Instructor: Dr. Amy Leisenring
Office Location: DMH 224
Telephone: 408-924-5756
Email: Via Canvas: https://sjsu.instructure.com
Office Hours: Tues 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., By appointment
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30 to 2:45 p.m.
Classroom: DMH 162
Prerequisites: SOCI 1, SOCI 100W, SOCI 105

Course Description
This seminar course is designed to provide upper-level sociology students with the opportunity to use field research methods to study a community problem/issue. We will focus exclusively on interviewing, which is the most widely used qualitative research method. A large portion of the course will be focused on collecting, analyzing, and writing up data generated from in-depth, semi-structured interviews. We will also discuss the various issues that accompany this form of research, including ethical issues, rapport-building, reciprocity and representation.

This course is designed to be practical, collaborative, and hands-on. We will conduct research for the Provost’s Office at SJSU in order to examine the factors that shape the success of students from underrepresented racial minority groups. Students will work on teams that will each be assigned to one of the colleges at SJSU. Each student will conduct approximately 4 interviews, transcribe them, and share them with their group to produce one uniform data set for each college. We will use a collaborative process to code and analyze the data. Each student will write a final paper based on the data. Additionally, as a class, we will create a report that will be made available to the SJSU administration and community.

We will be utilizing a grounded theory approach to data analysis. Grounded theory is an approach for conducting and analyzing qualitative research that was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s. It involves the development of theory through the analysis of data. Data is collected (in this class via in-depth interviews) and key points are extracted from the texts via the process of “coding.” Through the process of memo-writing, codes are grouped into categories, which are then used to generate theory.

This course is designed for advanced-level undergraduate students and graduate students who are assumed to already have some familiarity with the basics of qualitative research methods.
More of our time will be devoted to the exploration of data analysis than with the “how-to” of conducting qualitative research. However, I will provide recommendations of additional readings for those students who believe that their foundational skills and/or knowledge of qualitative methods are lacking.

**Required Texts/Readings**


2. Online Readings posted on Canvas: (Listed as “Canvas” in schedule)

**Canvas**

There is a Canvas site for this class and you will be automatically added. You will turn in most assignments here. I will also use Canvas to make announcements and post all handouts, assignments, and online readings. Canvas will also be a place for you to communicate with your group members and ask questions to other students in the class for which everyone might want the answer. Finally, all course emailing will be conducted via Canvas. Thus, I highly recommend that you either check Canvas regularly for important messages and announcements and/or that you link your Canvas email to your regular email.

**Workload**

This class is demanding. You will be doing course readings, facilitating class discussions, conducting interviews, transcribing and coding data, and you will collectively write a professional report. Therefore, you will need to use good time management. First, read the course readings on time for class. Everyone is expected to come to class having carefully read the assignments. Be sure to use the syllabus and Canvas to keep track of the assignments that are upcoming in the week. Be sure to organize your time so that you can complete the work for the course on time. Your performance affects the quality of the entire research project.

**Attendance**

While I will not take attendance, because this is an advanced-level seminar course, there is an expectation that you will attend class regularly. You will miss important information, feedback, etc. if you fail to attend class. Further, there will sometimes be exercises that take place in class for participation credit. You will lose this credit if you do not attend class and there is no additional opportunity to make it up.

Attendance and class participation is crucial in this course as we are conducting a collaborative project. If you absolutely must miss class, you should arrange with a classmate to get notes and materials from the class. You do not need to let me know if you are going to miss class for a day or two. However, if you experience something that will result in a long-term absence, please do let me know. I do not give incompletes except for in the case of an extreme emergency, and even then a student must have completed at least 70% of the course work (according to University Policy).
Late Work Policy
For most assignments, I will accept late work for 1 week after an assignment is due. However, late work will be dropped a third of a letter grade for each weekday it is late after the due date. For example, a grade of B- would become a C+ if turned in one day after it is due and a C if turned in two days after it is due. After one week, a missing grade becomes a zero (there are NO exceptions to this except for in cases of extreme emergencies, which you must communicate to me ASAP). Some assignments must be turned in on time for credit (I will make clear on each handout what can be turned in late and what cannot.)

Assignments and Grading Policy
Your final grade in this class will be based on the following:

1. Class Participation and Activities
   Because this is a workshop-style course, student participation is vital for the success of the class. I will evaluate your class participation based on the following:
   a. Participation in course discussions.
   b. Successful completion of various in-class activities (i.e. interview & coding exercises, writing exercises, small group activities, and peer review work and feedback). Not all of the out-of-class activities will be listed on the syllabus so it is imperative that you check Canvas regularly to see what has been assigned.
   c. Facilitation of class discussion of course readings.
   d. Accountability to group and class members.

   Please note: You cannot make up in-class activities and exercises. However, when I calculate your final participation grade I will allow for a bit of “cushion room” which means if you miss a day of in-class activities it will not adversely impact your grade.

2. Online Response Exercises
   At times you will be asked to submit a response to a question or two that I pose on Canvas regarding the week’s readings or activities. The questions will be posted at least 5 days ahead of time and will need to be submitted by 1:15 p.m. on the day that they are due.

3. Annotated Bibliography
   You will be responsible for reading materials on the course research topic and compiling an annotated bibliography based on the articles that you have read. At times students may be asked to facilitate class discussion of articles that we’ve read.

4. Interview Transcripts
   You will conduct interviews that will be recorded and transcribed.

5. Coding/Memos
   You will code interview transcripts from your group and write several memos as part of your analysis of data.
6. **Research Paper**

Analysis of data will happen both as an entire class and in small groups. Each student will write their own paper based on their analysis of group data. Papers will be assimilated by groups with my help to produce a cohesive report that will be presented to the Provost’s Office at the end of the semester.

7. **Final Presentation**

Students will present their findings from their projects at the end of the semester.

--Information and specific details about each assignment will be provided at a later date. (All handouts will always be posted to Canvas, as well).

The breakdown of your final grade looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Response Exercises</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Transcripts</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding, Memos, and Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Total:**                           | **100%**   |

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A = 93 – 100%
- B = 83 – 87%
- C = 73 – 77%
- D = 63 – 67%
- A- = 90 – 92%
- B- = 80 – 82%
- C- = 70 – 72%
- D- = 60 – 62%
- B+ = 88 – 89%
- C+ = 78 – 79%
- D+ = 68 – 69%
- F = 59% or less

**University Policies**

**Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.
**Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at [http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html). Information about late drop is available at [http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

**Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.
COURSE SCHEDULE

*Please note that I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule, as needed, with fair notice.*

Week 1: Introduction
Thursday, 1/28
*Introduction to Course*

Week 2: Introduction (Continued)
Tuesday, 2/2
**Video:** *What’s Race Got to Do With It?*

Thursday, 2/4
**Read:** *Text CH 1-3*
**Canvas Reading Response #1 (Due at 1:15 p.m.)*

Week 3: Designing Interview Guides
Tuesday, 2/9
**Read:** *Text CH 4-6*
**Canvas Reading Response #2 (Due at 1:15 p.m.)*

Thursday, 2/11
**Due: IRB CITI Training Certificate**

Week 4: IRB Proposal
Tuesday, 2/16
**Read:** “Why Do Students Leave? A Study of Student Department from SJSU” (Canvas)
**Canvas Reading Response #3 (Due at 1:15 p.m.)*

Thursday, 2/18
--Finalize IRB Proposal

REMAINDER OF SCHEDULE TO BE ANNOUNCED

FINAL MEETING:
**Thursday, May 19th** (12:15 p.m. until 2:30 p.m.)
**Read:** *Text CH 14*
Final Presentations
Final Reflection Writing