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I. Course Goals and Objectives

In recent decades, survey research has become an important part of public administration. Within the public and non-profit sectors, survey research skills have become essential because gathering primary data about services and programs is necessary. The goal of this course is for you to learn a set of skills that you can use to complete survey research for your professional career. In order to attain this goal, you will learn how to: 1) formulate substantive survey research questions and hypotheses; 2) develop survey questions; 3) understand the ethical obligations of public administrators in survey research; 4) collect and process data; 5) use appropriate methods to analyze the data; 6) present data using graphics; 7) interpret the analyses; and 8) write a professional, technical report.

II. Course Format

This is a dynamic, real-world topic, and the course format will be very interactive. Most of the course sessions will consist of some lecture; however we will utilize knowledge application via group exercises and analysis. Hence, students are encouraged to participate in class, ask relevant questions, and discuss readings. Since a portion of the grade is based on participation, attendance will be noted each class session.

The course format is designed to increase your level of computer literacy. You will have the opportunity to use the Internet to complete some of your research and assignments. We will use Blackboard as a means of gathering information and communicating with one another. All of the assignments and readings are on Blackboard under Course Documents. Most of the readings are Adobe Acrobat files, so you need to make sure you have Adobe Reader to view and print them.

III. Student Responsibilities

- A. Reading the assigned material for each class session;
- B. Completing the assignments;
- C. Attending all class sessions. Attendance is very important. You should call me or send an e-mail message to me if you cannot attend class;
- D. Actively participating during every class session;
- E. Successfully completing a survey research project. Your project must be typed, with selected bibliography and footnotes where appropriate. The format for the project is expected to meet the standards described by the A.P.A. All projects need to be submitted on the final day of class (November 29th), and no projects will be accepted after this date without prior approval.
- F. All student work submitted for this course must be original work prepared and submitted for this class only. Work or parts of work submitted for other courses or subjects are not acceptable for assessment unless prior permission is granted. Plagiarism is a very serious problem and is cause for dismissal from the MPA program and possibly the university. In order for us to avoid this problem, I want you to read the "Recommended Student Guidelines: Ethics and Academic Integrity" listed under week one on Blackboard. Plagiarism will result in an "F" for the plagiarized work and possibly an "F" for the course.

IV. ASSESSMENT

- A. Grading of your work will be based on the completeness of the survey
In addition, spelling, punctuation, and grammar are considered in determining grades.
- B. The following is the assignment of points and the grading scale:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Attendance & Participation | 100 points |
| Assignments | 50 points |
| Project | 200 points |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total Points Possible | 350 points |

V. Late Submission and Incomplete Policies:

- A. As a matter of fairness to students who submit their work on time, late submissions of any work will not be accepted for grading.
- B. Please note that "incomplete" grades are, by college policy, reserved ONLY for students who, having a passing grade (B or better) on the majority of assignments and prospects of a passing grade in the course, are prevented from completing one or more final assignments by circumstances beyond their control.

VI. Flexibility Clause and Emergency Information

- A. There may be times during the semester that the class is either progressing too slowly or too rapidly. If this were to occur, I will adjust the assignments as needed.
- B. If you need to determine that class has been canceled for a natural emergency (hurricane) or civic emergency, please contact me first. If that's not possible, call one of the following numbers:
Broward Campus 954.236.1800 Boca Raton 561.297.2020
Jupiter 561.799.8020 St. Lucie 561.785.9973

IX. REQUIRED READING:

Fink, A. (2006). *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Scheuren, F. (2004). "What is a Survey?" American Statistical Association.
<http://www.amstat.org/sections/srms/pamphlet.pdf>

A number of readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Outline

August 23rd: Introduction

Fink Book: Chapter 5

Scheuren Booklet: Chapter 1

Blackboard Materials:

- 1) Outline for Completing Survey Research
- 2) Assignment Point Distribution List
- 3) Recommended Student Guidelines: Ethics and Academic Integrity

Assignment 1: Biography *Post on BB by 8/27

August 30th: Ethical Guidelines of Survey Research - Online Class

Blackboard Materials:

- 1) ASA Ethical Guidelines
 - 2) AAPOR Code of Ethics
 - 3) NIH Ethical Guidelines
 - 4) CASRO Code of Standards and Ethics
 - 5) People Who Count: Polling in a new century
- Assignment 2: Ethical Frameworks & Human Subjects *Due by 9/3 via email;
Project: Decide on a topic for your survey project *Due by 9/3 via email

September 6th: The Process and Purpose of Survey Research

Fink Book: Chapter 1

Scheuren Booklet: Chapter 2

Blackboard Materials:

- 1) Best Practices for Survey and Public Opinion Research
 - 2) Polling and Democracy
- Assignment 3: Exploring Surveys *Due in class on 9/6

Project: What do you need to know? - Develop your 5 main research questions *Due in class on 9/6

September 13th: Survey Research Question and Hypotheses Development - Online Class

Blackboard Materials:

1) Research Question Packet

Project: Finalize your research questions and corresponding hypotheses

***Due by 9/17 via email**

September 20th: Survey Methods and Issues

Fink Book: Chapter 3

Scheuren Booklet: Chapters 3, 4, and 5

Blackboard Materials:

1) GAO Using Structured Interviews (Recommended if you are doing interviews)

September 27th: Survey Questionnaire Development - Online Class

Scheuren Booklet: Chapter 6

Fink Book: Chapter 2

Blackboard Materials:

1) Developing Questionnaires

Project: Question Development ***Due in class on 10/4 - bring 2 copies of questions**

October 4th: Sampling and Survey Pre-Testing

Fink Book: Chapter 4

Scheuren Booklet: Chapter 7

Blackboard Materials:

1) Sample Sizes

2) Sampling Packet

Project: Write introduction, survey methods section, and finalize draft of your questions ***Due in class on 10/11**

October 11th: Survey Logistics and Database Preparation

Fink Book: Chapter 6 (pg. 85-90)

Scheuren Booklet: Chapters 8 and 9

Blackboard Materials:

1) Data Preparation

2) SPSS Data Entry

October 18th: Administering Surveys and Data Collection - Online Class

Project: Collect your survey data ***Due in class on 11/1 - bring copy of database to the lab**

October 25th: Database Development - Online Class

Project: Database Development ***Due via email by 10/29**

November 1st: Descriptive and Bivariate Analyses - LAB

Fink Book: Chapter 6 (pg. 69-85)

Scheuren Booklet: Chapter 10

Blackboard Materials:

1) SPSS instructions for nominal and ordinal data

2) SPSS instructions for ratio data

Project: **Bring copy of your database to class**

November 8th: Survey Data Analysis - Online Class

Project: Write the descriptive and bivariate sections ***Due in class on 11/15**

November 15th: Multivariate Analysis

Project: Write the multivariate section ***Due via email by 11/20**

November 22nd: Survey Data Analysis - Online Class

November 29th: Presentations - Project is due

December 6th: Concluding Thoughts