

Capstone Research Practicum (M)

SOC 497 (CAPS, 3 credits)

Prereqs: SOC 317 or concurrent enrollment, junior standing, certified major in sociology
Spring 2016

Instructor: Alair MacLean
VMMC 202H
360-546-9177
alair.maclean@wsu.edu

Class times: TU, TH 13.25-14.40

Class room: VLIB 201

Office hours: TU, TH 12-13, in VMMC 202H, sign up for office hours at
<http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/efhjv> (or by appointment)

I. Course Overview: This course is designed to introduce undergraduate Sociology majors to the process of advanced research and, in the process, to draw upon their courses in theory, statistics, and research methods in the discipline. During the semester, students will produce a substantial piece of research related to an area within the discipline of sociology, such as inequality, the environment, or criminology. The research area will vary depending on the instructor. During this semester, we will examine the general area of inequality, focusing on the recent characterization of the contemporary era as a “second gilded age.”

II. Course Readings: Required readings are drawn from the following books and articles:

- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2008. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd Edition. The University of Chicago Press. (Designated as **Craft**.)
- Fischer, Claude S. and Michael Hout. 2008. *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years*. Russell Sage Foundation. (Designated as **Century**.)
- Garcia-Penalosa, C. and E. Orgiazzi. 2013. "Factor Components of Inequality: A Cross-Country Study." *Review of Income and Wealth* 59(4):689-727.
- Glaser, Joseph. 2010. *Understanding Style: Practical Ways to Improve Your Writing*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Designated as **Style**.)
- Lin, K. H. and D. Tomaskovic-Devey. 2013. "Financialization and US Income Inequality, 1970-2008." *American Journal of Sociology* 118(5):1284-1329.
- Luttig, M. 2013. "The Structure of Inequality and Americans' Attitudes toward Redistribution." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 77(3):811-821.
- Reardon, S. F. and K. Bischoff. 2011. "Income Inequality and Income Segregation." *American Journal of Sociology* 116(4):1092-1153.
- Marsden, Peter V. 2012. *Social Trends in American Life: Findings from the General Social Survey since 1972*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Designated as **GSS**.)
- Western, Bruce, Deirdre Bloome, and Christine Percheski. 2008. "Inequality among American Families with Children, 1975 to 2005." *American Sociological Review* 73(6):903-920.

WSU Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate	Student Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students should be able to:	Course Topics/Dates The following topic(s)/dates(s) will address this outcome:	Evaluation of Outcome: This outcome will be evaluated primarily by:
Diversity	Understand, analyze, critique inequality along the dimensions of class, race, and/or gender	All substantive course sessions will advance this goal	Class participation, the assignments contributing to the final research paper
Information Literacy	Locate, categorize, critique, and evaluate sources of information	Introduction (1/14); Century (1/19; 1/21); and Research (3/22; 3/24)	All assignments, but especially proposal and bibliography
Critical and Creative Thinking	Contextualize, discuss, and compare key scholars, findings, and theories in sociology	History (1/19; 1/21); and Trends (2/2; 2/4; 2/9; 2/11; 2/16; 2/18)	Weekly response cards, paper final draft
Communication	Create, tailor, and present scientifically based messages to the proper audience	Introduction (1/11); and Research (4/5; 4/7)	Weekly response cards, class participation
Writing	Communicate through writing comprehension of assigned reading materials	Writing (4/19; 4/21; 4/26; 4/28)	Final paper
Quantitative Reasoning	Draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis and presentation of social science data	Introduction (1/14); and Research (3/22; 3/24; 3/29; 3/31)	Proposal, rough, final draft paper
Depth, Breadth and Integration of Learning	Demonstrate the ability to integrate history, methods, and concepts of sociology to produce theoretically grounded empirical research	All class sessions	Weekly response cards, class participation, final paper

III. Assignments:

The focus of this course is a 15-20 page research paper. Before handing in the final draft of the paper, students will be responsible for handing in a research proposal, bibliography, annotations, outline, and rough draft. See below for points awarded for each type of assignment. (Deadlines are on the schedule on the last page of the syllabus.)

Students will also be responsible for reading responses due at the beginning of each class session, i.e., 13.25. In order to get credit for the reading responses, you must remain in class for the entire session.

Grading Policy

These are the standards for your overall grade: A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 67-69; D 60-66; F 0-59.

Note that the last day to drop a course without a record is February 10.

Late assignments: Assignments will be considered late if they are submitted after the start of class (after 13.25), and will be marked down 10 percent for each calendar day they are late.

