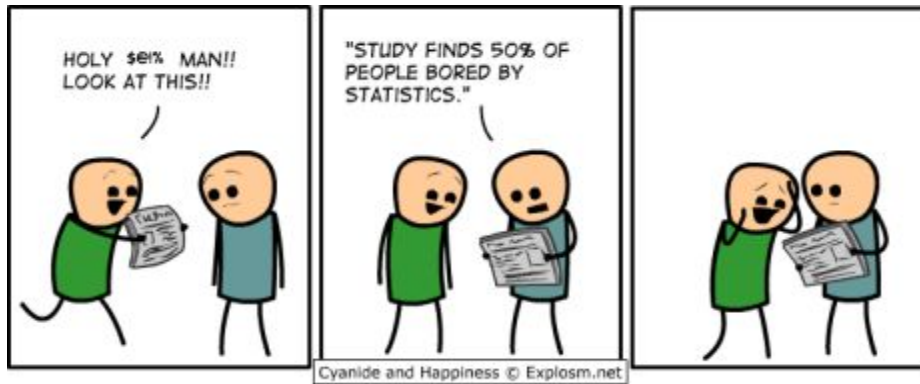


# SOCIOLOGY 309: Social Research II

Winter 2020



Instructor: Emily K. Carian

Email: [emily.carian@csusb.edu](mailto:emily.carian@csusb.edu)

Office: SB-437

Office drop-in hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7pm, and by appointment, SB-437

Class meetings: Lectures, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:50pm, PL-269  
Labs, Tuesdays or Thursdays, 4:00-5:50pm, SB-356

## ***Course Description and Objectives***

Welcome to Sociology 309: Social Research II! The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the statistical methods sociologists use to answer questions about the social world. This course will help you become a better *consumer* of research: you will be able to critically evaluate claims you read in class, the news, on social media, and elsewhere. This course will also help you become a *producer* of research: you will be able to ask and answer your own research questions in a scientifically valid way. Our class will cover topics including confidence intervals, null and alternative hypotheses, t-tests, chi-square tests of independence, and linear regression.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- identify and implement appropriate statistical tests to describe patterns in data and draw conclusions.
- perform descriptive statistics and statistical analyses in SPSS.
- design and implement research in an area of choice.
- convey research findings in writing.

## ***Required Materials***

There is no required textbook for this course. Required and recommended readings will be posted on Blackboard (under Readings). You need a USB flash drive (at least 16GB in size) for saving your work during lab. Bring your USB flash drive to every lab session.

## ***Grading and Assignments***

You will be graded according to the following scale:

A = 93% and higher	C = 73-76%
A- = 90-92%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 63-66%
B- = 80-82%	D- = 59-62%
C+ = 77-79%	F = 58% and lower

Your percent score is based on the following scheme:

Attendance:	5%
In-Class Assignments:	10%
Quizzes:	30%
Lab Reports and Reflections:	25%
Research Project:	30%

### ***Attendance (5%):***

Most learning will take place in class. It is crucial (and mandatory) that you show up! Attendance is taken using Blackboard's Qwickly Attendance tool. Make sure to check in using your smartphone or laptop by the end of the class. As a general rule, I will not "excuse" absences. In some cases, you are able to make up in-class assignments (see the next section). If you expect to be absent for a long period of time (e.g., because of a serious illness), please let me know as soon as possible.

### ***In-Class Assignments (10%):***

During class time, you will be expected to complete assignments, including worksheets, pop quizzes, group work, and more. Some of these assignments will be graded based on whether you completed them and some will be graded based on whether your answers are correct. If you are experiencing a serious problem (e.g., personal illness or illness of a child/parent/etc) or have an unavoidable and necessary scheduling conflict (e.g., a job interview), you may complete and turn in in-class assignments for credit. Check the list posted on Blackboard (under In-Class Assignments) to see if any assignments were completed during lecture, complete them, and turn them in to me during the next lecture (no later). Note that some assignments, like pop quizzes, cannot be made up if you are absent.

### ***Quizzes (30%):***

You will take three quizzes during the quarter. The quiz questions cover material from lecture, the required readings, in-class assignments, and other course materials. Quiz 1 is on January 23, quiz 2 is on February 18, and quiz 3 is on March 12. To complete these quizzes, you must be in class. If you will be absent for a prearranged, valid reason (e.g., a job interview), talk with me ahead of time to schedule when you will take your quiz.

