



1304 William James Hall
2900 Bedford Ave. • Brooklyn, NY 11210
tel 718-951-3192 • fax 718-677-6154
<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/departments/childrensstudies>

Children & Youth Studies Program

Applied Research in Children's Studies
CHST 4200 TZ11 – Section 15635
Fall 2017

Instructor: Mara Getz Sheftel
Class: Tuesdays 11:00-12:15
Room: James Hall 3607

email: msheftel@gradcenter.cuny.edu
Office hours: Tuesday 12:15-1:15, by appt.
Office: James Hall 3416

COURSE DESCRIPTION 3 hours; 3 credits

This course covers the study of applied research in social science settings and includes a discussion of ethical issues that arise when conducting research with children. Students will develop their own research questions and explore appropriate methodologies for examining them. Different approaches to research, both qualitative and quantitative will be discussed. Students will gain hands-on experience with one or more research method outside of the class. The course emphasizes critical reading and understanding of the research literature. (This course is not open to students who completed this topic in Children's Studies 25 in the spring or fall 2006)

Prerequisite: Children's Studies 2100 or permission of the program director.

Learner Objectives

Following full participation in this course, students will be able to:

1. Explore theoretical perspectives and ethical issues that arise when conducting applied research with children and youth.
2. Compare and contrast research and methodological approaches to conducting research with children in social science settings.
3. Develop research questions and explore appropriate means of answering and examining those questions.
4. Be critical consumers of research, especially of research with children and youth

Course Design

As an “applied research” hybrid course, CHST4200 is designed to include both lecture and application portions of the course:

- **Lecture**

The lecture portion of the class will introduce the materials that make up the substantive topics of this course. It will take the form of a traditional class consisting

of lecture and discussion. The course has two major foci: (a) to train students in the design and execution of scientific research in the study of children and youth, and (b) to enable students to complete, read and evaluate their own research and the work of other researchers. Lectures by the Instructor will be derived primarily from the posted readings and will highlight the key concepts through explanation, group discussion and activities.

- **Application**

The application portion of the class includes three components: 1) Weekly labs requiring the students to practice the research methods they have learned. As a hybrid class meeting only once a week, these applied labs are intended to take place during the remaining course hours; 2) Three assignments completed with research partners requiring students to conduct research; 3) Final research proposal completed individually.

Required Reading

We will be using the following textbook:

Blackstone, Amy. *Principles of Sociological Inquiry 1st Edition*. Saylor Foundation.

This open source (meaning free!) book can be accessed here:

<https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=139>

In addition, select chapters from other textbooks will be assigned on specific weeks and empirical research articles will also be assigned so students gain an understanding of how social scientists conduct and report on the methods we discuss. These additional materials will be scanned and provided on Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS AND OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		GRADING SCALE			
Attendance & Participation	150 (15%)	A	95-100	C	73-75.99
Labs (10 X 35)	350 (35%)	A-	90-94.99	C-	70-72.99
Assignments (3 X 100)	300 (30%)	B+	86-89.99	D+	66-69.99
Final Research Proposal	200 (20%)	B	83-85.99	D	63-66.99
Total	1000	B-	80-82.99	D-	60-62.99
		C+	76-79.99	F	59 and below

Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to play an active role in this course. This means you are responsible for attending class, reading assigned materials, participating in classroom discussions and activities, asking questions, listening carefully to your classmates, treating everyone with respect, and meeting with the instructor in person during office hours when you have questions or concerns that were not addressed in class. This also means acting considerately towards other students and the instructor and refraining from engaging in distracting behaviors including texting and side conversations. Attendance and participation will make up a total of 150 points (15%) of your total grade. Please see the end of the syllabus for the class participation rubric.

Weekly Labs

Research methods are something that a researcher actively *does* and therefore cannot be sufficiently learned sitting in a classroom. Thus, meeting only once a week, this course is designed so that students have considerable time to engage directly in research. To that end students are assigned weekly labs to apply the methods that they are learning in lieu of a second weekly meeting. **Labs are listed on the syllabus for the week that they are assigned and are due via Blackboard the following Sunday at 11:59pm unless otherwise noted on the syllabus.** Because these assignments are designed to keep students up to date on the material covered in class and will be used as examples in class around which to base our discussion it is critical that they are completed on time. Therefore late submissions will not be accepted. Each of the 10 weekly labs will be worth 35 points, together making up a total of 35% of your final grade for the course.

