

# **SURVEY DESIGN**

**Sociology 216A**

Spring 2019

**Tuesday, 9:00-11:50**

**Bunche 2174**

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## **Description and Objectives**

Surveys are among the main sources of information for social scientists and policy-makers, yet high-quality, reliable survey data are increasingly difficult to produce. This course is the first part of the two-course sequence, 216A and 216B. Its objective is to provide a well-grounded, nuanced understanding of various aspects of the design of social surveys, including: sampling; response and participation rates; instrument development; survey implementation through in-person, mail, or phone interviews or via the internet; reliability and validity of survey responses; ethics and costs. This course is meant both for students who consider designing and implementing surveys for their research projects and for students who want to better understand the background and content of secondary survey data they plan to use in their analyses. The course will not involve any practical applications of survey design skills, as such applications will be the focus of the second course of this sequence (216B). Also, the course will not directly involve any survey data analyses: such analyses are covered in the 212A-212B sequence. *Sociology* students: please note that only one of the 212A-212B and 216A-216B sequences may meet the two-course methodology sequence requirement.

## **Readings**

Required texts:

Dillman, D. A., J. D. Smyth, and L. M. Christian. 2014. *Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. New Jersey: Wiley.

Groves, R.M. et al. 2009. *Survey Methodology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New Jersey: Wiley.

The two texts inevitably overlap in content, but there are differences. Groves et al. covers in-person administered surveys (as well as other modes). Groves et al. is also more statistically heavy. Dillman et al. is a bit less technical, but it is more up-to-date and more detailed in some areas, such as questionnaire design and administration.

All other required and optional readings are available online through the UCLA library or free of charge directly from the publishers. Minor changes in the reading list are possible, but they will be made with sufficient advance notice.

## **Requirements**

The class will have primarily a seminar format, and students are expected to read all the required readings before class. While I will coordinate the review and discussion of the reading materials, all students are expected to actively participate in this process. For that purpose,

each student is required to submit every week, except in Weeks 1 and 10, a succinct (about 2 pages long, double-spaced) creative response memo on all the required readings, outlining the readings' key points and suggesting several corresponding questions for the class discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to address at least one optional reading in their weekly memos. They may also engage other relevant readings of their choice. These response memos must be uploaded into both the corresponding assignment folder and the discussion forum by 5pm on Monday of the corresponding week.

By the end of the course, each student must prepare and submit a term project paper. The paper should be a complete proposal for a survey, and should include the following: research question(s) and how a particular survey design would help address them; a brief review of existing survey-based research that guides the approach; the target population, sampling approach, and sample size; the survey mode, administration, and timeline; survey questionnaire; anticipated challenges (e.g., non-response, refusal, social desirability bias, inattentiveness, fatigue, sensitivities, etc.) and what would/could be done to mitigate them. Students must send me a 1-2 paragraph description of their proposed project no later than May 21 (Week 8) for approval. Students will present drafts of their projects on June 4 (Week 10). The final paper, incorporating the feedback received at the draft presentations should be about 10-12 pages long (not counting the questionnaire, which should be submitted as an appendix) and must be uploaded on the course website by noon on Tuesday, June 11.

Active participation in class discussions is expected throughout the course.

**Grade** (approximate composition): Class participation: 20%; eight weekly response memos 40% (5% each); Term project presentation 10%; term project paper 30%.

*No extra points or incompletes. Late submission of assignments will not be accepted unless medically and comparably justified (please notify me ahead of time if need an exception).*

### **Schedule and Readings**

*(Readings are listed in no particular order; optional readings are marked with \*)*

#### **Week 1 (Apr 2) The past, present, and future of social survey research: gains, losses, promises and challenges**

Groves et al. Ch.1. An introduction to survey methodology (2-38)

Groves et al. Ch.2. Inference and error in survey (39-68)

Dillman et al. Ch.1. Sample surveys in our electronic world (1-18)

Sudman, S. 1976. "Sample surveys" *Annual Review of Sociology* 2: 107-120.

Couper, M.P. 2017. "New developments in survey data collection" *Annual Review of Sociology* 43: 121-145.

\* Couper, M. P. 2013. "Is the sky falling? New technology, changing media, and the future of surveys." *Survey Research Methods* 7 (3): 145-156.

