

SOC 403: Applied Research Internship
Course Syllabus, WIN 2018
University of Alberta

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Office hours:

Location and Time:

- F 9:00AM - 11:50AM
- T 1-62 (Population Research Lab) & Rutherford S 205A

Required Course Texts:

Please see Course Schedule and Reading list below. You can access your readings through eClass.

Supporting Resources

These resources may be helpful as we work through the semester:

- Diez, David M., Christopher D. Barr, and Mine Cetinkaya-Rundel. 2015. *OpenIntro Statistics, 3rd Edition*. Available online at: <https://www.openintro.org/stat/>.
- Dalgaard, Peter. 2008. *Introductory Statistics with R*. Springer. Available online via the University of Alberta library system: [Dalgaard link #1](#). OR [Dalgaard link #2](#).

Prerequisites:

SOC 315 or consent of the instructor.

Technology Requirements:

Many meeting sessions will require independent work on the research project. We encourage you to bring personal laptops to each meeting. Please let us know if you do not have access to a laptop and we can make other arrangements. In addition, this semester's course project requires working with statistical data. We will be using Excel and the statistical program R. We will discuss how to download and set-up these programs early in the semester.

Policy about course outlines can be found in the section on [Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures, and Grading](#) of the University Calendar.

Course Description

Through the Applied Research Internship course, students will work as a team to conduct research for a local non-profit, business, social service organization, or government agency. Although conducting supervised research activities for the organization will make up the largest component of the course, students will also participate in weekly seminar meetings and professionalization activities. These will include developing skill-based CVs/resumes, researching potential job opportunities, and meeting with social scientists working outside academia to discuss their employment pathways and the nature of their work. Seminar discussions will also be dedicated to discussing the challenges, opportunities, role, and promises of applied social science research in contemporary society.

Course Objectives

Through this course, students will

1. Develop professional skills and competencies as applied social researchers. This will include:
 - a. Enhancing research and data analysis skills by applying them to a research project conducted in partnership with a local community housing agency.
 - b. Developing team-work skills through participation in a team-based research project.
 - c. Advancing written and oral communication skills through report writing and the delivery of research presentations to key stakeholders.
 2. Develop a familiarity with housing issues in Canada and Edmonton.
 3. Clarify the skills and competencies developed through training in the social sciences.
 4. Explore professional opportunities in the social sciences.
 5. Understand the issues, challenges, and possibilities of applied social science research in contemporary society.
 6. Develop connections with the larger community through participation in a research partnership.
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Nature of the Course

This course is not structured like a typical undergraduate class. We will be working as a team to conduct social research for a local organization. A core objective of the course is to create an environment that simulates the professional environments in which applied social researchers work. Thus, the course demands high levels of participation, professionalism, and collegiality. The course is not lecture-based. We will meet weekly to work on the project and to engage in discussions and workshops relevant to the course objectives. However, seminars, workshops, and discussions require prior preparation and some require completing out-of-class assignments. It is expected that team-members come to each seminar prepared.

Our Course Project: Capital Region Housing

For the Winter 2018 course, we will be partnering with Capital Region Housing (CRH), the largest provider of social and affordable housing in the Edmonton area. CRH manages over 4500 Community Housing units, 600 Near Market units, and 3000 rent subsidies. They are also developing new affordable housing properties, such as the recently approved Londonderry Development in the Kilkenny neighbourhood. As part of their commitment to becoming more than a landlord, and recognizing that a home is more than four walls and roof, CRH is seeking more ways to support their tenants. See www.crhc.ca for more information on the organization.

As part of the research project responsibilities, students will review housing literature, analyze CRH client data, contribute to a larger report, and participate in presentations for CRH staff and the broader community. This semester's project will use CRH data to create profiles of clients across the four primary CRH programs—near market rentals, community housing, direct rent supplements, and private landlord rent supplements. Each program offers a different type of housing support for participants, and CRH is interested in learning more about the clients served across these programs, especially in relation to income, age, and family characteristics. This project will therefore provide a greater understanding of where clients fit within the community, which will then allow CRH to better reach out to and serve the populations in need of housing assistance.

