

Population Studies Research Practicum

Sociology 4881 — Spring 2019

Blegen 430 — Monday/Wednesday — 1:00pm-2:15pm

Web page (for slides, readings, etc.): <https://www.rob-warren.com/4881.html>

Also see the course Canvas (not Moodle) page for grades and for turning in assignments

INSTRUCTOR: Rob Warren (he/him/his) | 1167 Social Sciences | warre046@umn.edu ([How to Email a Professor](#))

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:15-3:30 and by appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT: XXX (XXX) | XXX Social Sciences | xxx@umn.edu

Office Hours: XXX and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The University of Minnesota is among the most vibrant and productive research universities in the country. Its faculty are leaders and pioneers in many scientific (including social scientific) fields, and the university annually attracts tens of millions of dollars in federal and private research support. However, undergraduate students often have a hard time connecting to the research going on around them in a way that improves their skills, provides valuable experiences to them, or helps them explore their professional interests.

Sociology 4881 is designed to meaningfully connect undergraduate students to an ongoing population studies research project, to see that project through from the “idea stage” to a finished product, and to explore scientific research as a potential career option. (Population studies, by the way, is an interdisciplinary field of study that uses demographic data and methods to describe, explain, and predict social phenomena.)

Students in Sociology 4881 will be involved in every phase of the project—including problem formulation; literature review and critique; decisions about conceptualization and measurement; empirical analyses; writing; and the presentation and publication of results. Each week, students will also listen to a research presentation at the Minnesota Population Center (MPC) and reflect on the presentation in a way that will further their exposure to all phases of the research process. Along the way, students will also learn about ethical issues as they pertain to population and social scientific research; how research projects are funded; how scientists present, discuss, and critique one another’s work; and how scientific publishing works. Finally, students will develop specific skills in the analysis of quantitative data.

SPRING 2019 RESEARCH TOPIC: In spring 2019, students will investigate the long-term personal impact of having a name that denotes racial, gender, class, religious, or other group membership—regardless of whether the person belongs to that group—on a person’s educational attainment, marital status, occupational attainment, income, and longevity. This project will draw on research in sociology, economics, public policy, and demography to study issues related to discrimination.

GOALS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will be especially valuable for students who are (1) interested in learning more about the scientific research process and/or (2) considering careers in scientific research. It might be most valuable for students interested in social scientific, public health, or population studies research. Students considering attending graduate programs in those fields are especially likely to benefit from the course.

Students who have not taken undergraduate courses in research methods or statistics may find Sociology 4881 more challenging, but they are still welcome to enroll.

Students in Sociology 4881 will learn how scientific research projects are conceived, defined, funded, and executed and how their results are communicated, evaluated, critiqued, and disseminated. Beyond this, the University of Minnesota has defined several “Student Learning Outcomes” that will be pursued in Sociology 4881. These include:

1. Identifying, defining, and solving problems;
2. Locating and critically evaluating information;
3. Mastering a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry;
4. Communicating effectively; and
5. Understanding the role of creativity, innovation, discovery, and expression across disciplines.

THE BASICS

1. Respect for Others

Everyone in the class must treat everyone else in the class with unfailing respect. We are here to learn from one another, and we can learn the most from people who don't think like us or have the same perspectives or experiences as us. This means it is crucial that everyone feel free to voice their opinions and perspectives—even if others disagree with those opinions or have different perspectives. In my experience, people can only effectively communicate when they feel they are being treated with respect.

Listen carefully and respectfully to others. No shouting. No interrupting. No sarcasm. No personal attacks. If you get really upset, take a break, take a deep breath, maybe go for a short walk, and then come back to the discussion ready to calmly and respectfully re-engage.

2. Technology in the Classroom

Many instructors forbid or limit the use of iPads, laptop computers, tablets, phones, and other devices in class. Not me! Bring them and use them—they can be great resources and learning aids. In fact, I insist that you bring them since I might ask you to use these devices for some interactive exercises and in-class assignments. However:

- a. Do **not** distract or annoy your classmates or me! This means: Notifications and ringers off. Media sound off. If you are likely to use technology in some way that might distract or annoy people, sit in the very back of the room. Use good judgment. Don't be a jerk.
- b. If you are easily distracted or annoyed by other people's (mis)use of technology, sit toward the front of the classroom. Then you won't easily be distracted by them.

