

Prepared by the Department of Social Sciences and Human Services

Date of Departmental Approval: December 6, 2006

Date approved by Curriculum and Programs: November 6, 2013 (revised)

Effective: Spring 2014

1. **Course Number:** PSY 216 / SOC225
Course Title: Social Science Research Methods
2. **Description:** This course introduces the basic research techniques and skills of the social sciences through an interdisciplinary, topical approach. Qualitative and quantitative research methods including ethnography, observation, survey and experimentation are discussed, demonstrated and practiced. Topics include formulating social science hypotheses, identifying variables, constructing and interpreting questionnaires, interviewing, and observing participants. Other topics include social scientists' use of statistics; research ethics; interpretation and communication of research findings, and the relevance of research to public policies in our society. Students may earn credit for either PSY216 or SOC225.
3. **Student Learning Outcomes (instructional objectives, intellectual skills):**
Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to do the following:
 - demonstrate a basic understanding of the different social science research methods – the way hypotheses are formulated and tested
 - differentiate among questionnaires, interviews and social observations
 - demonstrate familiarity with the basic techniques of social science research methods including data collection and data entry; identification and differentiation of types of data, and descriptive data analysis
 - explain and apply qualitative research methods in any social science discipline
 - evaluate basic descriptive statistics as well as identify variables and demonstrate critical thinking in the interpretation of research findings and application of findings for social policies
 - demonstrate the ability to tackle research challenges and to use research to contribute to policy and program formulation in the workplace
4. **Credits:** 3 credits
5. **Satisfies General Education Requirement:** No
6. **Prerequisites:** PSY101 and (MAT020 or MAT025) or satisfactory basic skills assessment score
7. **Semester(s) Offered:** Varies
8. **Suggested General Guidelines for Evaluation:** Students will be evaluated on attendance, and participation in the class. Assignments will include research designs and practical fieldwork within the college and neighborhood. Individual and group projects presentations, review of articles and short research papers as well as quizzes and exams will constitute part of the evaluation.
9. **General Topical Outline (Optional):**
 - The Scientific Approach in the Social Science
 - What is Science*
 - Basic Assumptions of Science*
 - The research process*
 - Elements of Research
 - Research Problems, Unit of analysis;*
 - Definitions and Functions of Concepts*
 - Types of Variables*
 - Hypotheses*
 - Ethics in Social Science Research
 - Why Research Ethics*
 - Anonymity and Confidentiality*
 - Professional Code of Ethics*
 - Measurement: Reliability and Validity
 - Types of Data (Nominal, Ordinal, Interval, Ratio)*

Measurement error;
Theory, Concepts, Variables, Hypotheses, Concept Operationalization, etc.
Samples and sampling Procedures
Qualitative or Quantitative Research
Data Collection Techniques: Popular Social research methods
Interview Methods of Research
Questionnaires Methods of Research
Participant Observation
Focus Group Discussions
Existing Sources of Data
Measurement and types of variables
Data Analysis and Management: Descriptive Statistics
Telling the Qualitative stories: The Facts or the Figures?
Revision, Questions and Answers