Course Policies

Contacting Us:

If you have a question that can be answered with a couple sentences, you may contact us through email. If your question requires a more detailed or lengthy response, we suggest that you an appointment to meet or raise the question during our weekly meetings. Please be aware that we both check email most weekdays but not always on weekends. If you email us, you can expect a response within 48 hours, unless it arrives on Friday.

Email Etiquette:

Remember that email communication for all courses should be formal and professional. Make sure to use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Absences:

Your participation in weekly meetings, workshops, and discussions is essential. The success of the project depends on your professionalism and dedication. If you are going to be absent for a meeting session, please contact us.

Disability Accommodations:

Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, mental, or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services, SUB 1-80, 492 3381 (phone) or 492 7269 (TTY). Students registered with SAS who will be using accommodations in the classroom or writing exams through SAS are required to provide a “Letter of Introduction.”

Electronic Recording of Seminars:

As per the University Calendar: *Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).*

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Per GFC 24.3(2): *The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.* Please see the following website for more details:
<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/StudentAppeals/DontCheatsheet.aspx>.

Course Requirements, Assessment, and Grading

Four components constitute your grade for this course -- the research project, overall participation, professionalization workshops, and issues in applied social research discussion seminars. Each component comprises several assignments or assessments.

Component 1: Research project with Capital Region Housing (40%)

1. *Data Brief (10%)*

You will be required to produce a 2-page data brief discussing your preliminary data analyses. The data brief will include an overview of the project data and a set of short summary statistics. A draft version of your data brief is due on February 16, 2018. The final, revised version is due on March 2, 2018.

2. *Contribution to Final Report (15%)*

One of your main responsibilities in this course is working together to produce a final report for Capital Region Housing. Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for writing sections of the report, conducting specific analyses, editing drafts, and creating charts, tables, and infographics.

3. *Contribution to Final Presentation (15%)*

In addition to submitting a final report at the end of the semester, we will also present key findings to Capital Region Housing staff. This represents the second major deliverable of our project. Thus, another priority in this course is working together to produce a final presentation. You will be responsible for creating parts of the presentation, as well as editing, practicing, and delivering it.

Component 2: Participation (30%)

1. *Work sessions, professionalization workshops, and seminar discussions (30%)*

The course is structured around regularly scheduled work sessions, professionalization workshops, and seminar discussions. Your participation in these activities is critical to the success of the project. We expect you to be mentally and physically present and to participate in each work session, workshop, and seminar. Your participation grade is based on your in-class participation during work sessions, professionalization workshops, and seminar discussions. Participation includes speaking up in class, asking and answering questions, and working collaboratively as a group. As members of a research team, we expect everyone to be respectful and courteous. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior, such as talking out of turn, listening to music, using electronic devices for non-class purposes, sleeping through class, and leaving early without first notifying the instructor, will negatively affect your grade.

Component 3: Exit Interview and Revised Resume (15%)

1. *Exit Interview (10%)*

During exam week, you will participate in a 20-minute mock interview. The purpose of this exercise is to help you practice interviewing, an important and essential skill for today's job market. As part of the interview, you will be asked to discuss how your involvement in this project helped you develop skills and experience appropriate to a hypothetical job posting.

2. *Revised Resume (5%)*

One professionalization workshop will be dedicated to writing effective resumes. At the time of that workshop, you will be required to bring in a copy of your resume. When you conduct your Exit Interview you will be required to submit a revised resume that has been enhanced based on your participation in the various professionalization workshops. We will compare the two drafts of your resume and assign a grade based on the revisions.

Component 4: Housing Issues in Canada and Edmonton (15%)

1. *Three (2-3 page) memoranda*

As part of our discussions on issues in applied social research, you will be responsible for complete three two-page memos related to difference aspects of housing, the central topic of the course project. Memos should be concise summaries of each issue, geared to a general audience. Pretend that you are writing each memorandum for a work supervisor who wants to know as much about the issue as possible but does not want to read more

than two or three pages about it! Each memo will be graded on the thoroughness of its content and the clarity of writing. Your memoranda will then form a basis of the sections of our final report.

a. Canadian Housing Policy and Canada's National Housing Strategy (5%)