- c. My advice: Use technology sparingly while in class. Use it, when appropriate, for class-related activities. Use your cell phone to send or respond to urgent messages and to respond to polls or quizzes that I send out. Otherwise, try to pay attention to me and your peers. Snapchat and Twitter can probably wait until after class.
- d. I reserve the right to change this policy at any time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Individual Assignments

(120 points, or 60% of course grade)

Complete these assignments on your own. Instructions for each will be available on the course website well ahead of the due date. In most cases, assignments will be turned in via Canvas. Assignments turned in up to 48 hours late will receive half credit; those turned in beyond 48 hours late will not be accepted.

Assignment	Points	Due Date
1. Class Attendance	30	1.5 points for each of 25 class sessions
2. In-Class Quizzes	10	1.0 points for each of 11 quizzes
3. Precis, Part I	5	January 30
4. Hand Link 50 Cases	10	February 13
5. Precis, Part II	15	February 18
6. Front End Critique	10	March 4
7. Data/Methods Critique	10	March 25
8. Tables/Figures Critique	10	April 8
9. Results/Discussion Critique	10	April 15
10. Rough Draft Critique	10	April 29

2. Group Assignments

(80 points, or 40% of course grade)

Complete these assignments in groups to which you will be assigned. Instructions for each will be available on the course website well ahead of the due date. In most cases, assignments will be turned in by email to me. Assignments turned in late will receive half credit.

Assignment	Points	Due Date
1. Front End	8	February 25
2. Data/Methods	8	March 11
3. Stata Exercise	6	March 13
4. Annotated Stata Code/Output	6	March 25
5. Tables/Figures	8	April 1
6. Results/Discussion	8	April 8
7. IRB Application	4	April 10
8. Consult about Talk/Poster	4	April 17
9. Rough Draft	8	April 22
10. Practice Talk/Poster	4	April 24
11. Talk/Poster	8	May 1
12. Final Draft	8	May 11

3. Extra Credit

(Up to 8.5 points)

As noted above, class attendance is worth 30 points, there are 25 class sessions, and you earn 1.5 point for attending each class session. This means that you could earn up to $1.5 \times 25 = 37.5$ points for attending class ... up to 3.7 points beyond the maximum of 30. In other words, if you attend more than 20 of 25 class sessions, you are earning 1.5 points of extra credit per class session.

Likewise, in-class quizzes are worth 10 points, there are going to be 11 quizzes, and you earn 1.0 point per quiz. This means that you could earn up to $1 \times 11 = 11$ points for quizzes ... 1 point more than the maximum of 10. In other words, if you complete all 11 quizzes you can earn 1 extra credit point.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

1. How Grades Will Be Assigned

There are 200 total points in the class (plus some opportunities for extra credit). Your end-of-semester letter grade will be based on the percentage of the 200 points that you earn:

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	93.0% to 100.0%	B-	80.0% to 82.9%	D+	67.0% to 69.9%
A-	90.0% to 92.9%	C+	77.0% to 79.9%	D	63.0% to 66.9%
B+	87.0% to 89.9%	C	73.0% to 76.9%	F	less than 63.0%
B	83.0% to 86.9%	C-	70.0% to 72.9%		

Group assignments are worth a total of 80 points (or 40% of the course grade) and individual assignments are worth 120 points (or 60% of the course grade). You can get up to 7.5 points of extra credit.

2. Contesting Grades

I might sometimes make grading mistakes—it happens—but I want you to get the grade you deserve. To contest a grade on an assignment: First, wait 24 hours after you receive the grade. Are you *sure* the grade was unfair? Then, if you still want to contest the grade, email me a list of your reasons for your dissatisfaction with the grade.

3. Incompletes

According to university policy, a course grade of “Incomplete” is only given when (1) a student is making good progress throughout most of a course and then (2) some unexpected event or circumstance temporarily prevents that student from completing the course assignments on time. I will only agree to give an “Incomplete” when both conditions are met. Also, I will only give an “Incomplete” once you and I have met to sign the required university paperwork and have agreed about how and by what date all course assignments will be completed.

4. Learning Styles, Abilities, and Accommodations

If you are overwhelmed or feel like you could use some help catching up in the course, one good first step is to visit with me during office hours. In most cases I can help you get back on track, especially if you talk to me early.

Everyone learns in different ways. If, for any reason, you become concerned about your ability to fully participate in this course due to the structure of activities or assignments please talk to me about it. I am committed to providing all students equal access to learning opportunities.