Fieldwork Assignments

In addition to lectures and short labs, students will be required to conduct research. There are a total of three field assignments that are to be conducted together with a research partner: 1) Literature review, 2) Survey research (Quantitative), 3) Interviews or Field Research (Qualitative). Because the sample at your disposal is comprised of Brooklyn College students, each research team will pick a topic related to college age youth from their major or field of interest (e.g. education, sociology, social work, psychology etc). **Team work is expected to be equally divided among partners and as an upper level course groups are expected to manage this process individually without the mediation of the instructor.** Not only will these assignments give you an idea about how some of the main social science methods are conducted, they will also inform your choice of method proposed in your final research proposal (see below). More information on what is expected for assignment will be clearly outlined on an assignment sheet. Each of the 3 assignments is worth 100 points, together making up 30% of your final grade for the course.

Research Proposal & Presentation

Each student will be required to complete an individual research **proposal** based on the research question related to college students they have been working on throughout the semester. Determination of the specific method and sample to use will be informed by their experience with fieldwork assignments, but the proposal will be submitted individually. Portions of the proposal will be introduced throughout the semester and be based on and informed by labs and applied assignments. More information on what is expected for each section of the proposal and presentation will be clearly outlined on an assignment sheet. The final proposal will be worth 200 points (20%) of your total grade for the course.

POLICIES

Blackboard & Communication

Assignment submissions and course announcements will be made through Blackboard. All students are required to update their **email addresses** listed through Blackboard to their current and active email addresses. Students who have not updated their email address will miss them. For ALL technical issues, contact the Brooklyn College ITS Help Desk

718.951.4357 helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu **I cannot provide technical assistance—students are responsible for handling technology issues on their own!**

Communication with instructor

When contacting your instructor by email make sure to include your full name as well as the course title/number. You can expect to receive a response via email within 36 hours during the week (i.e. excluding the weekend). If you do not receive a response after 36 hours email again or use Blackboard to send me a message to make sure your original email did not go to spam.

Attendance and tardiness

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each scheduled class session. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your participation grade. Tardiness is disruptive to the entire class. Students who are late will not be able to sign in and thus will be counted as absent. Students will be responsible for all materials covered during class sessions missed.

Late assignments

No late assignments will be accepted without a university-approved, documented excuse (e.g. doctor's note).

Writing and citations

It is expected that submitted writing assignments be written at a college level. This means that your papers will be graded for their readability and grammatical accuracy as well as the substantive ideas they convey. Make sure to avoid colloquialisms, short hand, contractions and terms that would be appropriate in speaking (or texting!) but not professional writing. All resources should be cited using proper [MLA or APA citations](#). For additional help with this, individual tutoring services can be found at the campus Learning Center located in 1300 Boylan Hall. You can learn more about the center by calling them at 718.951.5821 or visiting their online webpage at <http://lc.brooklyn.cuny.edu/>

Academic honesty and plagiarism

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

Services for students with disabilities

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please

provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

Services for undocumented students

As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality and can direct you to free confidential assistance like CUNY Citizenship Now: <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now/>

Religious holidays

New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we "make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his [or her] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he [or she] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days." Please inform me of any absences for any observed religious holidays that overlap with class time.

