SSCI 370 – RESEARCH METHODS

A. **TITLE:** Research Methods in the Social Sciences

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** SSCI 370

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** YES

E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall and/or Spring

G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:** Three hours of lecture per week.

H. **CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides a comprehensive study of the scientific research methods utilized in the social and health sciences. Students are trained to be critical consumers of published research. Topics covered include the scientific method; critically evaluating research; qualitative and quantitative research analysis; operationalization and measurement, sampling techniques, surveys, field research, secondary data analysis, experimental research, correlation; and data management, analysis, and interpretation.

I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:**
   
a. Pre-requisite(s): Introductory Psychology (PSYC 101) or Introduction to Sociology (SOCI 101) or Introduction to the Science and Technology of Behavior (SSCI 245) or Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 101) or Principles of Microeconomics (ECON 103) AND Expository Writing (ENGL 101) or Oral and Written Expression (ENGL 102).

   b. Pre-requisite(s)/Co-requisite(s): Statistics (MATH 141) OR Permission of Instructor
J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**
By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

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<th>Course Objective</th>
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| a. Compare and contrast the basic qualitative and quantitative research designs commonly used in the social and health sciences. | 1. Communication  
2. Critical Thinking  
3. Prof. Competence |
| b. Apply the scientific method to a research question within their discipline.    | 1. Communication  
2. Critical Thinking |
| c. Critically evaluate published research in their discipline.                    | 1. Communication  
2. Critical Thinking  
3. Prof. Competence |
| d. Demonstrate an understanding of one, or more, research method(s) and design(s).| 1. Communication  
2. Critical Thinking  
3. Prof. Competence  
4. Inter-Intrapersonal Skills |

K. **TEXTS:**


I. REFERENCES:


M. EQUIPMENT: Technology enhanced

N. GRADING METHOD: A-F

O. MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS: Exam, quizzes, assignments, individual and group projects, research papers, oral reports.

P. TOPICAL OUTLINE:

I. The Scientific Method
   a. Overview of the research process
   b. Units of analysis
   c. Hypotheses and theories
   d. Deductive and inductive reasoning
   e. Ethics
      i. Institutional Review Boards (CITI Certification)
   f. Generating and developing research ideas
II. Understanding and Consuming Research
   a. Using databases
   b. Interpreting results
   c. Drawing conclusions
   d. Evaluation of the Research Article:
      i. Title
      ii. Abstract
      iii. Literature Review
      iv. Methods:
         1. Operationalization and measurement
         2. Sample characteristics
         3. Research design
      v. Results
      vi. Discussion

III. Measurement
   a. Reliability
   b. Validity
   c. Measuring constructs
   d. Individual differences
   e. Self-report measures

IV. Sampling
   a. Sample size
   b. Representativeness
   c. Sampling distributions
   d. Recruiting your sample

V. Experimental Design
   a. Issues in laboratory research: external validity vs. control
   b. Conditions of causality
   c. Experiments
   d. Quasi-experimental research
   e. Within subjects designs

VI. Surveys and Interviews
   a. Survey development
      i. Psychometric properties
   b. Interviews
      i. Structured
      ii. Semi-structured
      iii. Unstructured interviews
   c. Focus Groups

VII. Research Designs
a. Qualitative research
b. Triangulation
c. Case studies
d. Quantitative research
e. Qualitative versus quantitative designs
f. Analyzing qualitative and quantitative data

VIII. Field, Observational, and Archival Research
a. Field experiments
b. Observational research
c. Archival research
d. Coding data

IX. Meta-Analysis
   i. Sources of data
   ii. Using secondary data

X. Data management, analysis, and interpretation
   a. Storage and management of data
   b. Appropriate statistical methods and data reporting
   c. Significance testing and effect size
   d. Writing a research report
      i. Title
      ii. Abstract
      iii. Literature Review
      iv. Methods
      v. Results
      vi. Discussion

XI. Using research results
   a. Program evaluation
   b. Using research as evidence-based practice
   c. Publications
      i. Academic
      ii. Practitioner-oriented

Q. **LABORATORY OUTLINE**: NONE