



**Sociology 2206a (670)  
Research Methods in Sociology  
Summer 2026**

**Instructor:** D. Silva  
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**Course Information**

**Calendar Description:**

An introduction to the research process and ethical dilemmas faced by sociologists, as well as a survey of the essential procedures used to collect sociological data, e.g. sampling, questionnaire design, and observational field research techniques.

**Antirequisite(s):** [Social Work 2206A/B](#), [Health Sciences 2801A/B](#), [Political Science 3324F/G](#), or [Political Science 2325F/G](#).

**Prerequisite(s):** At least 60% in 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

**Extra Information:** 3 hours. Recommended in Years 2 or 3 of a Major, Specialization or Honours Specialization offered through the Dept of Sociology.

**Course Weight:** 0.50  
**Breadth:** Category A  
**Subject Code:** SOCIOLOG

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College  
Department of Sociology  
Course Number SOC2206A SEC 670 – RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY  
DISTANCE STUDIES

**Instructor Information**

The instructor for this course is **Dr. Derek Silva**. This course is offered during the **2026 Summer Session (May 4 – June 12)**. Dr. Silva's does not have a listed phone number but can be reached by email at [dsilva28@uwo.ca](mailto:dsilva28@uwo.ca).  
**Office hours are available by appointment** and will be held virtually via **Zoom**.

**This class is an asynchronous *distance studies class* with an in-person FINAL EXAM.**

**Course Information**

**Prerequisites**

At least 60% in 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

**Antirequisites**

Social Work 2206A/B, Health Sciences 2801A/B, Political Science 3324F/G, or Political Science 2325F/G.

**Mandatory Texts and Materials**

Bell, Edward, Alan Bryman, and Steven Kleinknecht. 2022. *Social Research Methods* (Sixth Canadian Edition). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. (\$131.99CDN MSRP; e-book rental available at Western Bookstore \$59.00 or at [VitalSource for \\$56.99CAD](#)).

**Course Overview**

This course will introduce students the research process and ethical dilemmas faced by sociologists, as well as a survey of the essential procedures used to collect sociological data, e.g. sampling, questionnaire design, and observational field, research techniques. This course is intended to bridge the gap between the passive consumption of academic literature (i.e., reading and analyzing) and *active* knowledge creation (i.e., research).

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Navigate and critically assess the ethical dilemmas inherent in sociological research involving human subjects.
- 2) Design fundamental data collection instruments by constructing precise sampling frameworks and effective questionnaires.
- 3) Deploy observational field research techniques to systematically interpret complex social environments.
- 4) Evaluate the core traditions and best practices of sociological methodology to rigorously critique existing empirical literature.
- 5) Utilize academic library databases and specialized software to organize, analyze, and synthesize raw evidence.
- 6) Connect applied methodological skills to practical applications within the contemporary research industry and potential career trajectories.
- 7) Understand the *logic* of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

**Assignment Breakdown and Due Dates**

**PROBLEM SETS** (100 points total; 10% of final grade) **Due: June 8, 2026**

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT** (200 points total; 20% of final grade) **Due June 11, 2026**

**QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT** (200 points total; 20% of final grade) **Due June 11, 2026**

**FINAL EXAMINATION** (500 points total; 50% of final grade) – FINAL EXAM WILL BE **IN-PERSON SYNCHRONOUS**, please see Brightspace for exam date.

## Total Grade Value

All components together total 1000 points. All assignments are due by 11:55 PM EST on their respective due dates.

**Late Penalty:** Late assignments will be given a 10% deduction per day (inclusive of weekends) up to 5 days (50% deduction). Assignments will not be accepted on the 6<sup>th</sup> day past due.

## Course Policy on Artificial Intelligence

Authentic sociological inquiry demands genuine human engagement and interaction. The intellectual labour of this class resides in your cognitive struggle with the methods, not in outsourcing that struggle to an algorithm. Therefore, the use of generative artificial intelligence (i.e., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.) is strictly forbidden for any submitted material.

This prohibition is absolute and applies across all evaluation metrics. You may not employ AI tools at any stage of the following tasks:

- Completing, structuring, or checking answers for problem sets.
- Conducting data analysis for the qualitative research assignment.
- Drafting or polishing the final write up for the qualitative research assignment.
- Running or interpreting data for the quantitative research assignment.
- Generating the narrative components for the quantitative research assignment.

Preserving academic integrity occasionally requires active verification, and I therefore reserve the right to **mandate a direct meeting to discuss any submitted assignment at my discretion.**

Should an oral defense be required, you will be expected to articulate the precise methodology you utilized and justify the decisions you made. You must be prepared to trace the intellectual genealogy of your conclusions and thoroughly explain the analytical process that led to your findings. Demonstrating a transparent and intimate understanding of your own research steps is the only way to validate the authenticity of the submission (and I should note, is one of the key learning objectives of this course). Of course AI can help you arrive at easy answers to many of these problems, but just as the calculator made arithmetic easier for the masses, experts still need to understand the *underlying logic* of what the calculator is doing. That is what we are focusing on in this class.

**\*\*\*\*All students must complete the “Student Agreement on Use of Artificial Intelligence” assignment available on Brightspace before submission of the first assignment. Failure to do so will result in a grade deduction of 300 pts from your total grade.\*\*\*\***

## Course Calendar / Topic Breakdown

### Module 1 – General Research Orientations

- Chapter 1
- Problem Set 1

### Module 2 – Research Design

- Chapter 2
- Problem Set 2

### Module 3 – Research Ethics

- Chapter 3
- Problem Set 3

### Module 4 – The Nature of Quantitative Research

- Chapter 4
- Problem Set 4

**Module 5 – Survey Research: Interviews and Questionnaires**

- Chapter 5
- Problem Set 5

**Module 6 – Structured Observation**

- Chapter 6
- Problem Set 6

**Module 7 – Quantitative Sampling**

- Chapter 7
- Problem Set 7

**Module 8 – Quantitative Data Analysis**

- Chapter 8
- Problem Set 8

**Module 9 – The Nature of Qualitative Research**

- Chapter 9
- Problem Set 9

**Module 10 – Ethnography and Participant Observation**

- Chapter 10
- Problem Set 10

**Module 11 – Interviewing in Qualitative Research**

- Chapter 11
- Problem Set 11

**Module 12 – Content Analysis**

- Chapter 12
- Problem Set 12

**Module 13 – Conducting Research**

- Chapter 15

**Final Exam:** Date To Be Announced

# King's University College

## General Course Policies

### 2025-2026

## **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

### **Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details [https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/exams/index.html](https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html).

## **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

## **GBSV Support:**

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### **3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports-TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member.

Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.