CLASS SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS*

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL RESEARCH		
Week 1	Introductions & Expectations	
August 29	Reading Due: Lab 1 (due 9/3)	None – hope you enjoyed your summer ☺ 1) Complete this student questionnaire: https://goo.gl/forms/NajxqyQBFdQBPBDn2 2) Post major/field and topic of interest on shared google doc linked in Blackboard “Lab 1”
Week 2	Why do social research?	
September 5	Reading Due: Lab 2 (due 9/10)	Babbie, 2015 Ch. 1 (Blackboard) 1) New York Times – Errors of Human Inquiry 2) Complete Google form: Who is your partner and what is your field/topic of research https://goo.gl/forms/3bQLrMYWmTr3C6IJ2
PART II: DEFINING A RESEARCH QUESTION		
Week 3	Beginning a research project & What is a research question	
September 12	Reading Due: Lab 3 (due 9/17)	Blackstone Ch. 4.1, 4.2 & 4.4, 5.1 & 5.4 Brainstorm Potential Research Questions
Week 4	Searching for Literature – Library Workshop	
September 19	Meet in the Library Readings Due:	Room 120 in the Library Patten & Newhart Part 2 (blackboard)
	Assignment 1a Due 9/19	Search subtopics for Literature Review
Week 5	Writing a Literature Review & Citations	
September 26	Reading Due: Lab 4 (due 10/1)	Bearman & Bruckner, 2001 p.859-871 Annotated bibliography

PART III: PLANNING A RESEARCH PROJECT		
Week 6	Research Design	
October 3	Reading Due:	Blackstone Ch. 5.2, Babbie Ch. 4 pg. 113-120 "Evicted"
	Assignment 1b Due 10/8	Literature Review + Research Question
Week 7	Research Ethics and Research with Children & Youth	
October 10	Reading Due:	Blackstone Ch. 3 (all) & Greene & Hogan, 2005
	Lab 5 (due 10/15)	Facebook controversy
Week 8	Conceptualization & Operationalization	
October 17	Reading Due:	Blackstone Ch. 6 (all) Bearman & Bruckner, 2001 p.873-875 ("Measurement" section)
	Lab 6 (due 10/22)	Conceptualization worksheet – 1 per team
PART IV: COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA		
Week 9	Logic of Sampling & Probability Sampling	
October 24	Reading Due:	Blackstone 7.1 & 7.3
	Lab 7 (due 10/29):	Probability Sampling Simulation
Week 10	Overview of Quantitative Data Collection - Surveys	
October 31	Reading Due:	Blackstone Ch. 8.1-8.4 Shuman (2002) "Sense & Nonsense about Surveys"
	Lab 8 (due 11/5)	Impact of question wording
Week 11	Quantitative Data Analysis	
November 7	Reading Due:	Blackstone 8.5 Best, 2012, Ch. 1
	Lab 9 (due 11/12)	Using Excel to analyze data
Week 12	Non-Probability Sampling & Overview of Qualitative Data Collection I - Interviews	
November 14	Reading Due:	Blackstone 7.2 & Ch. 9 (all)
	Assignment 2 Due 11/14	Quantitative Research: Survey
Week 13	Overview of Qualitative Data Collection II - Field Research & Qualitative Data Analysis	
November 28	Reading Due:	Blackstone Ch. 10 (all)
	Lab 10 (due 12/3):	Analyzing Interview Transcripts
PART V: CONCLUSIONS		
Week 14	Tying it all together into a research proposal	
December 5	Reading Due:	Sample research proposals
	Lab 11 (due 12/10)	Research Proposal Outline (Optional)
Week 15	Conclusions - Why do social research?	
December 12	Reading Due:	TBD
	Assignment 3 Due 12/10	Qualitative Research: Interview or Field
Finals Week	Assessments Due	
December 19	Research Proposal Due at 10:30am via Blackboard	

*Schedule, readings and assignments are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

PARTICIPATION GRADE RUBRIC

Grade	Criteria
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absent
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present, but has a number of absences • Disruptive and/or not engaged • Does not participate or respond when called on
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present, not disruptive. • Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much. • Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion on his/her own initiative.
60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic facts from the readings, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. • Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the readings), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class). • Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on. • Demonstrates sporadic involvement.
80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates good preparation: knows facts from the readings well, has thought through implications of them; often brings readings to class; shows evidence of taking some notes on readings. • Offers interpretations and analysis of readings (more than just facts) to class. • Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. • Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed readings exceptionally well, relating them to other material (e.g., course material, discussions, experiences, etc). • Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further. • Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc. • Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.