. 9	Assignment 7. Package of pre-contact items - draft
Class 11 March 30	Administration of surveys Enhancing response rates Non-response Management of the project Report writing Using secondary data sources Triangulation of survey research with other methods	Andres, Ch. 8 Andres, Ch. 10	Assignment 8. Revised survey instrument Assignment 9. Code book -draft
April 6	<i>Easter Monday – no class</i>		
April 13 (Monday)	Hand in final assignment		Final Assignment. Portfolio of revised versions of Assignments 1 - 9

* Recommended readings



Assignments

Assignment 1.

1. Describe your research problem. The problem should focus on a specific educational issue that interests you.

Examples:

Do adolescents' attitudes toward compulsory work experience as part of the school curriculum vary by their high school program (*i.e.*, academic or non-academic)?

Are there gender, socio-economic, and ethnic differences in university undergraduate completion rates?

To what extent do years of experience and level of education influence teachers' use of technology in the classroom?

2. Provide clear definitions for the terms specified in your research problem (*e.g.*, *academic program*, *socio-economic status*, *ethnicity*)
3. Specify all the independent and dependent variables for your study.
4. Outline the research hypotheses for your problem.
5. Use #1 - 4 to design a model for your study. Provide both a schematic model and a written description. Specify the dependent variable(s), key independent variables, and all mediating and moderating variables.

Assignment 2

Describe your sampling strategy in detail. Include descriptions of your frame and target and population, intended sample size, and method of sample selection. Describe whether you will employ non-probabilistic, probabilistic sampling strategies, or both, and whether you will use a stratified approach to sampling. Discuss potential non-sampling, sampling, and non-response errors.

Assignment 3

Complete the UBC ethics review forms for your survey research project. Begin constructing draft letters as required for approval by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) (see Assignment 7).

Assignment 4

Revise and refine Assignments 1 to 3. Submit Assignment 4 as a complete package of the revised versions of Assignments 1 to 3.

Assignment 5

Devise a detailed budget for your study. Provide detailed costs (*e.g.*, printing, postage, data entry). Consider alternate scenarios and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Specify a schedule for your study, including timing of survey administration, plans for follow-up, and quality control.

Assignment 6

Develop the survey instrument to be used in your survey project. Prepare two versions from the following: mail out survey, telephone survey, face-to-face survey, online survey using a mixed-methods approach. Plan to conduct a pilots of your survey instruments before completion of Assignment 8.

Assignment 7

Prepare a package of materials required for BREB approval.

Assignment 8

Submit revised drafts of two your survey instrument.

Assignment 9

Prepare a coding scheme for your study in SPSS (Data File Information).

FINAL ASSIGNMENT – PORTFOLIO

Synthesize and revise Assignments 1 through 9 and organize these materials into a portfolio. The grade will depend on the quality, evidence of progress, and level of effort expended to develop the survey research portfolio.