Disability Services is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, or systemic), are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at 612-626-1333 (V/TTY) or ds@umn.edu. Additional information is available at <http://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with Disability Services, please notify me at the start of the semester.

If you would like help with your writing, Student Writing Support at the Center for Writing (<http://writing.umn.edu/sws/>) offers a variety of very useful resources.

5. Sexual Misconduct

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment. I also have a reporting responsibility related to my role: I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime of sexual misconduct with the Office for Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action (EOAA) at diversity.umn.edu/eoaa/home. For victims of sexual assault: The Aurora Center provides free and confidential support and academic advocacy via their 24-hour help line (612-626-9111) and by email (aurora.umn.edu).

6. Academic Misconduct

I strongly encourage you to collaborate and brainstorm with your classmates and to review and critique one another's work, both in and out of class. However, individual assignments and essays should represent your own ideas and be your own work. If any words are not your own, you must place them in quotes, include a citation, and include the reference in a bibliography at the end of the assignment. If any ideas are not your own even if the words are, you must still include a citation. (See the American Sociological Association's [Style Guide](#) for useful direction on citations and references.) It is OK to reflect on and synthesize the ideas of other people, with proper citation of sources. It is not OK to imply that those ideas are yours or to use them without attribution. When in doubt, cite!

Taking credit for work that is not your own constitutes scholastic dishonesty. I am a “zero tolerance” professor when it comes to scholastic dishonesty. The university makes it easy for me to report it, too. I fill out one short report via a very nice web interface—I can do it from my phone!—and they take it from there. If I ever think you engaged in scholastic dishonesty, I will discuss it with you first. After that, if I still think you engaged in scholastic dishonesty, I will give you a zero on the relevant assignment and report the incident to the university. Not sure what scholastic dishonesty is? Read about it in the “Scholastic Dishonesty” section of the [Student Conduct Code](#).

WEEK-BY-WEEK CLASS SCHEDULE

Individual Assignments

Group Assignments

Topic in Class

Due Today

WEEK 1

Wed., January 23 Class Introduction; Syllabus; Web Site

WEEK 2

Mon., January 28 How to Read Research Articles; Introduction to Our Data; Our Basic Analytic Strategy

Wed., January 30 Discuss MPC Seminar; Introduction to Hand Linking **Precis, Part I; Quiz about 1/28 MPC Seminar**

WEEK 3

Mon., February 4 **NO CLASS**

Wed., February 6 **NO CLASS**

WEEK 4

Mon., February 11 Basic Structure of Articles; Front Ends; Measuring Key Variables; Getting into Groups **Hand Link 50 Cases**

Wed., February 13 **Discuss MPC Seminar; Reliability/Validity of Hand Linking; Discussion of Literature** **Quiz about 2/4 & 2/11 MPC Seminars**

WEEK 5

Mon., February 18 Discussion of Literature; Theory; Formulating Our Questions/Contributions **Precis, Part II**

Wed., February 20 Discuss MPC Seminar; More on Front Ends; How Machine Linking Works **Read Front End of 3 Articles; Quiz about 2/18 MPC Seminar**

Topic in Class

Due Today

WEEK 6

Mon., February 25	Data/Methods Sections; More on Our Analytic Strategy	Front End
Wed., February 27	Discuss MPC Seminar; Machine Linking Results; More on Our Analytic Strategy	Quiz about 2/25 MPC Seminar

WEEK 7

Mon., March 4	More on Data/Methods Sections; Discussion of Front Ends	Front End Critique; Read Data/Methods Sections of 3 Articles
Wed., March 6	Discuss MPC Seminar; Introduction to Stata & Stata Exercise	Quiz about 3/4 MPC Seminar

WEEK 8

Mon., March 11	More on Stata & Stata Exercise; Planning for Tables/Figures	Data/Methods; Read Tables/Figures of 3 Articles
Wed., March 13	Discuss MPC Seminar; Review Stata Exercise	Stata Exercise; Quiz about 3/11 MPC Seminar

WEEK 9

Mon., March 18	NO CLASS	
Wed., March 20	NO CLASS	

WEEK 10

Mon., March 25	More on Tables/Figures; Discussion of Data/Methods Sections	Annotated Stata Code/Output; Data/Methods Critique
Wed., March 27	Discuss MPC Seminar; Results/Discussion Sections; Poster Design	Read Results/Discussion Sections of 3 Articles; Quiz about 3/25 MPC Seminar