### ***Lab Reports and Reflections (25%):***

The purpose of lab is to (1) prepare you to complete the research project and (2) give you adequate practice with SPSS, a statistical software social scientists, public policy analysts, and others use to analyze quantitative data. Besides allowing you to answer all sorts of questions with data, being able to use SPSS is a valuable skill that you can list on your resume! You should be signed up for a lab on

Tuesday or Thursday at 4:00-5:50pm in SB-356. As noted in the Course Schedule below, you will usually need to prepare for lab by reading or completing a short assignment. Bring your USB flash drive to every lab. All lab reports will be turned in via Blackboard. To earn full credit, you must attend and complete each lab assignment. If you are experiencing a serious problem (e.g., personal illness or illness of a child/parent/etc) or have an unavoidable and necessary scheduling conflict (e.g., a job interview) and must miss your lab section, you may complete and turn in the lab report within one week. To do so, use the computers in the Pfau Library Wedge, which have SPSS.

Additionally, most weeks you will check your lab report against an answer key and complete a lab reflection, where you will describe what you did well and what you did not do well. Lab reflections are due the following Tuesday at 4pm (see the Course Schedule below); we will do the first lab reflection together.

### ***Research Project (30%):***

One of the objectives of this course is to design and implement a research study. For this assignment, you will have the opportunity to identify a question of interest about a social issue that is important to you, identify appropriate measures from the General Social Survey (or GSS, a nationally representative survey used by social scientists), and put the course material into practice to draw a conclusion. The following assignments and deadlines make up the research project:

- |  |                  |     |
|--|------------------|-----|
| 1. Research question, hypothesis, and descriptive statistics table | 2/4 or 2/6       | 5%  |
| 2. Plan for analysis and draft of Data & Methods section           | 3/3 or 3/5       | 5%  |
| 3. Analysis  | 3/10 or 3/12     | 5%  |
| 4. Report  | 3/17, 11:59:59pm | 15% |

The first three assignments will be turned in at the end of your lab session on that date. All assignments related to the research project will be turned in via Blackboard. More detailed instructions for the research project will be handed out later.

## ***My Expectations of Students***

### ***Participation:***

Everyone's contribution is needed to make us a true learning community. Participate by asking and answering questions, contributing during group work and other activities, and otherwise engaging with the material. To come to class ready to participate, complete the required readings listed in the course outline below before class time. I recognize that some students are uncomfortable speaking in class; if this is you, I challenge you to step out of your comfort zone and contribute to the discussion at least once per class period. I also encourage you to speak with me regularly during office hours about the material to demonstrate your understanding.

### ***Classroom Culture:***

I expect students to contribute to a respectful and inclusive learning environment with their actions and their words. As your instructor, I will strive to do the same. In addition to these expectations, we will work together to define what we want our classroom culture to be on the first day of class.

### ***Communication:***

I appreciate honesty and transparency, and I expect you to communicate with me in a timely manner (i.e. within 48 hours) about issues that will prevent you from participating fully in this class. If you are experiencing a serious problem (e.g., personal illness or illness of a child/parent/etc) or unavoidable

and necessary scheduling conflict (e.g., a job interview), please let me know before or after class, in office hours, or by email ([emily.carian@csusb.edu](mailto:emily.carian@csusb.edu)), especially if the problem will affect your attendance in lecture or lab. Keep me in the loop! Remember: I cannot make accommodations for you if you do not communicate with me.

### ***Late Work:***

I have high expectations for all students, including turning in assignments on time. As always, in the case of a serious issue that will prevent you from turning in an assignment on time, tell me as soon as possible to make arrangements. Exceptions to the deadline will be made on a case-by-case basis. Otherwise, late work will not be accepted.

### ***Laptops and Phones:***

Because research shows that laptops and phones are distractions to learning, laptops and phones are not allowed in this course, except for students with documented disabilities and for some class activities. I expect you to take notes by hand. I will post PowerPoint slides to Blackboard (under Slides) the evening before lecture. You are welcome to print them out and bring them to class if they are helpful in taking notes.

