

Advanced Methods of Social Research (SOC1 420-900)
Research Paper Assignment
Miller, Summer II 2019

Each student¹ will conduct an original research project related to a sociological topic of their choosing. They must review, cite, and discuss prior literature relevant to their topic, derive testable hypotheses, collect and analyze data to test their hypotheses, and discuss the implications of their results. The paper should follow a basic research paper format with citations following ASA (American Sociological Association) guidelines. The paper should be 10-12 double spaced pages at *minimum*.

Below are the required sections to include in your paper. There should be a clear and logical flow from section to section of the paper.

- I. Introduction: Introduce the paper and provide a general overview of the project as well as a justification or “so what” for conducting the research. Lay out what the project is and tell the reader why it is important.
- II. Literature Review: Discuss prior literature relevant to your topic. This section should include *at minimum* 8-10 academic, peer-reviewed sources that were not assigned readings for the class. Be creative with your section headings and subheads here – you do not have to use “Literature Review” as the section heading. Provide the context for into which your paper is set. Show where the paper is coming from and how the project contributes to this area. The discussion of literature should indicate a void or area for improvement that your theory and hypotheses seek to explore.
- III. Theory & Hypotheses: Explicitly state your research question(s) for the paper, identify and discuss theory used to explain your findings, and derive testable hypotheses.
- IV. Methodology: You should include three subsections (study design, data and measures, and data analysis) where you discuss how you will empirically test these hypotheses. All data sources must be clearly identified so that your analysis can be replicated.
- V. Results & Discussion: Present the actual statistical results of your analysis with both text and visuals (tables, graphs, etc.). Discuss your findings and how they relate to your hypotheses and larger theory.
- VI. Conclusion: Conclude your paper by summarizing your findings, highlighting the significance of these findings and what this means for the larger study of the topic, next steps and limitations in the research, and any practical implications of the work.
- VII. References: In-text citations must be present throughout as well as a separate references section following ASA (American Sociological Association) guidelines.

¹ Optional: students may form groups of no more than three and complete the same assignment as a group. Additional requirements and details are included in Appendix

Due Dates/Deadlines

Paper Topic Selection – Tuesday, July 9, 2019 – 10:00am

You should submit a one to two-paper summary of the topic you are selecting to write your paper on. Briefly describe the research question you plan to answer as well as a justification or “so what” for conducting the research. Lay out what the project is and tell me why it is important. In addition, you should identify your dependent and independent variable(s), any control variables you are considering, and the data source you have identified (if any).

Plagiarism Quiz – Tuesday, July 9, 2019 – 10:00am

Before you can write academically, you have to understand how to correctly use references to support your points. This includes learning how to quote, paraphrase, and cite sources properly so that the ideas and work you use is credited appropriately and so you can show how your own ideas build on the research and ideas of others.

To earn credit for the **Plagiarism Quiz**, review the materials and examples at <https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html>. Then take the certification test at the end of the materials (review the materials carefully – the test is challenging!). Once you have the completion certificate, take a screenshot or save the certificate itself and turn it in on eCampus.

Rough Draft Check – BY Friday, July 19, 2019

By Friday, July 19, 2019, you must have scheduled a time to meet with the instructor to provide a status check and summary of your progress. Use the meeting to your advantage – I am happy to review anything you’ve done so far, answer questions, and provide feedback or general direction on your paper.

Peer Review Deadline – Friday, July 26, 2019 – 10:00am

After topic selections have taken place, I will match you up for a peer review. You will be asked to review a classmate’s paper and provide a peer review report. The paper review and peer review form should be submitted electronically on eCampus by Friday, July 26, 2019, at 10:00am. Peer review partners/groups will determine when they require paper drafts to complete their reviews by the deadline above.

Early Review Deadline – Monday, July 29, 2019 – 10:00am

I am happy to review final papers early to provide comments and feedback. Papers must be submitted to me electronically (via eCampus) by Monday, July 29, 2019 at 10:00am. I will return feedback by Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

Final Research Paper DUE – Friday, August 2, 2019 – 10:00am

The Final Research Paper is due on Friday, August 2, 2019 by 10:00am. Both a hardcopy and electronic version (via eCampus) must be submitted.