Topic in Class

Due Today

WEEK 11

Mon., April 1	Discuss Tables/Figures; Structure of Talks	Tables/Figures
Wed., April 3	Discuss MPC Seminar; Research Ethics; IRB Applications	CITI Training; Read Article on Research Ethics; Quiz about 4/1 MPC Seminar
WEEK 12		
Mon., April 8	How research is funded; TBA	Results/Discussion; Tables/Figures Critique
Wed., April 10	NO CLASS	IRB Application
WEEK 13		
Mon., April 15	Discussion of Results/Discussion Sections; TBA	Results/Discussion Critique
Wed., April 17	Discuss MPC Seminar; Abstracts; TBA	Consult about Talk/Poster; Read Abstracts of 5 Articles; Quiz about 4/8 & 4/15 MPC Seminars
WEEK 14		
Mon., April 22	Peer Review Process; TBA	Read Manuscript, Reviews, & Decision Letter; Rough Draft
Wed., April 24	Discuss MPC Seminar; Practice Session for 2 Groups	Practice Talk/Poster; Quiz about 4/22 MPC Seminar
WEEK 15		
Mon., April 29	Practice Session for 3 Groups	Rough Draft Critique
Wed., May 1	Poster and Presentation Day!	Talk/Poster; Quiz about 4/29 MPC Seminar
WEEK 16		
Mon., May 6	Discuss MPC Seminar; Course Evaluations	
FINALS WEEK		
Sat., May 11	Final Exam Day/Time	Final Draft

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS POLICIES

GRADES: University academic achievement is graded under two systems: A-F (with pluses and minuses) and S-N. Choice of grading system and course level (1xxx/3xxx/4xxx) is indicated on the registration website; changes in grade scale may not be made after the second week of the semester. Some courses may be taken under only one system; limitations are identified in the course listings. The Department of Sociology requires A-F registration in courses required for the major/minor. University regulations prescribe the grades that will be reported on your transcript.

- A Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements (4.00 grade points)
- A- 3.67 grade points
- B+ 3.33 grade points
- B Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements (3.00 grade points)
- B- 2.67 grade points
- C+ 2.33 grade points
- C Achievement that meets the basic course requirements in every respect (2.00 grade points)
- C- 1.67 grade points
- D+ 1.33 grade points
- D Achievement worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements (1.00 grade point)
- F Performance that fails to meet the basic course requirements (0 grade points)
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
- N No credit. Its use is now restricted to students not earning an S on the S-N grade base
- I Incomplete, a temporary symbol assigned when the instructor has a "reasonable expectation" that you 1) can successfully complete unfinished work on your own no later than one year from the last day of classes and 2) believes that legitimate reasons exist to justify extending the deadline for course completion. The instructor may set date conditions for make-up work. If a course is not completed as prescribed or not made up as agreed within the year, the I will lapse to an F if registered on the A-F grade base or an N if registered on the S-N grade base.
- W Official withdrawal from a course after the end of the second week of the semester. You must file a course cancellation request before the end of the sixth week of the semester to ensure that the W, rather than the F, will be formerly entered on your record.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS (see schedule on the Calendar web site at <https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/final-exam-times>): You are required to take final examinations at the scheduled times. Under certain circumstances, however, you may request final examination schedule adjustment in your college office. Instructors are obligated to schedule make-up examinations within the final examination period for students who have three final examinations within a 16-hour period. Instructors also are encouraged to reschedule examinations for students with religious objections to taking an examination on a given day. You must submit your request for an adjustment in your schedule at least two weeks before the examination period begins. For assistance in resolving conflicts, call the CLA Student Information Office at 625-2020. If you miss a final, an F or N is recorded. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make up the examination. Final examinations may be rescheduled by the instructor only through the official procedure for that purpose (as noted on the above web page). Final examinations may not be scheduled for the last day of class or earlier or for Study Day. If an examination is rescheduled at the instructor's request, and you have an examination conflict because of it, you are entitled to be given the final examination at an alternative time within the regularly scheduled examination period for that semester.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: As a student, you are responsible for attending class and for ascertaining the particular attendance requirements for each class or department. You should also learn each instructor's policies concerning make-up of work for absences. Instructors and students may consult the CLA Classroom, Grading, and Examination Procedures Handbook for more information on these policies (<https://policy.umn.edu/education/makeupwork>).

