

# SOCI 211 <sup>1</sup>

## Introduction to Sociological Research

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### Instructor:

Athena Madan

### Course Description:

Research Methods are central to understanding our social world and where and how we position ourselves within it. This course introduces students to foundational concepts and strategies of social research, including underpinning processes of knowledge construction, research design, and meaning-making. We discuss such issues as:

1. How we have come to know what we think we know (processes of knowledge construction and epistemology)
2. Research ethics – history as well as contemporary issues in a globalised world
3. Conceptual and empirical research
4. How to formulate appropriate research questions and design meaningful research
5. The basics of mixed and multi- methods research
6. Applications of different research approaches
7. Decoloniality and social sciences research

We will cover some of the major types of methods in sociological research (e.g., ethnography, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, surveys) and processes of sampling, analysis, and access involved with their use. In-class assignments provide opportunities for “how to” engage with basic research.

Overall, the course will provide the foundational knowledge required for subsequent courses (e.g., SOCI374, SOCI376) that will take up specific research techniques and topics in-depth, and also look at contemporary research issues within frameworks of social justice and equity.

### Course Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will learn about:

- Processes of knowledge construction in the social sciences

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<sup>1</sup> This outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. A detailed course outline will be made available in August before the first day of class. Only that outline is to be considered official.

- Major methodological approaches in the traditional social sciences, as well as equity-seeking methodological approaches and their applications in a globalised world
- Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods
- Knowledge of methods/approaches specific to their research ideas
- Ethical and political dimensions of social research in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and
- How to write up research reports for various (scholarly and non-scholarly) audiences.

Further, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate analytical skills in evaluating research design and practice,
- Formulate their own research questions and research designs,
- Communicate the theoretical underpinnings of their chosen approach, as well as their own research assumptions and relationships, and
- Use library and electronic resources to locate appropriate materials.

### Course Pre-requisites:

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### Topics May Include:

We discuss such issues as:

1. How we have come to know what we think we know (processes of knowledge construction and epistemology)
2. Research ethics – history as well as contemporary issues in a globalised world
3. Conceptual and empirical research
4. How to formulate appropriate research questions and design meaningful research
5. The basics of mixed and multi- methods research
6. Applications of different research approaches
7. Decoloniality and social sciences research

### Course Format:

This course will blend asynchronous lecture content with synchronous, in-person discursive and applied learning opportunities.

### Required Resources May Include:

- Babbie. E., Edgerton, J.D., and Roberts, L.R. (2020). [\*Fundamentals of Social Research, 5th Edition\*](#). Toronto: Nelson Education / Cengage.
- Wilson, S. (2008). [\*Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods\*](#). Fernwood Publishing.