### ***Academic Honesty:***

Plagiarism (claiming credit for someone else's ideas or words) and cheating are against the Student Conduct Code. In addition to decreasing how much you will learn, plagiarizing and cheating will earn you a failing grade in this class. To avoid plagiarizing and cheating, always use your own words; avoid the temptation to use even half a sentence written by someone else. When directly quoting others' work or using their ideas, give credit to them by putting their words in quotes and citing them. To learn more about how to cite your sources, see [this guide](#) from the library.

## ***Resources to Help You Succeed***

### ***Office Drop-In Hours:***

I highly encourage you to attend office drop-in hours (Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7pm, or by appointment). You do not need an appointment to come to office drop-in hours; this is a time I set aside each week specifically to meet with you! We can clarify anything that's confusing, talk about new topics, work on assignments, discuss graduate school in sociology and job paths, and more! My office is located in SB-437. I expect every student to come to office hours at least once.

### ***Email:***

In addition to communicating with me during class and office hours, you are welcome to contact me via email ([emily.carian@csusb.edu](mailto:emily.carian@csusb.edu)) with questions or clarifications. To save both of us time, please consider whether your question is best answered in office hours, in class, or over email. Before you email me a question, make sure you look for the answer in the syllabus and/or assignment instructions. While I make an effort to respond to student emails on the same day, I cannot promise I will respond to emails sent after 5pm until the next day.

### ***Recommended Readings:***

I have tried to minimize the number of assigned readings for this course so you can concentrate on what is important, which is understanding the concepts. If you are the type of person who benefits from in-depth readings or if you are struggling with these topics, I have posted recommended readings

on Blackboard (under Readings). They are:

Topic	Recommended Reading
Null and alternative hypotheses	Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 5
T-tests	Excerpt from Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 9
Chi-square tests of independence	Excerpt from Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 11
Linear regression	Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 13

### ***Pfau Library Wedge:***

If you need additional practice or time (e.g., for the Research Project) with SPSS, the [Student Technology Support Center](#) has computers equipped with SPSS.

### ***Blackboard:***

This course will make use of the Blackboard site for posting readings, turning in assignments, keeping track of grades, and making announcements. Please make sure you are able to access Blackboard and check the site frequently. Note that we will be using the Blackboard site for the lecture, not the Blackboard site for the lab sections.

### ***Support for Students with Disabilities:***

If you require an accommodation to participate fully in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so we can arrange accommodations. Additionally, contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) at 909-537-528 (UH-183) to verify your eligibility for services and obtain necessary services.

### ***Basic Needs:***

If you are having trouble affording groceries, accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, I encourage you to contact the [Basic Needs](#) unit ([basicneeds@csusb.edu](mailto:basicneeds@csusb.edu)). They can point you to resources like the [Obershaw DEN](#) food pantry (FO-237; [TheObershawDen@csusb.edu](mailto:TheObershawDen@csusb.edu)), short-term housing, and emergency loans.

### ***Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):***

College can be stressful; make sure you take care of your mental and emotional well-being. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is available for students with personal, academic, and relationship concerns. You can call them at 909-537-5040, or visit their [website](#).

### ***University Policies and Emergencies:***

You can review the University's policies on plagiarism, cheating, and course withdrawal in the [Academic Regulations and Procedures](#) section of the CSUSB Bulletin of Courses. For information regarding emergency procedures and safety guidelines, visit the [Office of Emergency Management and Business Continuity](#).

## *Course Schedule*

### *Notes:*

- Readings that are “recommended” are not required; they are optional for those who want more in-depth readings. *All other readings are required.* All readings can be found on Blackboard, under Readings.
- This schedule is subject to change. Stay up-to-date using the most recent version of the syllabus on Blackboard, under Syllabus.

### *Important Dates:*

- January 23: Quiz 1
- February 4/6, at the end of lab: Research question, hypothesis, and descriptive statistics table for research project due
- February 20: Quiz 2
- March 3/5, at the end of lab: Plan for analysis and draft of Data & Methods section for research project due
- March 10/12, at the end of lab: Analysis for research project due
- March 12: Quiz 3
- March 17, 11:59:59pm: Research report due