COURSE PERFORMANCE AND GRADING: Instructors establish ground rules for their courses in conformity with their department policies and are expected to explain them at the first course meeting. This includes announcement of office hours and location, the kind of help to be expected from the instructor and teaching assistants, and tutorial services, if available. The instructor also describes the general nature of the course, the work expected, dates for examinations and paper submissions, and expectations for classroom participation and attendance. Instructors determine the standards for grading in their classes and will describe expectations, methods of evaluation, and factors that enter into grade determination. The special conditions under which an incomplete (I) might be awarded also should be established. The college does not permit you to submit extra work to raise your grade unless all students in the class are afforded the same opportunity.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: You are entitled to a good learning environment in the classroom. Students whose behavior is disruptive either to the instructor or to other students will be asked to leave (the policies regarding student conduct are outlined on-line at <https://communitystandards.umn.edu/know-code/consequences>).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: University instructors may restrict or prohibit the use of personal electronic devices in his or her classroom, lab, or any other instructional setting. For the complete policy, visit: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>

SCHOLASTIC CONDUCT: The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows: Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. **Students cannot evade (intentionally or unintentionally) a grade sanction by withdrawing from a course before or after the misconduct charge is reported. This also applies to late withdrawals, including discretionary late cancellation (also known as the "one-time-only drop").** For the complete policy, visit: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you

may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/>.

DRAFT

A REMINDER OF RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
*** SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES ***

GRADE INFORMATION: Grades are due in the Office the Registrar within 3 business days after the final examination. No information regarding grades will be released by the department office staff to anyone except designated personnel in Records and college offices. Students may access their own grades through the MyU Portal.

INCOMPLETES: It is the instructor's responsibility to specify conditions under which an Incomplete (I) grade is assigned. Students should refer to the course syllabus and talk with the instructor as early as possible if they anticipate not completing the course work. Coursework submitted after the final examination will generally be evaluated down unless prior arrangements are made in writing by the instructor. University policy states that if completion of the work requires the student to attend class in substantial part a second time, assigning an "I" grade is NOT appropriate. Incompletes are appropriate only if the student can make up the coursework independently with the same professor. Students need to have completed a substantial portion of the course in order to be even considered for an Incomplete.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS: Arrangements for special examinations must be made directly with the instructor who taught the course and who is responsible for approving and supervising the examination or making individual arrangements. Circumstances for missing an exam include, but are not necessarily limited to: verified illness, participation in athletic events or other group activities sponsored by the University, serious family emergencies, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, and religious observances. It is the responsibility of the student to notify faculty members of such circumstances as far in advance as possible.

GRADE CHANGES: Grades properly arrived at are not subject to renegotiation unless all students in the class have similar opportunities. Students have the right to check for possible clerical errors in the assignment of grades by checking with the instructor and/or teaching assistant.

Students with justifiable complaints about grades or classroom procedures have recourse through well-established grievance procedures. You are expected to confer first with the course instructor. If no satisfactory solution is reached, the complaint should be presented in writing to the department Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising (909 Soc Sci). If these informal processes fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, other formal procedures for hearing and appeal can be invoked. See the departmental advisor in 923 Social Sciences to explore options.

DISABILITY SERVICES: Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. For more info contact Disability Resource Center in 180 McNamara.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the December 1998 policy statement, available at the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Questions or concerns about sexual harassment should be directed to this office in 419 Morrill Hall.

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAMS INFORMATION: The Sociology Department offers two options for the Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science degree. Students interested in majoring in Sociology should view the online-information session about the major. Further information can be obtained from the following persons and offices or online at <http://cla.umn.edu/sociology>

General information, Sociology Department, 909 Social Sciences - 624-4300
[Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising, Bobby Bryant, 923 Social Sciences – 624-4300](#)
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Joe Gerteis, 1125 Social Sciences - 624-1615
Soc Honors Faculty Representative, Prof. Joe Gerteis, 1125 Social Sciences - 624-1615
Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Jeylan Mortimer, 1014B Social Sciences – 624-4064 and/or
Graduate Program Associate, Becky Drasin, 927 Social Sciences - 624-2093

Undergraduate jobs, internships, volunteer and research opportunities, scholarships, and much more can be found in the Undergraduate Resources site - <https://sociologyundergrad.wordpress.com/>