

Survey Design and Analysis

PSCI 3155

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2; Wednesday 11-12 in Ketchum 382

Course Description

Surveys are an increasingly important tool for government, private organizations, and communities. With increasing use of the internet, there are a burgeoning number of tools to query different populations, be they customers, employees, or citizens. Many examples of surveys gone wrong abound in companies, universities, and scholarly research. Survey research is both an art and science and done poorly generates flawed insights into what the public believes as well as public policy that does not reflect what the people want. This class will provide students with the unique experience of involvement in ongoing survey research. The course is designed for students from many different disciplines, including the business school, CMCI and other cognate disciplines. Each week, students will learn valuable information about what makes a good and bad survey, how to write effective questions, how to put survey questions together into a cohesive questionnaire, best approaches to analyzing and reporting on the survey data, as well as insight into the pitfalls of survey research and how to overcome them. The course will give students hands-on, real-world experience on the design, implementation, and analysis of the annual Colorado Political Climate survey.

Course Work and Grading

Required Texts:

Please purchase the following books from the merchant of your choice:

1. Asher, Herbert. *Polling and the Public: What Every Citizen Should Know*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly (2004).
2. Fowler, Floyd J. *Survey Research Methods*. 5th Edition. Sage Publications, 2013.

Other required readings will be posted on the class D2L page and should be read prior to the week for which it is assigned.

Grading and Grade Components:

The system used to assign final course grades will be as follows.

- _ A+: 98-100
- _ A : 94-97
- _ A-: 90-93
- _ B+: 87-89
- _ B : 84-86
- _ B-: 80-83
- _ C+: 77-79
- _ C : 74-76

- _ C-: 70-73
- _ D : 60-69
- _ F : 59 and below

Final grades will be calculated based upon the following, and you must complete all portions of the course to receive a passing grade:

Homework (50%):

To facilitate learning the material, there will be 5 homework assignments due during the course of the semester each worth 10% of your final grade. These assignments will cover various materials from class lectures and reading assignments.

Assignment 1: CITI Training

Assignment 2: Writing Effective Survey Questions

Assignment 3: Developing a Survey Questionnaire

Assignment 4: Understanding and Critiquing Political Polls

Assignment 5: Analyzing Survey Data

Attendance & Participation (10% Total – 5% Attendance & 5% Participation):

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of each class using “clickers”. Clickers will also be used throughout the semester to gauge your reactions to the course material, political polls, and other current events. If you attend at least 85% of the classes you will receive full credit for the attendance portion of your grade. If you attend less than 85% of the classes, your attendance grade will reflect the percentage of classes you attended.

For you to maximize the value you receive from this course, participation during lecture is necessary. As such, your in-class participation will be worth 5% of your final grade. This portion of your grade will be judged based on the quantity and quality of discussion you bring to lecture as well as how engaged you are in learning the material.

Final Project (40% Total – 15% Group Presentation & 25% Research Paper):

The final project will be group based and consist of two separate parts. First, you will be required, with your group, to present your analysis of the Colorado Political Climate survey. This will be a roughly 10 minute presentation that reviews your statistical analysis of the assigned topic for your group. This portion of the Final Project will be worth 15% of your final grade. The second aspect of your final project will be a written paper detailing your statistical analyses as well as drawing conclusions based on what you and your group observe in the survey data. This portion of the Final Project will be worth 25% of your final grade.

University Policies

Classroom Environment: Please be respectful of others (and your instructor) when attending class and try to avoid late arrivals, early departures, ringing cell phones, and conversation not related to the course, etc. Moreover, while I am fine with you using laptops in class, I ask that you put phones away and minimize

distractions on your computer (excessive web browsing, games, etc.). If you are texting or causing a distraction, you may be asked to leave class.

Disability Issues: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Students requesting instructional accommodations due to disabilities must provide documentation of disabilities to arrange for such accommodations. If you are a student with a disability and require specific accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible. Please review the University's services and policies for such accommodations: <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>

Religious Observances: The University of Colorado acknowledges a legal and a moral obligation to accommodate all students who must be absent from classes or scheduled exams in order to observe religious holidays. If you have a religiously-based conflict with classes or exams you must, by the end of the third week of class, notify me and arrange to make up missed work. For campus religiously-based conflict policies, see http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Discrimination and Harassment: Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment. Further information can be found here: <http://www.colorado.edu/odh/>

Academic Integrity: Cheating is not acceptable in this recitation; make sure to do your own work. Students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution, which can be found here: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/acadinteg.html>. For the purposes of this recitation, I will not tolerate plagiarism or cheating of any kind. All work MUST be your own and that work must be correctly cited.

Professional Courtesy & Learning Environment: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the student code.

Class Schedule

Week 1: August 28th – Introduction to Survey Research

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 1; Fowler, Chapters 1 & 2

Week 2: September 4th – Psychology of Survey Response

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 2
- D2L Readings: Zaller & Feldman 1992; Rasinski, Rips, and Tourangeau 2000
- Homework 1 Due: CITI Training

Week 3: September 11th – Writing Effective Survey Questions: Part 1

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 3; Fowler, Chapters 2, 4, & 6

Week 4: September 18th – Writing Effective Survey Questions: Part 2

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 3; Fowler, Chapters 2, 4, & 6

Week 5: September 25th – Designing Effective Survey Questionnaires

- Book Readings: Fowler, Chapter 7
- Colorado Political Climate Survey to IRB
- Homework 2 Due: Writing Effective Survey Questions

Week 6: October 2nd – Implementing Surveys and Deciding on Your Sample

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 4; Fowler, Chapter 3
- Homework 3 Due: Developing a Survey Questionnaire

Week 7: October 9th – Consuming and Understanding Political Polls

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapters 6, 7, & 9

Week 8: October 16th – Understanding the Impact of Survey Modes

- Colorado Political Climate Survey Goes Live
- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 5; Fowler, Chapters 5, & 8
- Homework 4 Due: Understanding and Critiquing Political Polls
- CPC Goes Live in Field

Week 9: October 23rd – Analyzing Surveys

- Book Readings: Asher, Chapter 8; Fowler, Chapters 9 & 10

Week 10: October 30th – Understanding Cultural Influences in Survey Responses

- Book Readings: Fowler, Chapter 11
- Homework 5 Due: Analyzing Survey Data
- CPC Topline Report Due

Week 11: November 6th – Comparing Political Polls to Election Outcomes & Survey Experiments

- D2L Readings: Mutz, Selected Chapters; Stapleton 2013

Week 12: November 13th – Survey Experiments & Writing Effective Survey Reports

- Book Readings: Fowler, Chapter 12

Week 13: November 20th – No Class Fall Break & Thanksgiving

Week 14: November 27th – Writing Effective Survey Reports

- Book Readings: Fowler, Chapter 12

Week 15: December 4th – In Class Group Presentations

- No Readings

Finals Week: Final Research Paper Due During Class Final Time Slot