<b>Week 1</b>	
Tuesday 1/7	<i>Why should I know statistics?</i>
Thursday 1/9	<i>How do I measure the things I'm interested in?</i> Read Before: Excerpts from Schutt Chapter 2 and Schutt Chapter 4
<b>Week 2</b>	
Tuesday 1/14	<i>How can I describe my data? Descriptive statistics</i> Read Before: Excerpt from Schutt Chapter 9
Thursday 1/16	<i>How can I describe variation in my data? Variance, standard deviation, z-scores</i> Read Before: Phillips Chapter 4 Do Before: Practice with Squaring and Square Roots
Lab	<i>Lab 1: What are the fundamentals of SPSS?</i> Read Before: Guide to SPSS, p. 3-11
<b>Week 3</b>	
Tuesday 1/21	<i>How do I write a research question?</i> Read Before: GSS Codebook, p. 2 (and skim the rest) (on Blackboard, under Labs) Note: You will need access to the GSS Codebook in class today (so bring a smartphone or laptop)
Thursday 1/23	<b>Quiz 1 today!</b>

	<b><i>Why should I doubt my conclusions? Fundamentals of probability</i></b> Read Before: Wheelan Chapter 5
Lab	<b><i>Learning How to Do a Lab Reflection + Research Project Work Time</i></b>
<b>Week 4</b>	
Tuesday 1/28	<b><i>When can I be confident in my conclusions? The Central Limit Theorem</i></b> Read Before: Wheelan Chapter 8
Thursday 1/30	<b><i>When can I be confident in my conclusions? Confidence intervals</i></b> Read Before: Phillips Chapter 6
Lab	<b><i>Lab 2: How can I describe data using SPSS?</i></b> Read Before: Guide to SPSS, p. 31-35
<b>Week 5</b>	
Tuesday 2/4	<b><i>How can I write a testable hypothesis? Null and alternative hypotheses</i></b> Recommended Read Before: Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 5
Thursday 2/6	<b><i>How can I write a testable hypothesis? Null and alternative hypotheses</i></b>
Lab	<b><i>Lab 3: How can I describe data using SPSS?</i></b> Do Before: Lab 2 reflection & Part 0 of Lab 3
<b>Week 6</b>	
Tuesday 2/11	<b><i>How can I use statistics to compare two means? T-tests</i></b> Read Before: Phillips Chapter 7 Recommended Read Before: Excerpt from Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 9
Thursday 2/13	<b><i>How can I use statistics to compare two means? T-tests</i></b> Read Before: How do sociologists use t-tests?
Lab	<b><i>Lab 4: How do I calculate confidence intervals using SPSS?</i></b> Read Before: Guide to SPSS, p. 34-36
<b>Week 7</b>	
Tuesday 2/18	<b><i>What have I learned so far? Review</i></b>
Thursday 2/20	<b>Quiz 2 today!</b> <b><i>How can I use statistics to compare frequencies? Chi-square tests of independence</i></b> Read Before: Excerpt from Phillips Chapter 8 Recommended Read Before: Excerpt from Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero Chapter 11

Lab	<b><i>Lab 5: How do I conduct a t-test using SPSS?</i></b> Read Before: Guide to SPSS, p. 37-42 Do Before: Lab 4 reflection
<b>Week 8</b>	
Tuesday 2/25	<b><i>How can I use statistics to compare frequencies? Chi-square tests of independence</i></b> Read Before: How do sociologists use chi-square tests of independence?
Thursday 2/27	<b><i>How can I use statistics to quantify (measure) a relationship? Correlation</i></b> Read Before: Wheelan chapter 4
Lab	<b><i>Lab 6: How do I conduct a chi-square test of independence using SPSS?</i></b> Read Before: Guide to SPSS, p. 43-45 Do Before: Lab 5 reflection
<b>Week 9</b>	
Tuesday 3/3	<b><i>How and when do I use t-tests, chi-square tests, and correlation?</i></b>
Thursday 3/5	<b><i>How do I write a research report?</i></b> Bring all your materials for the research project and a laptop (if possible) to class
Lab	<b><i>Lab 7: How do I answer a research question using statistics? (Project work time)</i></b> Do Before: Lab 6 reflection & Part 0 of Lab 7
<b>Week 10</b>	
Tuesday 3/10	<b><i>What have I learned so far? Review</i></b>
Thursday 3/12	<b>Quiz 3 today!</b> <b><i>What have I learned so far?</i></b>
Lab	<b><i>Lab 8: How do I answer a research question using statistics? (Project work time)</i></b> Do Before: Part 0 of Lab 8
<b>Finals Week</b>	
Tuesday 3/17, 11:59:59pm	<b>Report for Research Project due (submit via Blackboard)</b>