

SUMMER 2021



300-101-LA

Introduction to Methodology in the Social Sciences

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Academic discipline for this course
Methodology

Prerequisites
Quantitative Methods

Ministerial Objectives
The following objective is fully met through this course:

022Q To apply the scientific approach used in the field of Social Science to empirical research.

Credits, Course length, and hours

- Credits: 2.00
- Course length: 60 hours
- Hours: the weighting for this course is 1-3-2. This means that the Minister of Education assesses the workload of this course as following: for every hour of class time students should put in 1 hour of homework (reading, assignments, papers, studying or review of class notes). This means that an average of 4 hours per week should be devoted to this class outside of class hours.

About the Instructor

- Name: Mark Paradis, PhD
- Office hours: By appointment
- Email: MIO.

If you are having any problems or difficulties in the course, or if you have any questions whatsoever, do not hesitate to get in touch with me by MIO.

Evaluation:

- Research Question: 15%
- Literature Review: 15%
- Theory and Design: 15%
- Oral Presentation: 20%
- Final Paper: 35%

This course will examine the entire process of doing research in the social and human sciences. Students will see what is meant by the scientific method, the difficulties involved in doing research with humans, and ethical considerations that affect researchers' work. You will learn which research techniques are used in the different disciplines they are studying. You will use their knowledge of quantitative methods and research techniques to evaluate research reported in the media, texts, and journals, and you will create, implement, and report on a research project of their own.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

This is a course in Methodology. The principal objective of the course is to initiate you to the basics of research design in the social sciences by teaching you to carry out a research project of your own. This course builds upon the techniques that you have acquired in Quantitative Methods.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

1. Explain the the scientific approach used in Social Science.
2. Identify and correctly formulate a research question.
3. Select and justify a research method and technique that correspond to the question identified.
4. Select an appropriate population and sample.
5. Produce a data collection instrument based on the research method and techniques selected.
6. Collect data systematically using the instrument produced.
7. Analyze the data using appropriate statistics.
8. Interpret the research results as they relate to the question identified.
9. Produce a comprehensive research report.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXIT PROFILE OF THE PROGRAM

Students will:

- Identify the main course-specific facts, notions, terms, principles, and concepts and apply this knowledge appropriately
- Use empirical evidence to support their conclusions
- Apply their knowledge of the scientific approach to empirical data
- Demonstrate a knowledge and application of qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Demonstrate qualities associated with a scientific mind and critical thinking
- Understand ethical issues involved in performing research
- Communicate ideas clearly in written format
- Work effectively as a member of a group
- Use appropriate information-processing technologies.

GROUP PROJECTS

Each student will be assigned to a group of 4-6 students. The group will form a research question, propose a theory to answer the question, create a data collection method, carry out the data collection together, and present their preliminary findings. You must share the workload of group assignments equally. On each group assignment, each member must include a statement of what they contributed to the assignment.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

The main goal of this course is to guide you through the process of completing a research project. As such, class time will be divided between the following activities:

- **Online Lectures:** Lectures will be recorded and posted on Lea.
- **Writing Days:** You will be expected to make progress on the different assignments. When the assignment is a group assignment, students may communicate through Teams, Skype, or another platform of the group's choosing.
- **Presentation:** Students will present their projects on Zoom at the end of the semester.

EVALUATIONS

- Research Question (Group Assignment) 15%
- Literature Review (Individual Assignment) 15%
- Theory and Research Design (Group Assignment) 15%
- Oral Presentation (Group Assignment) 20%
 - *Each group will prepare and deliver a 15 minute oral defense to the class on the topic, methodology, and main findings of their Integrated Interdisciplinary Paper. This presentation is expected to be visual and interactive. More guidelines will be provided in class. After your presentation, 5 minutes will be given to questions/suggestions from other students.*
- Final Project (Individual Assignment) 35%
 - *Paper must be 8-10 pages in length (excluding cover page, references list, tables, etc), include at least 5 academic sources, and properly cite sources.*

DATA ANALYSIS

As part of the group project, students will need to complete data analysis of their results. There will be three (3) options for data analysis. Your groups will need to agree on your chosen option, so discuss this when forming groups.

1. **R:** R is an open-source statistical software that is free to download and use. While it does have a steeper learning curve, R is one of the 2 most commonly used statistical software in newer social science jobs (the other is Python). Tutorials will be provided.
2. **SPSS:** SPSS requires an expensive license to operate. It is relatively easy to use and you may have experience with it from QM. While less commonly used in jobs in the new data economy, SPSS is still fairly common in the workplace. Some tutorials will be provided.
3. **Excel:** Most students probably already have access to Excel. It is relatively easy to use, but is by far the least capable. While almost never used in jobs in the new data economy, Excel is still fairly common in the workplace (not for statistics). No tutorials will be provided.

SCHEDULE

Please note: This schedule is subject to change. I will inform you of any changes through email and/or in class.