\* Pew Research Center. *Collecting Survey Data*. <http://www.pewresearch.org/methods/u-s-survey-research/collecting-survey-data/>

## **Week 2 (Apr 9) Survey sampling**

- Dillman et al. Chapter 3. Covering the population and selecting who to survey (56-94)
- Groves et al. Chapter 3. Target populations, sampling frames, and coverage error (69-96)
- Groves et al. Chapter 4. Sample design and sampling error (97-149)
- Gaziano, C. 2005. "Comparative analysis of within-household respondent selection techniques." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69(1): 124–157
- Brick, J. M. 2011. "The future of survey sampling." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75(5): 872-888
- \* Iannacchione, V. G. 2011. "The changing role of address-based sampling in survey research." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75: 556-575

## **Week 3 (Apr 16) Opt-in and other non-probability sampling approaches: costs, benefits, and implications**

- Sterrett, D., et al. 2017. "Assessing changes in coverage bias of web surveys in the United States" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 81 (S1): 338–356
- Yeager, D., et al. 2011. "Comparing the accuracy of RDD telephone surveys and internet surveys conducted with probability and non-probability samples." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75: 709-747.
- Dutwin, D., and T.D. Buskirk. 2017. "Apples to oranges or Gala versus Golden Delicious?: Comparing data quality of nonprobability Internet samples to low response rate probability samples" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 81 (S1): 213–239.
- Schonlau, M., and M.P. Couper. 2017. "Options for conducting web surveys" *Statistical Science* 32(2): 279-292
- Heckathorn, D. D., and C. J. Cameron. 2017. "Network sampling: from snowball and multiplicity to respondent-driven sampling." *Annual Review of Sociology* 43: 101-119.
- Mullinix, K. J., T. J. Leeper, J. N. Druckman, and J. Freese. 2015. "The generalizability of survey experiments." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2: 109-138
- \* Browne, K. 2005. "Snowball sampling: Using social networks to research non-heterosexual women." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 8(1): 47-60
- \* Gile, K. J., and M. S. Handcock. 2010. Respondent-driven sampling: An assessment of current methodology" *Sociological Methodology* 40(1): 285–327
- \* Agadjanian, V., and N. Zotova. 2012. "Sampling and surveying hard-to-reach populations for demographic research: A study of female labor migrants in Moscow, Russia" *Demographic Research* 26 (5):131-150. <http://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol26/5/26-5.pdf>

## **Week 4 (Apr 23) Modes and methods of survey data collection**

- Groves et al. Ch. 5. Methods of data collection (149-182)
- Ansolabehere, S., and B.F. Schaffner. 2014. "Does survey mode still matter: Findings from a 2010 multi-mode comparison" *Political Analysis* 22(3): 285-303
- de Leeuw, E. D. 2005. "To Mix or not to mix data collection modes in surveys." *The Journal of Official Statistics* 21(2): 233-255
- Pew Research Center. 2015. *From Telephone to the Web: The Challenge of Mode of Interview Effects in Public Opinion Polls.*

Link, M. W., et al. 2014. *Mobile Technologies for Conducting, Augmenting, and Potentially Replacing Surveys: Report of the AAPOR Task Force on Emerging Technologies in Public Opinion Research*.

- \* de Leeuw, E.D. 2008. "Choosing the method of data collection" Ch.7, pp 113-135, in *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, ed. by D. de Leeuw et al., Routledge (e-brary)
- \* Buskirk, T. D., and C. Andrus. 2012. "Smart surveys for smart phones: Exploring various approaches for conducting online mobile surveys via smartphones." *Survey Practice* 5(1), <https://doi.org/10.29115/SP-2012-0001>
- \* Sugie, N. F. 2016. "Utilizing smartphones to study disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups." *Sociological Methods & Research* 1-34. DOI: 10.1177/0049124115626176
- \* Ansolabehere, S. and D. Rivers. 2013. "Cooperative survey research." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 307-329

### **Week 5 (Apr 30) Non-Response**

Groves et al. Ch. 6. Non-response in sample surveys (183-216)

Dillman et al. Ch. 2. Reducing people's reluctance to respond to surveys (19-55)

Groves RM, and Peytcheva E. 2008. "Impact of nonresponse rates on nonresponse bias" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(2) 167-189

Brick, J. M. and D. Williams. 2013. "Explaining rising nonresponse rates in cross-sectional surveys." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 645: 36-59

\* Massey, D. S. and R. Tourangeau. 2013. "Where do we go from here? Nonresponse and social measurement." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 645:222-236

Schoeni, R F., et al. 2013. "Response rates in national panel surveys." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 645(1): 60-87

Millar, M.M, and D. Dillman. 2011. "Improving response to web and mixed-mode surveys" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75 (2): 249-269

\* Teitler, J. O., N. E. Reichman, and S. Sprachman. 2003. "Costs and benefits of improving response rates for a hard-to-reach population." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 67: 126-138.

