

**TECHNIQUES OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL WRITING IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**SOCI 5378**  
**3 credit hours**  
**Fall 2017**

**Class location** Arranged (Blackboard)

**Instructor** Dr. Gene L. Theodori

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**Office hours**

Tuesday and Thursday: 12:30-2:00; Monday/Wednesday/Friday: by appointment.

**Course Description**

*Techniques of Research Proposal Writing in the Social Sciences* is designed to provide students with a critical understanding of the principal theoretical aspects and technical skills necessary for the development of written research proposals in the social sciences. Through an examination of fundamental theories, research methods, and concepts in the social sciences, students will increase their understanding of various analytical techniques necessary for the preparation of “fundable” research proposals. This course is specifically designed for students who plan to engage in original research.

**Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you will have developed the specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by social scientists who write research proposals and engage in original research.

In addition, you will have increased your understanding of:

- the different theoretical perspectives used in research proposal writing.
- the numerous research methods used in research proposal writing.
- the various sociological concepts pertinent to social science research.

And furthermore, you will have:

- determined how to make your proposed project feasible.
- solved potential theoretical and methodological problems.
- provided yourself with a checklist of research activities to follow once your proposed research is underway.

**Required Books**

Students are expected to purchase the following books:

Punch, Keith F. 2016. *Developing Effective Research Proposals* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gray, David E. 2014. *Doing Research in the Real World*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## **Requirements and Grading**

Part of the tradition of higher education is the need to evaluate performance. Each student's final course grade will be based upon his/her performance on the following requirements:

### ***Readings and Weekly Assignments***

***(60% of final grade; 14 assignments totaling 145 points)***

Students will be expected to read all required assignments and submit weekly assignments. Each weekly assignment will be posted under the "Assignment" tab. Information regarding due date, submission, grading criteria, and possible points will be posted with each assignment.

### ***Research Proposal***

***(40% of final grade; 1 research proposal totaling 100 points)***

The major written assignment will be the preparation of a professionally polished research proposal. Students may take a quantitative, qualitative, or a mixed-methods approach to their research design. Regardless of the approach, rigor is required. In order to fulfill most of the weekly assignments, students will be required to submit sections of their research proposal throughout the semester. The instructor will provide students with comments/feedback on each section. The final submission must be typed, double-spaced, and fully-referenced. The final submission should, in most instances, be between 25 and 35 pages in length (not including cover page, references, and appendices). All citations and references in the research proposal must adhere to ASA format guidelines. For a refresher on ASA format guidelines, see ASA handouts posted on the SHSU Academic Success Center website at <http://www.shsu.edu/centers/academic-success-center/writing/handouts.html>.

## **Grades**

Grades will be based on a total of 245 points.

A 220.50 – 245.00

B 196.00 – 220.49

C 171.50 – 195.99

F 0.00 – 171.49

## **Academic Dishonesty**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

### [Dean of Student's Office](#)

The SHSU Academic Policy Statement 810213 – Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty – will be enforced (see <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/728eec25-f780-4dcf-932c-03d68cade002.pdf>). **Plagiarized work will not be accepted or tolerated. Students who violate the policy and/or submit plagiarized work will earn a course grade of 'F' and be reported to the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Dean of Students.**

## **Students with Disabilities Policy:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu)). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf>

## **Religious Holy Days**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an

examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

</dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/861001.pdf>

### **Visitors in the Classroom**

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

### **Instructor Evaluations**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

*NOTE:* This syllabus does not constitute a contract between student and instructor. It may be necessary to change the sequence of topics and/or due dates. Any changes will be repeatedly posted under the "Announcement" tab.