

# THE RESEARCH PROCESS

## SOCIOLOGY 738

Wednesday, 6:30 - 8:20 pm, PH-302

Charles F. Turner

Office Hours: Wednesday, 4:30 to 6:30pm and by appointment

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The aim of this course is to provide students with an overview of the methods, practices, and outcomes of applied social research. Major emphasis will be placed on applications of survey and evaluation research methods to the study of contemporary social issues. We will begin each segment of the course with a brief overview of the relevant research methodology. To provide students with an overview of the life cycle of the research process, we will follow a number of contemporary research enterprises from their inception in a research proposal through their realization in publications many years later. Using this strategy, we will review the basic stages and issues in empirical research, including conceptualization, operationalization, causal explanation, criteria for selecting research strategies and research designs, sampling theory, and some basic issues in data collection and analysis. We will also have the opportunity to observe the ways in which serendipity, opportunity, and luck -- both good and bad -- can reshape the research process.

For most of this course, there will be no formal text. Instead, we will be reading from a wide selection of articles, chapters, and unpublished research proposals. For classes on November 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, the required text is: Robert Boruch, *Randomized Experiments for Planning and Evaluation*. This text will be available at the College Bookstore at mid-semester.

### GRADING

**EVALUATIVE QUIZZES.** Quizzes will be given in class on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and December 10<sup>th</sup>. These quizzes will be designed to evaluate whether you have completed your reading assignments and mastered **key** concepts covered in class. As we will discuss in our first class meeting, the assigned reading for this course is substantial, and I expect students to be serious about learning from it. Quizzes, however, will be designed so that a student who has completed at least half of the class readings and mastered the most important concepts discussed in class should be able to achieve an excellent grade.

**TERM PAPER.** All students are required to submit one 10-15 page research proposal providing an overview of a research problem, statement of specific research objectives, specific hypotheses to be tested (if appropriate), description of research methods to be employed (including instruments to be used or developed, sample design, potential impediments to research), and types of analyses that will be done with the data generated by the research. The term paper must be submitted by e-mail before 11:00 pm on December 29<sup>th</sup>. (If you will be submitting your paper using a word processor other than MS Word or WordPerfect, you must save your file in RTF format.)

Before beginning work on your term paper, all students must meet with the instructor to discuss and receive approval for their proposed research topic. These meetings should be completed on or before October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**GRADES.** Grades in the course will be based upon student's performance in the two evaluative quizzes (25% each), and the term paper (50%).

**PLAGIARISM.** The use of other people's work or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment is a serious breach of the standards of academic scholarship. Students who engage in such behavior may be given a grade of F, and they may be subject to other disciplinary action. The university's academic integrity policy is published in full at ---  
<http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>

**CONTACTING ME.** The best way to contact me is to send E-Mail to CFTurner3@.RCN.COM. My office telephones are 202-657-4455 (home) and 718-997-2819 (university). *Please leave voicemail messages ONLY on 202-657-4455.*

**READINGS** (\* indicates a required reading)

**August 27 COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROCESS**

**Sept. 3, 10 ORIGINS AND METHODS OF SURVEY RESEARCH**

\* Chapters 1-5 in C. Moser and G. Kalton, *Survey Methods in Social Investigation*. New York: Basic Books, 1971. [Reading 01]

S. Sudman, Applied Sampling. Chapter 5 in P. Rossi et al., *Handbook of Survey Research*. New York: Academic Press, 1983. [Reading 02]

\* J.M. Lepkowski, Telephone Sampling Methods in the United States. Chapter 5 in R. Groves et al., *Telephone Survey Methodology*. New York: Wiley, 1988. [Reading 07]

\* Introduction to Survey Methodology. Chapter 1 in R. Groves et al., *Survey Methodology*. New York: Wiley, 2004. [Reading 201].

**Sept. 10 (cont'd) PRACTICE AND SOME PROBLEMS OF SURVEY RESEARCH**

**Sept. 17**

The Development and Contemporary Use of Subjective Surveys. Chapter 2 in C. Turner and E. Martin, *Surveying Subjective Phenomena, Volume 1*. New York: Russell Sage. [Reading 03]

\* Standards of Practice and Misuses of Surveys. Chapters 3 in C.F. Turner and E. Martin, *Surveying Subjective Phenomena, Volume 1*. New York: Russell Sage, 1985. [Reading 05]

Chapters 1-3 in R. Andersen et al. *Total Survey Error*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979. [Reading 06]

\* Questions and Answers in Surveys and Evaluating Survey Questions. Chapters 7-8 in R. Groves et al., *Survey Methodology*. New York: Wiley, 2004. [Reading 202].