	Date	Topic	Assignments
Week 1	June 2	• Introduction to the Course • Basics of Research • Philosophy of Research • Validity • Ethics in Research	
	June 3	• Internal Validity • Introduction to Experimental Methods • Introduction to Non-Experimental Methods	
	June 4	• Introduction to Survey Research • Structure of a Peer-Reviewed Article • Selecting a Research Question • Conducting a Literature Review	Assigned – Research Question
Week 2	June 7	• Writing Day – Research Question	Due – Research Question (by end of day)
	June 8	• Writing Day – Literature Review	Assigned – Literature Review
	June 9	• Writing Day – Literature Review	Due – Literature Review (by end of class)
	June 10	• Theory of Measurement • Survey Design • Scales and Indexes	Assigned – Theory and Research Design
	June 11	• Writing Day – Survey Instrument Design	
Week 3	June 14	• Writing Day – Survey Instrument Design	Due – Theory and Research Design (by end of day)
	June 15	• External Validity • Sampling Distribution • Types of Samples	
	June 16	• Writing Day – Conduct Survey	
	June 17	• Writing Day – Conduct Survey	
	June 18	• Writing Day – Conduct Survey	
Week 4	June 21	• Data Analysis – Introduction to R or SPSS	
	June 22	• Data Analysis – Introduction to R or SPSS	
	June 23	• Writing Day – Data Analysis	
	June 24	NO CLASS – HOLIDAY	
	June 25	• Writing Day – Data Analysis	
Week 5	June 28	• Writing Day – Final Project	
	June 29	• In-class presentations	Presentations
	June 30	• Writing Day – Final Project	Due – Final Paper (by end of class)

COURSE POLICIES:

To ensure that you have the best possible chance of succeeding in this course and that you have the best possible learning environment, the following policies are in effect:

Email/MIO ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments sent by email WILL NOT be accepted unless otherwise specified.

LATE assignments: One of the goals of CEGEP is to help you to develop skills in managing deadlines. All assignments are to be handed in on the day assigned at the beginning of class. Late marks will be given to all assignments received after class has begun, unless official documentation is presented to the Registrar's office. Late marks are as follows: 5% per day. Late assignments will not be accepted more than a week late.

CLASSROOM COMPORTMENT guidelines: Any meetings or discussions on Zoom are to be treated as if taking place in a classroom. The classroom is an educational environment. All students will be treated with respect, regarded as equals, and treated fairly without discrimination. On your part, you will be expected to respect your peers' right to learn in the best possible environment and to act as responsible adults. To this end, completing work unrelated to the course, private conversations, talking during lectures, sleeping, and any other disruptive behaviour is not permitted. In particular, the following are prohibited during class time: using cell phones for calling, texting or photography, listening to an iPod or other audio device, using a laptop for purposes other than note-taking or unrelated to the course, chatting while teacher or classmates are speaking, passing notes to a classmate(s), doing work/reading material for another course, putting your head down on the desk.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY and EVALUATION: The College has established a comprehensive policy on the evaluation of students, which spells out the criteria on literacy, plagiarism, cheating and attendance. This policy will be applied in the course. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the policy. Key excerpts are printed in the current college calendar. Disciplinary action runs from receiving a zero grade on the work in question to expulsion from the college. Here's a more constructive solution: If you are having trouble with any part of this course, come see me as soon as possible. There are usually more solutions available if we address the problem early. You should retain all copies, rough drafts, notes etc. of all your work so that should you wish to appeal a grade, you will have evidence of your work. Save all of your work on your own data storage device.

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND PARTICIPATION are extremely important. They are an integral part of a positive attitude toward your academic responsibilities. Attendance has a proven positive effect on your success in the course. Students who miss more than 3 classes/meetings are usually unable to successfully pass the course because they have missed too much material. Avoid arriving late to class or leaving early as it distracts your fellow students and it will result in your being marked absent for the day. It is not enough to just hand your work in: you must attend classes and be "mentally" present during classes. Chronic absenteeism will affect your grade. If you miss a class, get the notes from a classmate. You can also see me during my office hours

LITERACY: The proper use of English in all your work is very important and will affect your grade in this course. If I cannot understand what you are trying to say, I cannot give you a grade. In addition to disciplinary content, such written work will also be evaluated for adequate writing style and mechanics. The correction of written English is part of the quality of the teaching offered at Champlain Saint Lambert. One of the goals of this course is for students to use and develop their English-language skills in reading and oral comprehension, speaking and writing. All assignments and papers must be typed, be presented in the correct form, be well-written and organized and be printed using a computer printer unless otherwise specified. Evaluation criteria applied are academic tone, appropriate disciplinary vocabulary, flow and clarity of style, continuity, correct

paragraph and sentence structures, grammar, punctuation, spelling and use of adequate in-text and end-text documentation according to Chicago, in-text style. There are language tutors and other services available at the learning center for any Champlain students in need of help in this area. it is your responsibility to get the help you need.

CLEAR GRADING: Every evaluation method will contain clear grading criteria. Numerical grades will be assigned as follows, as per the College policy: 90-100% for work that is of outstanding quality, 80-90% for very good work quality, 70-79% good quality work, 60-69% work that is of satisfactory quality, and 0-59% for work that is of unsatisfactory quality (failure).