

**SYLLABUS**  
**Research Methods in Human Ecology**  
**Course # 11-374-201**  
**Fall 2018**  
**Mondays and Thursdays 12:35-1:55**  
**Hickman 205**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:**

Instructor: Dr. Cara Cuite (pronounced “cute”)  
Office: Cook Office Building, room 217  
Phone: 848-932-4544  
Email: [cuite@aesop.rutgers.edu](mailto:cuite@aesop.rutgers.edu)  
Office hours: by appointment

**TEXT:**

Chambliss, D.F., & Schutt, R.K. (2015). *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation*. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores how social scientists empirically investigate and quantify behavior within the social world.

**LEARNING GOALS:**

By the end of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- Understand general principles of scientific investigation, as well as specific challenges facing social scientists.
- Identify a range of social science research methodologies and what types of research questions each is best suited to address.
- Be an informed consumer of research information. You should be able to critically read about research studies in the popular press, and have a basic understanding of research articles in peer-reviewed journals, and be able to explain in broad terms how the research was conducted.
- Recognize ethical issues in human subjects research, and be familiar with the institutions in place to prevent unethical research.
- Propose and conduct two small original research studies, including research design, simple data analysis, and presentation.

The Core Curriculum Goal addressed in this class is:

**GOAL y–Student is able to...Employ current technologies to access information, to conduct research, and to communicate findings.**

#### COURSE POLICIES:

**Absences:** I will be taking attendance in class. After two unexcused absences, your class participation grade will drop by 10% for every absence.

**Electronic Device Policy:** Students who inappropriately use laptops, the Internet and/or other technological devices in the classroom distract their peers and instructor. You may use laptops or other technologies only to advance your learning in the course (taking notes, for instance). If I find you using the technology for something other than relevant class work, you will not be allowed to use the device moving forward.

**Assignments:** Homework and project reports are due by 12:35 PM on the date listed in the syllabus. They must be uploaded to Sakai, **and** a hard copy must be handed to me in class for it to count as complete. Late homework and reports will be marked down by one letter grade for every day that they are late, unless you have a documented reason for them to be late.

**Make up exams:** Make-ups will be given only if there is a documented reason for the absence. Similarly, if you miss a class where there is an in-class assignment, you will receive a 0% unless there is an excused and registered absence in the system.

#### ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. Full policies and procedures are at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

## ASSESSMENT

	Percent of total grade
Attendance	10
Class participation, including in class writing	15
Homework	15
Observational research project	15
Survey research project	15
Quizzes and Exams	30

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that

- everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments.
- all student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University

community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

## STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES

Rutgers University offers a variety of campus resources to aid students in their physical and mental well-being.

### *Food Resources*

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Rutgers Student Food Pantry or the Dean of Students (contact below) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professors if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

### Rutgers Student Food Pantry

848-932-5500/ 39 Union Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/  
<http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food/>

Mon-Fri, 9:00am-4:00pm

The Rutgers Student Food Pantry is dedicated to helping all Rutgers students in need of food. No appointment is necessary, all you need to do is bring your RUID and fill out a brief identification form once you arrive. Students will be provided with groceries that typically last about one week.

### Dean of Students Office

848-932-2300/ 88 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ  
08901/<http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu/>

Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:00pm

The Dean of Students Office at Rutgers University-New Brunswick provides solutions, services, and support to help students navigate Rutgers University. The Office serves as a student support network by providing advocacy, problem resolution, and critical incident intervention for those times when additional assistance is needed. Please call to schedule an appointment to meet with a representative from the Dean's office. Just In Case Web App <http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

*Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)*

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ [www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

*Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)*

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

*Disability Services*

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

*Scarlet Listeners*

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

## SCHEDULE

Following is a *tentative* schedule of readings, exams, and project deadlines. Readings are due on the day listed, and you should divide the chapter in half if it's listed over two days.

Any of these may change, depending on how quickly we move through the material. While I will announce all changes in class, PLEASE check the Sakai page to ensure you are up to date.

	<b>Topic of class</b>	<b>Reading due</b>	<b>Special instructions</b>
Th 9/6	Intro to course and research methods		
M 9/10	Overview of research methods	<a href="http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/08/18/upshot/how-to-know-whether-to-believe-a-health-study.html?abt=0002&amp;abg=0&amp;_r=2&amp;referrer">http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/08/18/upshot/how-to-know-whether-to-believe-a-health-study.html?abt=0002&amp;abg=0&amp;_r=2&amp;referrer</a> text pp 7-16	Kristin Hunter-Thomson to guest lecture
Th 9/13	Processes and problems in social research	Chapter 2 starting from p. 28: What is the design through p 37 <a href="http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2548251">http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2548251</a>	
M 9/17	Ethics in research methods	Read Chapter 3 p 46-63 <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/everything-we-know-about-facebooks-secret-mood-manipulation-experiment/373648/">http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/everything-we-know-about-facebooks-secret-mood-manipulation-experiment/373648/</a> Also, watch the following video about the Zimbardo Stanford prison experiment. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=760lwYmpXbc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=760lwYmpXbc</a> Watch from approx. 4:54—16:00	
Th 9/20	Ethics in research methods	QUIZ Ch 1-3 Watch full approx. 20 minute video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Rnq1NpHdmw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Rnq1NpHdmw</a>	QUIZ Ch 1-3

	<b>Topic of class</b>	<b>Reading due</b>	<b>Special instructions</b>
M 9/24	Conceptualization and measurement	First half of Chapter 4 <a href="http://www.vox.com/2014/10/21/7027395/gun-violence-mass-shootings-james-alan-fox-mother-jones-cohen-azrael-suicide/in/5654656">http://www.vox.com/2014/10/21/7027395/gun-violence-mass-shootings-james-alan-fox-mother-jones-cohen-azrael-suicide/in/5654656</a>	
Th 9/27	Conceptualization and measurement and Observational research	Second half of Chapter 4 and Chapter 9 only p 205-215	Assign observational research project
M 10/1	Sampling	Chapter 5 and read NPR article on polling <a href="http://www.npr.org/2016/09/28/495805190/no-donald-trump-didnt-win-post-debate-polls">http://www.npr.org/2016/09/28/495805190/no-donald-trump-didnt-win-post-debate-polls</a>	HW on question writing due
Th 10/4	Sampling & Review	Chapter 5	Observational research homework due Quiz on Ch 4
M 10/8	EXAM 1		Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Th 10/11	Qualtrics intro	Ch 7	Go to computer lab in Blake Hall
M 10/15	Researching in the library	Ch 7	Go to Chang Library
Th 10/18	Survey design	Chapter 6	Go to computer lab in Blake Hall
M 10/22			Library HW due Work on survey questions

	<b>Topic of class</b>	<b>Reading due</b>	<b>Special instructions</b>
Th 10/25	Causation and experimental design	Ch 6	
M10/29	Causation and experimental design	Reread Ch 6, focus on threats to validity and quasi-experiments.  AND read <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/07/upshot/alcoholics-anonymous-and-the-challenge-of-evidence-based-medicine.html?smid=tw-share&amp;abt=0002&amp;abg=1">http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/07/upshot/alcoholics-anonymous-and-the-challenge-of-evidence-based-medicine.html?smid=tw-share&amp;abt=0002&amp;abg=1</a>	QUIZ on causation and quasi-experiments;
Th 11/1	Elementary quantitative data analysis	Ch 8. Need all Qualtrics surveys finalized.	Go to computer lab in Blake Hall
M 11/5	Qualitative methods	Ch 9—everything but 205-215	Qualtrics HW due.
Th 11/8	Qualitative methods	Ch 8 Qualtrics analysis	Meet in Computer lab; Finalize qualtrics survey
M 11/12	Exam 2		Chapter 6, 7, 8
Th 11/16	Qualitative research	Ch 9	
M 11/19	Qualitative research	Ch 9	
<b>TUES!</b> 11/20	Qualitative research	Ch 9 and presenting qualitative data	
		Thanksgiving break	
M 11/26	Evaluation research	Ch 12	
Th 11/29	Evaluation research	Ch 12	Teacher evaluation.



	<b>Topic of class</b>	<b>Reading due</b>	<b>Special instructions</b>
			Last day to turn in news story homework
M 12/3	Quantitative analysis	Meet with your groups to work on presentation	Evaluation HW due on Sakai.
Th 12/6	Preparing your presentation	Ch 10, Kristin Hunter-Thomson guest lectures	
M 12/10	Present final projects and papers due	Present final projects	Written final project due AND presentations