



Social Science (SOSC) 366

Research Methods in the Social Sciences (Revision 8)

Status:	Replaced with new revision, see the course listing  for the current revision 
Delivery mode:	Individualized study online  . Delivered via Brightspace.
Credits:	3
Areas of study:	Arts or Social Science
Prerequisites:	A junior social science course is recommended but not required.
Precluded:	PSYC 304. SOSC 366 may not be taken for credit if credit has already been obtained for PSYC 304 .
Challenge:	SOSC 366 is not available for challenge.
Faculty:	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

Overview

Social Science 366: Research Methods in the Social Sciences is designed for students who wish to gain an understanding of the limits and potentials of social science research, and for those who intend to research social phenomena scientifically.

Social Science 366 is intended to facilitate your awareness of the research process and your ability to conduct research in an ethical and thorough manner using appropriate research strategies. This course has technical and critical components. This means understanding the course requires a good grasp of many technical concepts and processes and applying these concepts to the study of social phenomena.

Outline

Social Science 366: Research Methods in the Social Sciences comprises 15 units:

- Unit 1: Doing Social Research: An Introduction to Inquiry
- Unit 2: Theory and Research
- Unit 3: The Ethics and Politics of Social Research
- Unit 4: The Logic of Causation
- Unit 5: Obstacles to Scientific Inquiry
- Unit 6: Research Design
- Unit 7: Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement
- Unit 8: The Logic of Sampling
- Unit 9: Survey Research
- Unit 10: Experiments
- Unit 11: Nonreactive or Unobtrusive Research
- Unit 12: Qualitative Field Research
- Unit 13: Evaluation Research
- Unit 14: Mixed Methods
- Unit 15: Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Learning outcomes

Social Science 366: Research Methods in the Social Sciences has been designed to help you achieve the following course objectives:

1. Understand the ethical responsibilities of a social researcher toward research participants.
2. Explain the principles and objectives of social science research.
3. Describe the use of common research methods in the social sciences.
4. Define a research problem.
5. Write a research proposal.
6. Conduct an independent pilot research project involving the collection of empirical data.
7. Analyze and report findings from a research project.
8. Better understand research reported in the media and critically analyze research studies.

Evaluation

Students must achieve an overall passing grade of 60% in the course. In addition, students must obtain a passing grade of 60% on all written assignments. The weighting of the composite grade is as follows:

Activity	Weight
Quiz 1	3%
Midterm Test	15%
Literature Review	10%
Quiz 2	3%
Essay	20%

Activity	Weight
Research Proposal	20%
Quiz 3	4%
Research Project	25%
Total	100%

Materials

Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

Babbie, E., Edgerton, J. D., & Roberts L. W. (2021). *Fundamentals of social research*. (5th Canadian ed.). Cengage.

Neuman, W. L., & Robson, K. (2018). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th Canadian ed.). Pearson Canada.

All other materials, including a Course Information, Study Guide, and additional reading and viewing materials, are available online through the course site.

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) 
- › [Program planning](#) 
- › [Request assistance](#) 
- › [Support services at AU](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 8, May 30, 2024

Updated October 17, 2025

View **previous revision** 