**SOCI 420 Research Paper
Peer Review & Evaluation Form**

Person Completing Peer Review: _____

Paper Author: _____

Paper Title: _____

Provide any general comments in the box below:

Provide any comments related to the Introduction of the paper in the box below:

Provide any comments related to the Literature of the paper in the box below:

SOCI 420 – Peer Review Form (Continued)

Provide any comments related to the Theory/Hypotheses of the paper in the box below:

Provide any comments related to the Methodology of the paper in the box below:

Provide any comments related to the Results & Discussion of the paper in the box below:

Provide any comments related to the Conclusion of the paper in the box below:

SOCI 420 – Peer Review Form (Continued)

Rate the follow sections based on the criteria below on a scale of 1 to 10

Section & Criteria	POINT SCALE 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10 (terrible) (fantastic)
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduces paper with general overview of project - Idea is relevant and novel with justification for conducting the research 	
Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive or analytic? - Literature Reviewed is relevant to topic - Presented in a way that logically leads to subsequent sections of paper 	
Theory & Hypotheses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Novelty of research questions - Connection between prior literature and theory/hypotheses - Hypotheses make sense with theory - Theory is acceptable for research question(s) 	
Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection between hypotheses and the method(s) you use to test them - Replicability is evident - Discussion of study design, data and measures, and data analysis included 	
Results & Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the statistical analysis - Quality and implication of presented results - Connection of findings to hypotheses and theory - Discussion is descriptive or analytic? 	
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarizes findings, highlights significance, next steps and limitations, and practical implications of the work - Answers any pending questions of the reader 	

**SOCI 420 Research Paper
Full Assignment Grading Sheet**

Grading Criteria	Points on a 100-point scale	Points of Total Grade	Point Value
Paper: Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduces paper with general overview of project - Idea is relevant and novel with justification for conducting the research 		30	
Paper: Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive or analytic? - Literature Reviewed is relevant to topic - Presented in a way that logically leads to subsequent sections of paper 		40	
Paper: Theory & Hypotheses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Novelty of research questions - Connection between prior literature and theory/hypotheses - Hypotheses make sense with theory - Theory is acceptable for research question(s) 		30	
Paper: Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection between hypotheses and the method(s) you use to test them - Replicability is evident - Discussion of study design, data and measures, and data analysis included 		50	
Paper: Results & Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the statistical analysis - Quality and implication of presented results - Connection of findings to hypotheses and theory - Discussion is descriptive or analytic? 		50	
Paper: Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarizes findings, highlights significance, next steps and limitations, and practical implications of the work - Answers any pending questions of the reader 		30	
Paper: Quality of Organization & Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follows guidelines for assignment - Clear communication - Writing engages the reader - Proofread, polished paper 		20	
Peer Review & Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of Peer Review & Evaluation 		50	
Timeliness and Deadlines Met <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper Topic Selection - Plagiarism Quiz - Rough Draft Check - Peer Review - Final Paper - Group Paper Items 	n/a 10-point initial deduction per late item Additional 5-point deduction per day late		
Total Grade		300	

Appendix: Optional Group Research Paper Requirements and Details

Instead of working independently, students may form groups of no more than three to complete the same assignment as detailed above.

Additional Requirements/Details:

Paper Topic Selection & Membership Details – Tuesday, July 9, 2019 – 10:00am

You should submit a one to two-paper summary of the topic you are selecting to write your paper on. Briefly describe the research question you plan to answer as well as a justification or “so what” for conducting the research. Lay out what the project is and tell me why it is important. In addition, you should identify your dependent and independent variable(s), any control variables you are considering, and the data source you have identified (if any).

In addition to the Paper Topic Summary, you should provide membership details and a completed Group Contract (see below).