\* F.J. Fowler. The case for more split-sample experiments in developing survey instruments. Chapter 9 in S. Presser et al., eds. *Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires*. New York: Wiley, 2004. [Reading 203].

**Sept. 24 APPLIED RESEARCH ON SEXUAL BEHAVIORS AT THE ONSET OF THE AIDS**  
**Oct. 15 EPIDEMIC AND BEYOND**

\* Chapter 1-4 in A.C. Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior of the Male*. Philadelphia: Saunders, 1948. [Reading 08]

\* W.G. Cochran, F. Mosteller, and J.W. Tukey (1953) Statistical problems of the Kinsey Report. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 48:673-716. [Reading 09]

C.F. Turner, H.G. Miller, L.E. Moses, Eds., (1989) *AIDS, Sexual Behavior, and Intravenous Drug Use*. Washington DC: National Academy Press  
Ch. 2: Sexual Behavior and AIDS. [Reading 11]

\* Institute of Medicine (1997) *The Hidden Epidemic: Confronting Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Summary*. Washington DC: National Academy Press. [Reading 101]

**NOTICE Oct. 1, 8 —> No Class**

**Oct. 15, 22, 29 AGONIES AND OUTCOMES OF APPLIED RESEARCH ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOR**

### **Research Proposals**

\* F.L. Sonenstein and J.H. Pleck (1985), Proposal to National Institutes of Health for 1987 National Survey of Adolescent Males. Unpublished. [Sections of Reading 12].

\* C.F. Turner et al., (1993) Survey Measurement of Sensitive Behaviors Using Audio-CASI. Proposal to the National Institutes of Health. Research Triangle Institute: Unpublished. [Reading 105]

Chapters 1-2, Appendix A-B in E. Laumann et al., *Social Organization of Sexuality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. (*Optional Reading: Appendix C, Questionnaire*) [Reading 17, 18]

### **Research Outcomes**

Mosher WD, Chandra A, Jones J. (2005) Sexual behavior and selected health measures: men and women 15-44 years of age, United States, 2002. *Advanced Data (NCHS)*, 15:1-55. [Reading 110]

\* Sonenstein FL, Pleck JH, Ku L (1989) Sexual activity, condom use and AIDS awareness among adolescent males. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 21(4):152-158. [Reading 13]

\* Sonenstein FL, Ku L, Lindberg LD, Turner CF, Pleck JH (1998) Changes in sexual behavior and condom use among teenaged males: 1988 to 1995. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(6):956-959. [Reading 15]

\* Turner, CF, Ku, L, Rogers, SM, Lindberg, LD, Pleck, JH, Sonenstein, FL (1998) Adolescent sexual behavior, drug use, and violence: Increased reporting with computer survey technology. *Science*, 280:867-873. [Reading 16]

\* Al-Tayyib, A.A., S.M. Rogers, J.N. Gribble, M. Villarroel, C.F. Turner (2002) Effect of low medical literacy on health survey measurements. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92: 1478-1481. [Reading 51]

\* Turner, C.F., S.M. Rogers, H.G. Miller, W.C. Miller, J.N. Gribble, J.R. Chromy, P.A. Leone, P.C., Cooley, T.C. Quinn, J.M. Zenilman (2002) Untreated gonococcal and chlamydial infection in a probability sample of adults. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 287:726-733. [Readings 49, 49a, 49b]

Ku L, St Louis M, Black C, Aral S, Turner CF, Lindberg LD, Sonenstein F (2002) Risk behaviors, medical care and chlamydial infection among young men in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92: 588-596. [Reading 54]

Rogers, S.M., H.G. Miller, W.C. Miller, J.M. Zenilman, C.F. Turner (2002) NAAT-identified and self-reported gonorrhea and chlamydial infections: Different at-risk population subgroups? *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, 79: 94-97. [Reading 55]

\* Zenilman JM, Yuenger J, Galai N, Turner CF, Rogers SM. (2005) PCR Detection of Y-chromosome Sequences in Vaginal Fluid: Preliminary Studies of a Potential Biomarker for Sexual Behavior. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 32:90-94. [Reading 66]

\* Turner, C.F., M.A. Villarroel, J.R. Chromy, E. Eggleston, S.M. Rogers (2005). Same-Gender Sex in the USA: Trends across the 20th century and during the 1990s. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 69: 439-462. [Readings 63,64]

Johnson AM, Mercer CH, Erens B, Copas AJ, McManus S, Wellings K, Fenton KA, Korovessis C, Macdowall W, Nanchahal K, Purdon S, Field J. (2001) Sexual behaviour in Britain: partnerships, practices, and HIV risk behaviours. *Lancet*. 358:1835-42. [Reading 111]

