

# COURSE SYLLABUS

## ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS

SOC 346

SPRING 2007

MORAVIAN COLLEGE

DR. DEBRA WETCHER-HENDRICKS



### CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR

Office: PPHAC 314

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:45-10:15 a.m. and from 11:30 a.m. – noon

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### REQUIRED READING MATERIAL

Babbie, Earl. *The Practice of Social Research*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Wadsworth Publishing, 2003. ISBN:0534574742

Green, Samuel B. and Neil J. Salkind. *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh*, 4th Edition. Prentice Hall, 2005. ISBN:013146597X

## course outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should have gained the following.

1. familiarity with the tools of data collection, organization and analysis, specifically using computer (Excel and SPSS) programs
2. skills for interpreting raw data, including recognition of appropriate basic statistical processes used to analyze data
3. the ability to draw conclusions that are useful to social service personnel, policymakers, future researchers, etc.
4. proficiency in presenting and explaining research findings in both written and oral forms
5. competence in objectively assessing the appropriateness of a research project, identifying any shortcomings and possible improvements

Throughout the course, students must complete five laboratory practicals, which take the forms of 30-minute hands-on exercises. The practicals require students to organize and analyze provided data. Suggestions regarding preparation for each practical are provided prior to the class in which the practical is scheduled. Please see the course schedule for specific dates.

Each student must complete a research project involving organization of data and basic statistical analysis using SPSS software. This project involves the submission of two written reports. Detailed descriptions of these reports can be found in "Course Project Guidelines."

Two exams are given in this course. The exams assess students' understandings of the theoretical components of data analysis, their abilities to draw conclusions from data, and their skills of presenting these elements in written form. Please see the course schedule for exam dates.

Although attendance, itself, does not directly affect students' grades in this course, each student receives a class participation grade. IT IS NECESSARY TO ATTEND CLASS TO RECEIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION CREDIT. Contributions to class discussions and activities increase students' participation grades. Obvious inactivity (including sleeping), disruptions, or lack of effort lowers the grade.

To determine a course grade, the preceding factors are combined in the following manner.

laboratory practicals	20% (4% each)
project	30% (15 % each)
exams	40% (20% each)
class participation	10%

Course grades follow the letter-grade system. Please consult the Moravian College Student Handbook for description of the requirements for attaining each grade. The numerical ranges used in assigning each letter grade in this course are as follows.

A	92%-100%	B-	80%-81.9%	D+	68%-69.9%
A-	90%-91.9%	C+	78%-79.9%	D	62%-67.9%
B+	88%-89.9%	C	72%-77.9%	D-	60%-61.9%
B	82%-87.9%	C-	70%-71.9%	F	0%-59.9%

**Policies** All policies listed in the college catalog that deal with attendance, withdrawal, cheating, plagiarism, and all other pertinent policies apply to this class.

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain information and distributed materials from any class the he or she misses. Please make every possible effort to take lab practicals and exams and to hand in papers on the scheduled dates. All missed practicals and exams are given on the make-up/review day at the end of the semester. Projects must be submitted on time to receive full credit. Late papers are accepted with a five-point penalty for each overdue day (including weekends and holiday), beginning with the due date.