Final Research Paper DUE – Friday, August 2, 2019 – 10:00am

The Final Research Paper is due on Friday, August 2, 2019 by 10:00am. Both a hardcopy and electronic version (via eCampus) must be submitted.

In your Final Paper, please include an Appendix that includes a summary of what each group member contributed. Also include an authorship ordering for the paper.

Group Research Paper Peer & Self Evaluation – Friday, August 2, 2019 – 10:00am

Details included below.

Group Contract Details (Due 07/09/19 at 10:00am)

As you probably know, working in a group can be challenging. A group contract is a document that a group creates to formalize expectations, establish good faith, set the tone for future interactions, and facilitate accountability and responsibility for all group members.

For this assignment, you will work together with your group to create a **1-page** group contract. In this contract, you should outline your groups' expectations for the roles, rules, and responsibilities of each group member.

While you are not required to make any specific agreements, I suggest that you and your group consider and speak to each of the following:

1. Each group members' name and contact information
2. Expectations regarding preparation for and attendance at group meetings
 - What will be your primary means of communication?
 - How quickly are group members expected to respond to communications?
 - Where/when/how often will you meet outside of class?
3. Behaviors crucial to group effectiveness (2.5 points)
 - How long will you wait for group members before beginning the meeting?
 - How late is too late?
 - How many meetings can a group member miss per semester?
4. Assignment of specific tasks, roles, and responsibilities (optional)
 - Who will be responsible for initiating contact between your group and liaison?
 - Who will be responsible for organizing group tasks and facilitating meetings?
 - Who will be responsible for editing and submitting all assignments/reports?
5. Outline of the specific process for dealing with unmet expectations
 - Consequences for failing to meet expectations for proper group communication?
 - Consequences for failing to attend class and/or other meetings?
 - Consequences for inappropriate/disrespectful behavior?
 - Consequences for failing to complete designated tasks?
6. The signature of each group to indicate their agreement to the contract

NOTE: This is a group assignment, and each member of your group is expected to contribute appropriately. Please have one group member submit your completed paper on eCampus. Use *12pt font, 1.5 spacing, and 1 inch margins.*

Group Research Paper Peer & Self Evaluation (Due 08/02/19 at 10:00am)

You are being asked to complete this evaluation so that I can recognize the individual contributions of group members to the overall group project. To help me, please provide me with information that evaluates the performance of your group members and yourself. Keep in mind that the information you provide here is **confidential** and I will not share the information with your group members. Below are the criteria to consider as you rate yourself and your group members:

1. Active Participation: Attending and participating in group meetings, participating in on-line chats/conferences with group members (if applicable)
2. Constructive Contribution: Improving quality of project, both informal and formal; being proactive in researching information about issue and providing quality research; fostering creativity; bringing unique skills and abilities that aid in the quality of the final products; and providing leadership
3. Supported Group Process: Eliciting, valuing, and respecting the viewpoints and input of others; making room for quiet members or not overshadowing others; mediating arguments and relieving tension; lending a positive attitude; other maintenance roles that enhance group process and climate
4. Communication: Checking in with group before missing a meeting, clarifying expectations, keeping communication channels open among group members, facilitating others' participating, and speaking/listening effectively and respectfully
5. Commitment and Effort: Following through on assigned tasks, being accountable to group members, and working consistently to meet group expectations

Using each of the above criteria, provide a rating for yourself and each of your group members. Use the rating scale below. In the last column, I ask that you recommend a grade, for example, A, B-, C+, D, etc.

NAME <i>Please write names below</i>	POINT SCALE						Advisory Grade
	1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10 (terrible)			(fantastic)			
	Active Participation	Constructive Contribution	Supported Group Process	Communication	Commitment and Effort		
Yourself: _____							
Member: _____							
Member: _____							

In addition, please write a paragraph about yourself that explains what you did to contribute to the group project and support your reasoning for your self ratings above. *If you feel the need to provide written feedback about any group member, you may do that as well.*

Explanation and Justification for Yourself (Required):

OPTIONAL: Explanation and Justification for other members of your team: