Survey Research for Public Administrators

EMAIL POLICY: The best way to contact me is by email. On weekdays (M-F) I will make every effort to respond to all email inquiries promptly. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours (M-F) or 48 hours (weekends), feel free to send a follow-up email. When emailing, please use your Islander email account, include your name, and what course you are in. I will not respond to emails sent from personal email accounts. If you have questions that cannot be resolved via email, we will make arrangements to meet via Skype or on the TAMUCC campus.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The ability to conduct and interpret survey research is becoming an integral part of public management. This course provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to direct, understand and make effective use of administrative and policy information from survey research data.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: After completing the course, students should be able to:

1) Choose an appropriate survey mode (e.g., face-to-face, mail, telephone)
2) Construct an appropriately worded questionnaire
3) Select a representative sample
4) Maximize respondent participation
5) Generate high quality data that can be used to address important issues in public administration
6) Evaluate survey research conducted in the field of public administration

REQUIRED READING:


RECOMMENDED READING:


*If you do not wish to purchase a copy of the APA manual, a user friendly online guide to APA style is available here: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/.
MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

EXAMS: There will be two exams given over the course of the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points (20% of your final grade). See the course calendar for exam dates. The exams may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions over material from the textbook and other material provided by the instructor on Blackboard.

Missed Exams: You will only be able to make up a missed exam if you provide the instructor with a reasonable excuse for missing the exam ahead of time!! “Reasonable excuses” are determined at the discretion of the instructor and may require documentation. The instructor reserves the right to alter the content and format of exams taken outside of the designated exam time.

ASSIGNMENT 1: “A Tale of Two Surveys”
This assignment is worth 100 points (20% of your final grade). You will read and report on two surveys that have produced contradictory findings on a single issue. The purpose of the assignment is for you to pinpoint the cause of the disparate findings. Potential issues to be explored include:
1) How sampling influenced the findings
2) How the phrasing of survey questions influenced the findings
3) How order effects influenced the findings
4) How delivery mode influenced the findings
Your write-up should be approximately 3-5 pages and follow the APA writing guidelines. The assignment will be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Additional instructions and resources will be posted on Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Survey Design and Research Plan
This assignment is worth 100 points (20% of your final grade). You will construct a survey that could be used to study an important issue within public administration. You may also choose to design a survey for your current job or for the university. Your survey must adhere to the guidelines described in the course text. In addition, you will submit a 5-8 page written narrative that provides a detailed rationale for every aspect of the survey. The narrative should follow the APA writing guidelines. Issues to discuss include:
1) Research question(s)/research objective(s)
2) Concepts (and how they are measured in your survey)
3) Question wording, question order, response categories/format
4) Sampling technique
5) Mode of delivery
6) Anticipated response/nonresponse rate
You will submit (a) a final copy of the survey and (b) the narrative electronically via Blackboard. Additional instructions and resources will be posted on Blackboard.
**BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS:** In addition to the exams and major course assignments, you will also complete several shorter Blackboard assignments. Together, these assignments are worth 100 points (20% of your final grade). These assignments include forum discussions about the course readings and posting survey questions (to be used in Assignment 2) on Blackboard for peer review. Additional instructions and resources will be posted on Blackboard.

**GRADING:** Your course grade will be based on your grades on the required exams and assignments. Your grades will be posted on Blackboard.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Late assignments will only be accepted for 72 hours past the due date/time. All late papers and assignments will have 10 points deducted per day, including holidays and weekends.

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:**

This course makes use of the Blackboard system. To be successful in the course you will need access to reliable internet service. All of the assignments in this course will be submitted using Blackboard. Specific instructions for submitting assignments will be included on the individual assignments.

It is imperative that you check Blackboard and your Islander email account daily during the week for important course updates and reading assignments.

If you need help with Blackboard:

- View the tutorials at [https://iol.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html)
- Call the IT help desk at (361) 825-2692
- Email computer.helpline@tamucc.edu
ACADEMIC HONESTY:

The faculty of the College of Liberal Arts expects students to conduct their academic work with integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit), the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the college.

COURSE OUTLINE:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Introduction to the Tailored Design Method</td>
<td>Dillman CH 1,2</td>
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<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Coverage and Sampling</td>
<td>Dillman CH 3</td>
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<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>Crafting Quality Questions &amp; Questionnaires</td>
<td>Dillman CH 4,5,6</td>
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<td>Unit 4</td>
<td>Choosing a Survey Mode &amp; Implementation Procedure</td>
<td>Dillman CH 7,8,10</td>
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<td>Unit 5</td>
<td>Data Collection &amp; Other Issues</td>
<td>Dillman CH 11,12,13</td>
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GRADE APPEALS:

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning
environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**DROPPING A CLASS:**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**STATEMENT OF CIVILITY:**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.