Read the introductory and concluding chapters of Suttor's (2016) book *Still Renovating*, which provides a historical analysis of social housing policy in Canada. Then, read Canada's recently released National Housing Strategy. Provide a two to three-page memorandum that 1) concisely identifies Suttor's main arguments regarding housing policy in Canada and 2) provides an executive summary of Canada's national housing strategy. This memo will be due on January 19, 2018. Please bring your memo to class. If you wish to revise your memo based on our discussion, please resubmit memo on Monday, January 22, 2018.

b. Housing Issues in Edmonton (5%)

Read "A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness." Then write a memorandum that provides a 2-page summary of the plan major housing and homelessness issues in Edmonton. During our discussion session, we will be speaking with three local experts in homelessness and housing. In preparation for their visit, please also include at the end of your memorandum a list of 5 questions that reading this plan raised and that you would like to ask our guests. This memo will be due on January 26, 2018. Please bring memo to class. If you wish to revise your memo based on our discussion, please resubmit memo on Monday, January 29.

c. Capital Region Housing Company profile (5%)

After listening to the presentation about Capital Region Housing, its role in Edmonton, and the services it provides, you will be responsible for writing a two-page memorandum that outlines important information about the organization, including its size, vision and mandate, number of employees, services, and future goals. This will require that you thoroughly read through the information presented on their website and review important publically available documents, such as the organization's strategic plan. This memo will be due on February 2, 2018.

Please note: If you are having issues keeping up with course work for any reason, notify us as soon as you start to have a problem. We will be more likely to come to an acceptable arrangement if we can attack the problem sooner rather than later. Counseling and Clinical Services are also available. Please see the following website for more details: uofa.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling.

Meeting Schedule and Readings

SOC 403: Applied Research Internship Course						
Week	Day	Topic	Itinerary*	Reading	Assignments Due	Notes
1	Jan 12, 2018	Introduction and Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Syllabus and expectations • Introduction to project and dataset • Social Policy and Welfare State - Key Ideas Discussion 			
2	Jan 19, 2018	Housing and Housing Inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion seminar: Importance of housing and housing inequality/Canada's National Housing Strategy • Capital Region Housing presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guest speakers: Meryn Seversen and Esther de Vos, Capital Region Housing • Review data analysis and final report • Preparations for next meeting 	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Suttor (2016). Still Renovating. Introduction and Conclusion.</p> <p>Canada's National Housing Strategy</p> <p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>Polyvere, L., et al. (2014). Canadian Housing First toolkit: The At Home/Chez Soi experience. Calgary and Toronto: Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Homeless Hub.</p> <p>Gaetz, S. & DeJ, E. (2017). A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.</p>	Memo 1: Canada's Nation Housing Strategy	<p>Please bring memo to class.</p> <p>If you wish to revise your memo based on our discussion, please resubmit memo on Monday, January 22.</p>

3	Jan 26, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Housing and Housing Inequality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion seminar: Housing issues in Edmonton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guest speakers: John Kolkman (Edmonton Social Planning Council), Laura Murphy (Edmonton Coalition of Housing and Homelessness), and Jim Gurnett (Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness) • Data analysis work session • Preparations for next meeting 	<p style="text-align: center;">Required Reading:</p> <p>A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Suggested Reading:</p> <p>Making Life Better: Alberta's Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy</p> <p>City of Edmonton's Affordable Housing Strategy, 2016-2025</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Memo 2: Housing Issues in Edmonton</p>	<p>Please bring memo to class. If you wish to revise your memo based on our discussion, please resubmit memo on Monday, January 29.</p>
4	Feb 2, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Resume workshop and work session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalization workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating an effective resume ○ U of A Career Services presentation ○ Work on Resumes • Data analysis work session/report structure discussion • Preparations for next meeting 	<p style="text-align: center;">Suggested Reading:</p> <p>University of Alberta Career Centre, Career Resources: https://www.ualberta.ca/career-centre/resources</p> <p>It Takes More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success: https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2013_EmployerSurvey.pdf</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Memo 3: Company Profile Due</p>	<p>Please bring memo to class. If you wish to revise your memo based on our discussion, please resubmit memo on Monday, February 5</p> <p>Please bring two copies of your resume: one for us and one for the workshop.</p>