\* Villarroel, M.A., C.F. Turner, E.E. Eggleston, A.A Al-Tayyib, S.M. Rogers, A.M. Roman, P.C. Cooley, H. Gordek (2006). Same-Gender Sex In the USA: Impact of T-ACASI on Prevalence Estimates. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 70:166-196. [Reading 68]

\* Turner, C.F., J.N. Gribble, A. Al-Tayyib, J.R. Chromy (2000) Falsification in epidemiologic surveys: Detection and remediation. Paper presented at Conference on Research Integrity. Bethesda, MD, November 18-20, 2000. [Reading 53]

**NOTE. October 22<sup>nd</sup> class will include in-class evaluative quiz #1.**

Nov. 6, 12

## **REDISCOVERING THE NEED FOR APPLIED RESEARCH ON INJECTION DRUG USE**

### **Research Proposals**

DesJarlais DC, et al., Research on Spread of AIDS among IV Drug Users in New York. Proposal to the National Institutes of Health. New York: NDRI. [Reading 19]

\* DesJarlais DC, et al., National Evaluation of Syringe Exchange Programs. Proposal to the National Institutes of Health. New York. Beth Israel Medical Center. [Reading 107]

### **Research Outcomes**

DesJarlais et al., Bibliography and Abstracts of Published Research. [Reading 21]

\* DesJarlais, DC, Friedman, SR (1987) HIV infection among intravenous drug users: Epidemiology and risk reduction. *AIDS*, 1:67-76. [Reading 22]

\* DesJarlais, DC, Hopkins, W. (1985) Free needles for intravenous drug users at risk for AIDS: Current developments in New York City (letter). *New England Journal of Medicine*, 313:1476. [Reading 23]

DesJarlais, DC, et al. (1987) Development of AIDS, HIV seroconversion, and potential co-factors for T-4 cell loss in a cohort of intravenous drug users. *AIDS*, 2:105-111. [Reading 24]

\* Friedman, SR, et al. (1997) Sex, drugs, and infections among youth: Parenterally and sexually transmitted diseases in a high-risk neighborhood. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 24: 322-326. [Reading 25]

DesJarlais, D.C., D. Paone, J. Milliken, C.F. Turner, H.G. Miller, J. N. Gribble, Q. Shi, H.Hagan, S.R.Friedman (1999) Using audio-computer interviewing to measure HIV risk behavior in a high risk population. *Lancet*, 353(9165):1657-1661. [Reading 40]

Normand J, Vlahov D, Moses L. (1995) *Preventing HIV Transmission: The Role of Sterile Needs and Bleach*. Washington DC: National Academy Press. [Reading 108]

\* Braine N, Des Jarlais DC, Ahmad S, Purchase D, Turner CF. (2004) Long-term effects of syringe exchange on risk behavior and HIV prevention. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 16: 264-275. [Reading 62]

Perlis, T.E., Des Jarlais, D.C., Friedman, S.R., Arasteh, K., Turner, C.F. (2004) Audio-computerized self-interviewing versus face-to-face interviewing for data collection at drug abuse treatment programs. *Addiction*, 99:885-896. [Reading 59]

\* Turner, C.F., M.A. Villarroel, S.M. Rogers, E. Eggleston, L. Ganapathi, A.M. Roman, A. Al-Tayyib (2005). Reducing Bias in Telephone Survey Estimates of the Prevalence of Drug Use: A Randomized Trial of Telephone Audio-CASI. *Addiction*, 100:1432-1444. [Readings 68, 69]

Nov. 19 - 26

## **EVALUATION RESEARCH**

\* Boruch, R.F. *Randomized Experiments for Planning and Evaluation*. Sage Publications (Applied Social Research Methods Series). ISBN: 0803935102 (**TEXT TO BE PURCHASED BY STUDENTS**)

\* The NIMH Multisite HIV Prevention Trial Investigators. (1998) Reducing HIV Risk Behaviors, *Science*, 280: 1889-1894. [Reading 26]

Dec. 3, 10

## **THE FUTURE: SURVEY RESEARCH ON THE INTERACTION OF GENETICS, ENVIRONMENT, AND HUMAN DISEASES.**

\* National Research Council (2006) *Genes, Behavior, and the Social Environment*. Washington DC: National Academy Press, in press. Selected chapters. [Reading 109]

National Research Council (2001) *Cells and Surveys*. Washington DC: National Academy Press. [Reading 104]

Chapter 1: Introduction [Reading 102]

\*Chapter3: Biological Material in Household Surveys: The interface between Epidemiology and Genetics [Reading 103]

Glossary

\*National Research Council (2008) *The National Children's Study Research Plan: A Review*. Washington DC: National Academy Press. *Selected Chapters*. [Reading 205]

**NOTES: The December 10<sup>th</sup> class will include in-class evaluative quiz #2.**  
**Term papers must be submitted before 11pm on December 29th**