\* Lynn, P. 2008. "The problem of nonresponse" Ch.3, pp 35-55, in *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, ed. by D. de Leeuw et al., Routledge (e-brary)

\* Tourangeau, R., R.M. Groves and C.D. Redline. 2010. "Sensitive topics and reluctant respondents: Demonstrating a link between nonresponse bias and measurement error." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 74(3):413-432. doi: 10.1093/poq/nfq004

### **Week 6 (May 7) Designing survey questions**

Dillman et al. Ch.4. The fundamentals of writing questions (94-126)

Dillman et al. Ch.5. How to write open- and closed-ended questions (127-168)

Dillman et al. Ch.6. Aural versus visual design of questions and questionnaires (169-227)

Dillman et al. Ch.7. Ordering questions and testing for question order effects (228-257)

Groves et al. Ch.7. Questions and answers in surveys (217-258)

\* Schaeffer, N.C., and S. Presser. 2003. "The science of asking questions." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 65-88

\* Schaeffer, N.C. and J. Dykema. 2011. "Questions for surveys: Current trends and future directions." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 75: 909-961

Schwarz, N. 2007. "Cognitive aspects of survey methodology" *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 21: 277-287

\*van der Vaart, W. 2004. "The time-line as a device to enhance recall in standardized research interviews: A split ballot study." *Journal of Official Statistics* 20(2): 301-318

\* Axinn, W.G., L.D. Pearce, and D. Ghimire. "Innovations in life history calendar applications" *Social Science Research* 28(3): 243-264

\* Christian, L.M., N. L. Parsons, and D. A. Dillman. 2009. "Designing scalar questions for web surveys." *Sociological Methods & Research* 37: 393-425

\* Gaskell, G.D., D.B. Wright, and C.A. O'Muircheartaigh. 2000. "Telescoping of landmark events: Implications for survey research." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 64: 77-89

### **Week 7 (May 14). Evaluating survey questions and answers: quality, validity, reliability**

Groves et al. Ch. 8. Evaluating survey questions (259-290)

Yan, T., F. Kreuter, and R. Tourangeau. 2012. "Evaluating survey questions: A comparison of methods." *Journal of Official Statistics* 28(4): 503-529

Alwin, D. F. and B.A. Beattie. 2016. "The Kiss principle in survey design: Question length and data quality." *Sociological Methodology* 46(1):121-152

Tourangeau, R. and T. Yan. 2007. "Sensitive questions in surveys." *Psychological Bulletin* 133(5): 859-883

Hout, M., and O. P. Hastings. 2016. "Reliability of the core items in the General Social Survey: Estimates from the three-wave panels, 2006–2014." *Sociological Science* 3(43):971–1002

Dykema, J., and N.C. Schaeffer. 2000. "Events, instruments, and reporting errors." *American Sociological Review* 65(4):619-629

\* Kreuter, F., S. Presser, and R. Tourangeau. 2008. "Social desirability bias in CATI, IVR, and Web surveys: The effects of mode and question sensitivity." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(5):847-865

\* Sturgis, P., C. Roberts, and P. Smith. 2013. "Middle alternatives revisited: How the neither/nor response acts as a way of saying "I don't know"?" *Sociological Methods & Research* 43(1):15-38

\* Yeager, D.S. and J.A. Krosnick. 2012. "Does mentioning "some people" and "other people" in an opinion question improve measurement quality?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76:131-141

\* De Nicola, F. and Giné, X. 2014. "How accurate are recall data? Evidence from coastal India." *Journal of Development Economics* 106: 52-65

\* Chae, S. "Forgotten marriages? Measuring the reliability of marriage histories." *Demographic Research* Vol. 34, Article 19: 525-562. <https://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol34/19/default.htm>

\* Schwarz, N. 1999. "Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers." *American Psychologist* 54(2): 93.