5	Feb 9, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Employment pathways and work session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalization workshop: Employment pathways and insights from insiders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jasmine Brazil, City of Edmonton ○ Heather Curtis, Edmonton Social Planning Council ○ Meghann Eagle, Government of Alberta ○ Amy Proctor, Workers' Compensation Board Research Program ○ Meryn Seversen, Capital Region Housing • Data analysis work session • Preparations for next meeting 	<p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>What Can I Do With a Degree in Social Science? https://www.pdx.edu/careers/what-can-i-do-degree-social-science</p> <p>Blumenstyk, G. Liberal-Arts Majors Have Plenty of Job Prospects, if they Have Some Specific Skills, Too. https://www.chronicle.com/article/Liberal-Arts-Majors-Have/236749</p>		
6	Feb 16, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Research ethics in applied social research/work session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion seminar: Research Ethics in Applied Social Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guest Presenter: Kim Kordov, Associate Director, Research Ethics Office, University of Alberta • Brainstorm structure of final report • Peer review of data brief • Preparations for next meeting 	<p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>TCPS 2 (2014)-- Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/</p>	Draft Data Brief Due	Please bring in a copy of your data brief for editing session.
7	Feb 19 – 25, 2018	Reading Week - No Classes				

8	Mar 2, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Graduate school/work session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalization workshop: Graduate school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guest presenters TBA • Data analysis/report writing work session • Preparations for next meeting 	<p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>Is Graduate School the Right Choice for You? https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/graduate-matters/graduate-studies-right-choice/</p> <p>The Best Practices of Graduate Students: https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/best-practices-of-graduate-students/</p>	Revised Data Brief Due	
9	Mar 9, 2018	<p style="text-align: center;">Labor market opportunities/work session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalization workshop: Labor market opportunities for social science graduates • Report writing session • Assignment of revision tasks • Preparation for next meeting 	<p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>Preparing for a 21st Century Job Hunt with a BA in Sociology: http://www.asanet.org/news-events/footnotes/mar-apr-2016/whats-new/preparing-21st-century-job-hunt-ba-sociology</p> <p>Career Centre, University of Alberta https://www.ualberta.ca/career-centre</p> <p>https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/careercentre/documents/publications/job-search-guidebook.pdf</p> <p>https://www.ualberta.ca/career-centre/job-postings</p>		

10	Mar 16, 2018	Evaluation research as career opportunity/work session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionalization workshop: Evaluation research as career option <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest speaker: Trish Paton, President, Alberta/NWT Chapter, Canadian Evaluation Society Edits and Revisions to Report (Draft 1) Preparation for next meetin 	<p>Suggested Reading:</p> <p>Canadian Evaluation Society https://evaluationcanada.ca/</p> <p>Better Evaluation http://www.betterevaluation.org/en</p>	Please submit your sections electronically to us the day before class!
11	Mar 23, 2018	Social statistics: who is missing and why should we care?/work session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion seminar: Social statistics and social data-who and what are we missing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest speaker: Dr. Chris Andersen Edits and Revisions to Report (Draft 2) Preparation for next meeting 	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Qvortrup, J. (1997). A Voice for Children in Statistical and Social Accounting: A Plea for Children's Right to be Heard. In A. James and A. Prout (Eds.), <i>Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood</i> (pp. 83-104). London, UK: Falmer Press.</p> <p>Rodrigue, S. (2016). Hidden Homelessness in Canada. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2016001/article/14678-eng.pdf</p> <p>Maggie, W., & Andersen, C. (2013). Chapter 1: Deficit Indigenous. <i>Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Research Methodology</i>. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, Inc.</p>	Please submit your revised sections electronically to us the day before class!
12	Mar 30, 2018	No meeting – Good Friday			Please submit report to CRH for review and comments by beginning of next week.

13	Apr 6, 2018	Work session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report and presentation 			Submission of Report and Final Presentation to key stakeholders at CRH. Please note that we will arrange the time and date of final presentation in collaboration with CRH.
14	Apr 13, 2018	Work session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report and presentation 			
15	Apr 16- Apr 28, 2018	Final Exam week	Exit Interviews and Revised Resume submission			Make sure you sign up for interview slots

*The course itinerary is subject to change based on unanticipated demands of the research project.