I calculate overall grades twice: at mid-term and after finals. If you are interested in your grade, I will calculate mid-term grades for the entire class, which are to be submitted to the registrar's office. If you come after the midterm period, I will only be able to tell you the grade that you were earning at the midterm. If you are concerned about your grade, it is better to figure out where you stand in the middle than at the end of the semester. Otherwise, you are responsible for keeping track of your assignments and grade. If you wish, you may track your progress toward your final grade using the following table:

	Total points	Your points
Reading responses	200	
Proposal	100	
Bibliography	100	
Annotations	100	
Outline	150	
Rough draft	150	
Final draft	200	
Total	1000	

Note that each reading response is worth 8 points.

Blackboard: I will post the syllabus and some assignment guidelines on Blackboard.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all seminars and are responsible for all material and announcements presented there. If you miss a seminar for any reason, you are responsible for

contacting first your classmates and then the professor to find out what was discussed (including announcements of or changes to assignments or due dates).

There are no make-ups for the reading responses. I will, however, drop the 2 lowest grades of the reading responses for the calculation of your grade. Do NOT write the reading responses unless you are prepared for class (i.e., unless you have done the required reading).

WSU Reasonable Accommodation Statement

“Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. For more information contact a Disability Specialist on your home campus: **Vancouver:** 360-546-9138 <http://studentaffairs.vancouver.wsu.edu/student-resource-center/disability-services>”

WSU Academic Integrity Statement

“Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. Any student caught cheating on any assignment will be given an F grade for the course and will be reported to the Office Student Standards and Accountability. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). It is strongly suggested that you read and understand these definitions.”

Safety and Emergency Notification

“WSU has made an emergency notification system available for faculty, students, and staff. Please register at zzusis with emergency contact information (cell, email, text, etc.). You may have been prompted to complete emergency contact information when registering for classes at RONet. In the event of a building evacuation, a map at each classroom entrance shows the evacuation point for each building. Please refer to it. Finally, in case of class cancellation campus-wide, please check local media, the WSU Vancouver web page and/or <http://www.flashalert.net/>. Individual class cancellations may be made at the discretion of the instructor. Each individual is expected to make the best decision for their personal circumstances, taking safety into account. [Safety plan website](#) -- <http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/safety-plan>.”

Other random concerns

If you have a concern about this class, rule 104 of the WSU Academic regulations states: “Students having complaints about instruction or grading should refer them first to the instructor.”

Technology policy

Research has shown that high levels of multi-tasking are bad for focus and concentration. In addition, students who use keyboards during class have been shown to learn less than those who do not. (For a recent review of the research, as well as experimental demonstration of these issues, read: Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. 2014. "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking." *Psychological Science* 25 (6):1159-1168.) My own experience has been that the classroom environment is greatly improved by removing individual keyboards and screens.

For these reasons, we will have a no technology policy (unless you have a documented disability) for this class. This policy means no cell-phones or computers are to be used during class-time.

University Dates and Deadlines: <http://catalog.wsu.edu/General/AcademicCalendar/>

Note: The assigned readings average 100 pages per week.

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading	Assignments
1	12-Jan	14-Jan	Introduction to class Craft: sections I & II	Computer lab: start looking at data and resources.
2	19-Jan	21-Jan	History Century: 1-95	
3	26-Jan	28-Jan	History Century: 96-185; 240-252	
4	2-Feb	4-Feb	Trends GSS: chs 1-4	Proposals
5	9-Feb	11-Feb	Trends GSS: chs 5-7	
6	16-Feb	18-Feb	Trends GSS: chs 8-11	
7	23-Feb	25-Feb	Trends GSS: chs 12-13, appendix	Bibliographies
8	1-Mar	3-Mar	Research (Reardon and Bischoff 2011; Western, Bloome, and Percheski 2008)	
9	8-Mar	10-Mar	Research (Lin and Tomaskovic-Devey 2013; Garcia-Penalosa and Orgiazzi 2013; Luttig 2013)	Annotations
	15-Mar	17-Mar	<i>Spring break</i>	
10	22-Mar	24-Mar	Research Bring 3-4 articles	
11	29-Mar	31-Mar	Research Bring 3-4 articles	
12	5-Apr	7-Apr	Research Craft: Sections III & IV (through ch. 12)	Outlines
13	12-Apr	14-Apr	Research Craft: ch. 13-17	
14	19-Apr	21-Apr	Writing Style: ch. 1-5	Rough drafts
15	26-Apr	28-Apr	Writing Style: ch. 6-11	
16	3-May		Finals week	Final papers