Overview and Goals of the Course

The objective is to introduce students to the various phases of conducting a sample survey through lectures, readings, and examples from actual projects. The first half of the week is focused on survey design and sampling. The second half focuses on questionnaire development and testing, data collection and coding. Data analysis and report writing remain beyond the scope of this class. The class will be run in the form of a workshop rather than a lecture driven format.

Upon successfully completing this course, students are able to:

- Identify primary sources of error in surveys, and discuss the consequences of each type of error for survey findings
- Critically evaluate the design, construction and implications of studies based on survey research
- Formulate strategies for surveys that minimize error
- Critically evaluate the design, construction, and implications of surveys

Readings

Most of the topics covered in class discussions can be found in the following books:


However, I will closely follow the presentation in the following textbooks for the class:


**Tentative Class Schedule and Readings**

**Lecture 1 Overview and Background: Logic of Science and Survey Research**

- Chapters 1 to 4 from De Vaus (2002).

**Choosing Your Own Survey Research Project**

Describe a research question you would like to explore in this class and any initial thoughts you have about the survey that you would like to do or any special design challenges you already see ahead?

Recommended:

- Chapters 1 and 2 in Weisberg et al. (1996).

**Lectures 2 to 4 Sampling and Research Design**

- Chapter 6 from De Vaus (2002).

**Selecting Target Population and Sampling Frame**

What is (are) the unit(s) of analysis for your study? To what population would you like to generalize findings?


Recommended:

- Chapter 3 in Weisberg et al. (1996).
Examples of Sample Designs: (Read at least one of the below)

- Montaquila, JM, L. Mohadjuer et al. NYC Hanes: Design of the Community Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

Hard-to-Reach Populations

Are there hard to reach populations that are of interest to you? How might you collect sufficient information from them?


Lectures 5 to 7 Questionnaire Design

- Chapter 7 from De Vaus (2002).

Instrument Construction: Events

What will your main outcome and independent variables be? How will your measures be influenced by your data collection strategy and the people you are studying?

Read at least one of the below:

Instrument Construction: Opinions

What types of variables are your main outcome and independent variables? Attitudes, knowledge, behavior, events, demographic characteristics or what? What problems may respondent face trying to answer questions about these variables?


Read at least one of the below:


Recommended:

• Chapter 4 in Weisberg et al. (1996).
• Converse and Presser (1986).
• Oppenheimer (1966).
• Sudman and Bradburn (1982).

Lectures 8 to 10 Issues in Data Collection

➢ Chapter 8 from De Vaus (2002).

Face-to-Face Interviewing

What if you chose to use face-to-face interviewing to collect data, what would be the advantages versus disadvantages?
Groves, et al. Chapter 5

Telephone Interviews

What if you chose to use face to face or telephone interviewing to collect data, what would be the advantages versus disadvantages?


Read at least one of the below:


Mail, Self-Administered, Web-based Questionnaires

What if you chose to use mail or web-based surveys to collect data, what would be the advantages versus disadvantages?


Read at least one of the below:


Computer Assisted Interviewing
What if you chose to use computer assisted interviewing to collect data, what would be the advantages versus disadvantages?


Read at least one of the below:


Recommended:

- Chapters 5 and 6 in Weisberg et al. (1996).

Interview Error

What management and implementation strategies do you plan to use to ensure the quality of your data?

➢ Groves, et al. Chapter 9