



Sociology 3306a (570)
Investigating the Social World: Quantitative Research
Fall/ Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: J. Comeau

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Course Information

Calendar Description:

Mandatory for third-year Sociology students in an Honours Specialization. In this course students will learn to evaluate quantitative sociological research and gain hands-on experience carrying out and writing up a research project that investigates current social issues. Topics include: posing a research question, developing concepts and measures, and analyzing quantitative survey data.

Prerequisite(s): Enrolment in an Honours Specialization or Honours Double Major in Sociology or Criminology with a minimum grade of 60% in [Sociology 2205A/B](#) and [Sociology 2206A/B](#), or [Social Work 2206A/B](#) and Social Work 2207A/B. If not in an Honours Specialization or Honours Double Major, a minimum grade of 70% in [Sociology 2205A/B](#) and [Sociology 2206A/B](#), or [Social Work 2206A/B](#) and Social Work 2207A/B is required.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

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.

Soc3306A (570)

INVESTIGATING THE SOCIAL WORLD: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Course Introduction

This course will introduce students to the foundations of data analysis in social science research. We will focus on developing research questions and applying appropriate statistical techniques to answer them. Students will learn how to write code to analyze data using R, a programming language and platform used to compute statistics. The course will involve weekly lectures and labs where students will gain hands-on experience using R.

Whereas many of you will have been exposed to descriptive and bivariate statistics in an introductory statistics course such as Sociology 2205, this course will focus on multivariate statistics: the analysis of several variables at the same time. Students will be introduced to the logic behind multivariate statistics, learn how to develop a research question and answer it by applying multivariate statistics, and become proficient at interpreting and reporting results from multivariate analyses.

Learning Outcomes

As we work through the course material, students will be able to:

- Develop answerable research questions and related hypotheses
- Identify, implement, and evaluate appropriate statistical techniques to answer a given research question and undertake the analysis
- Demonstrate proficiency with R to manipulate and analyze data
- Interpret and report research findings in both written and oral format in a clear and accessible manner
- Critically evaluate research findings in their field of study and in everyday life
- Take more advanced statistics courses

Brightspace

All course content will be available on Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>

Login using your UWO username and password. Check Brightspace regularly for information on the course schedule, materials such as lecture slides and readings, announcements, grades, and the full evaluation details. You will also be required to submit all assignments and evaluations to Brightspace.

Course Readings

The following textbooks are required for this course.

Kellstedt, Paul M., Guy D. Whitten, and Steven A. Tuch. 2022. *The Fundamentals of Social Research*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press.

Kellstedt, Paul M., Guy D. Whitten, and Steven A. Tuch. 2022. *An R Companion for the Fundamentals of Social Research*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press.

Additional details on the cost and how to purchase a hard or digital copy of the textbook is available here:

https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=KC&term=W2026A&courses%5B0%5D=570_KC/SOC3306A

Additional readings will be made available to students on Brightspace.

Technical Requirements for the Course

This course will be held in the instructional computer lab (W143) at King's University College where students will be able to use the computers to complete their labs and exams. Students will also require a laptop that is compatible with R to complete any work outside of class time. R is a free open-source platform for analyzing data. Instructions will be provided in class on how to install R on student laptops.

Research Methods Consultant

Students in this course have access to additional resources to assist with their comprehension of the course material, including a dedicated consultant to provide support with R. See the course Brightspace page for the consultations schedule.

Method of Evaluation

1. Labs (40%)

Weekly labs involve discussing the readings for that week or solving problems using the appropriate statistical procedures in R. The professor and research methods consultant will be available to answer questions and provide support during labs. There are a total of 10 labs worth 4% each (no labs on Oct 30 and Dec 4). Labs are graded weekly and students will be provided with feedback. Students may miss two labs per term without penalty.

2. Midterm Examination (30%)

Students will be required to write one mid-term exam on **October 30** during our regular class time using the instructional lab computers. It will include multiple choice and problem-based questions that will involve analyzing data in R. All material up to this point in the course will be covered. Academic consideration to write a make-up for missed mid-term exams will require formal supporting documentation from the Academic Advising Office.

3. Final Exam (30%)

The final exam for this course will be held during the December exam period (Dec 11-22). The university registrar will determine the date and time. It will include multiple choice and problem-based questions that will involve analyzing data in R. It will cover ALL the material seen in this course, with an emphasis on material after the mid-term exam. Academic consideration to write a make-up for missed final exams will require formal supporting documentation from the Academic Advising Office.

Artificial Intelligence & Plagiarism

All work submitted as part of this course must be completed independently by the student without any aids. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), including personal chatbots and other generative tools, for this course is NOT permitted under any circumstance. Please see the course policies below for further information

Course Outline and Readings (subject to minor changes)

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1 (September 11)	- Course background, objectives, and evaluations - Introduction to quantitative methods and review of key concepts and terms - Introduction to R	Chapter 1
Week 2 (September 18)	- How to develop a research question - Linking theory and methods - Introduction to course datasets	Chapters 2
Week 3 (September 25)	- Research design - Survey Research - Missing Data	Chapters 3, 4, & 5
Week 4 (October 2)	- Measurement - Manipulating data in R - Computing descriptive statistics in R	Chapters 6 & 7
Week 5 (October 9)	- Probability and statistical inference	Chapter 8
October 12-16	- Reading Week	
Week 6 (October 23)	- Bivariate hypothesis testing and measures of association	Chapter 9
Week 7 (October 30)	- Midterm Examination (no lab)	
Week 8 (November 6)	- Linear regression models	Chapter 10
Week 9 (November 13)	- Multivariate regression	Chapter 11
Week 10 (November 20)	- Logistic regression	Chapter 11 Agresti & Finlay, Ch. 15
Week 11 (November 27)	- Bringing it all together	No readings

Week 12 (December 4)	- Final Exam Review (no lab)	No readings
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**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (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 at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** 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 (i.e., you are scheduled to write 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 (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their 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.

3. Support Services

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

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

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

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

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing 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 (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. 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://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

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.

6. 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 https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

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 to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools 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/Originality_Reports_-_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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.