### **Week 8 (May 21) Mode-specific survey implementation**

Groves et al. Ch. 9. Survey Interviewing (pp. 291-328)

Dillman et al. Ch. 8. Telephone questionnaires and implementation (pp. 258-300)

Dillman et al. Ch. 9. Web questionnaires and implementation (pp.301-350)

Dillman et al. Ch. 10. Mail questionnaires and implementation (pp.351-397)

- Dillman et al. Ch. 11. Mixed-mode questionnaire and survey implementation (pp.398-449)
- \* Garbarski, D., N.C. Schaeffer, and J. Dykema. 2016. "Interviewing practices, conversational practices, and rapport: Responsiveness and engagement in the standardized survey interview." *Sociological Methodology* 46(1): 1-38
  - \* Bradburn, N. M. 2004. "Understanding the question-answer process." *Survey Methodology* 30: 5-15.
  - \* Dijkstra, W., and Y. Ongena. 2006. "Question-answer sequences in survey-interviews" *Quantity and Quality* 40(6): 983–1011
  - \* Beatty, P. C. and G. B. Willis. 2007. "Research synthesis: The practice of cognitive interviewing." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 71(2): 287-311
  - \* Lind, L.H., et al. 2013. "Why do survey respondents disclose more when computers ask the questions?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 77(4):888–935
  - \* Olson, K., J.D. Smyth, and B. Cochran. 2018. "Item location, the interviewer-respondent interaction, and responses to battery questions in telephone surveys." *Sociological Methodology* 48 (1): 225-268
  - \* Conrad, F. G., et. al. 2013. "Interviewer speech and the success of survey invitations." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society)* 176:191-210.
  - \* Siber, H., et al. 2019. "The impact of respondent attentiveness on reliability and validity" *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 22(2): 153-164
  - \* Goldberg, R. E., M. Tienda, and D. A. Koffman. (in press) "Using bi-weekly mobile diaries to assess adolescent relationship flux: Opportunities and challenges." *Journal of Research on Adolescence*
  - \* Maynard, D. W., Freese, J., & Schaeffer, N. C. 2010. Calling for participation: Requests, blocking moves, and rational (inter) action in survey introductions. *American Sociological Review* 75(5): 791-814
  - \* Maynard, D. W., Schaeffer, N. C., Drew, I. P., Raymond, G., & Weinberg, D. 2006. Standardization-in-interaction: The survey interview. In *Talk and Interaction in Social Research Methods*, p. 9-27. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247637673\\_Standardization-in-interaction\\_The\\_survey\\_interview](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247637673_Standardization-in-interaction_The_survey_interview)

**Week 9 (May 28) Basics of survey data management. Ethics and politics of survey research**

- Groves et al. Chapter 10. Postcollection processing of survey data. (329-370)
- Biemer, P.P., and S.L. Christ. 2008. "Weighting survey data" Ch.17, pp 317-341, in *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, ed. by D. de Leeuw et al., Routledge (e-brary)
- Mercer, A., A. Lau, and C. Kennedy. 2018. *For Weighting Online Opt-In Samples, What Matters Most?* Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewresearch.org/methods/2018/01/26/for-weighting-online-opt-in-samples-what-matters-most/>
- \* Kalton, G., and I. Flores-Cervantes. 2003. "Weighting methods" *Journal of Official Statistics* 19 (2): 81-97
- Groves et al. Chapter 11. Principles and practices related to ethical research (371-399).
- AAPOR Code of Ethics <https://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/AAPOR-Code-of-Ethics.aspx>.
- Singer, E., and C. Ye. 2013. "The use and effects of incentives in surveys." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 645: 112-141
- \* Singer, E. and R. M. Bossarte. 2006. "Incentives for survey participation: When are they coercive?" *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 311: 411-418

\* Steklov, G., A. Weinreb, and C. Carletto. 2018. "Can incentives improve survey data quality in developing countries?: results from a field experiment in India" *Journal of Royal Statistical Society A* 181 (part 4): 1033-1056

Corstange, D. 2014. "Foreign sponsorship effects in developing-world surveys: Evidence from a field experiment in Lebanon." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 78(2): 474-484

**Week 10 (June 4) Student project presentations and discussions**