Time: Fridays, 1:00 – 3:30 (August 24 – December 10)

Location: Davis Library 219

Instructors: Emilia Peytcheva, Ph.D.  
Research Survey Methodologist  
RTI International  
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Emily Geisen, M.S.  
Survey Methodologist  
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Office Hours: By appointment

Overview:
This course focuses on the design of questions and questionnaires used in survey research. The course will provide an overview of the theoretical and experimental literature related to question and questionnaire design as well as focusing on practical issues in the design, critique, and interpretation of survey questions that are often not taught in formal courses. Discussion will focus on the measurement of both subjective and objective phenomena. Topics include cognitive guidelines for question construction to ensure respondent comprehension, techniques for measuring the occurrence of past behaviours and events, the effects of question wording, response formats, and question sequence on responses, an introduction to the psychometric perspectives in multi-item scale design, combining individual questions into a meaningful questionnaire, special guidelines for self-completion surveys versus interview surveys, strategies for obtaining sensitive or personal information, issues associated with translating survey questions, and an introduction to techniques for testing survey questions.

The expectation is that assigned readings are completed prior to attending the class for which the materials are assigned.

Evaluation:
Grading for the course will be based on five homework exercises, class participation and a final exam. The exercises will focus on solving practical problems related to questionnaire design and will account for 50% of the total grade. The final exam will assess participants’ mastery and critical appraisal of the required readings (textbooks and articles in course pack) and will account for 50% of the grade.

Prerequisite:
An introductory course in survey research methods or equivalent experience.

Required Texts


**Course Website:**
Sakai.unc.edu – look for SOCI761.001.FA18

Copies of the instructor's powerpoint slides will be available on the course website each week on the Thursday morning before the Friday afternoon class. In addition, homework assignments and the final exam will be posted to the website on the schedule outlined below.

**Reading Schedule**

**August 24:** Class 1. Introduction, Measurement Error, Standardization, and Operationalizing Constructs
Assignment 1 available on the class website on 8/24
Instructor: Peytcheva

Fowler, Chapter 1: pages 1 – 7.


August 31: Class 2. Cognitive Processes Related to Answering Questions
Instructor: Peytcheva

Willis, Chapters 2 and 3: pages 12 – 41.

Tourangeau, et. al., Chapters 1 and 2 and pages 313 – 323.


September 7 and September 14: Classes 3 & 4. Writing Factual and Behavioral Questions / Memory Issues

Assignment 1 due at 4:30pm on 9/7
Assignment 2 available on the class website on 9/7
Instructor: Geisen

09/7:

Fowler, Chapter 2, pages 8 – 33 only.

Tourangeau, et. al., Chapters 3 – 5, pages 62 – 164 and Chapter 8, pages 230 – 249 only

09/14:


September 21 & 28: Classes 5 & 6. Constructing Attitude and Other Non-Factual Questions
Assignment 2 due at 4:30pm on 9/21
Assignment 3 available on the class website

Instructor: Peytcheva

9/21
Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski (2000), Chapters 6, 7, 239-254

9/28
*Sociological Methods & Research, 20*, 139-181.


October 5: Class 7. Design of Self-Administered Questionnaires
Assignment 3 due by 4:30 pm on 10/5
Instructor: Geisen


October 12: Class 8. Web and Mobile Phone Surveys
Instructor: Geisen


October 19: FALL BREAK – NO CLASS

October 26: Class 9. Questionnaire Pretesting Methods 1
Assignment 4 available on class website 10/26
Instructor: Peytcheva


November 2: Class 10. Questionnaire Pretesting Methods 2
Instructor: Geisen

Geisen and Romano Bergstrom (2017), Chapters 1-3, 7

November 9: Class 11. Mode Differences and Mixed-Mode
Assignment 4 due by 4:30 on 11/9
Assignment 5 available on class website 11/9

Instructor: Geisen

Tourangeau, et. al., Chapter 10: pages 289 – 312.


November 16: Class 12. Translation and Other Issues Related to Surveys in Multiple Languages
**Instructor: Peytcheva**


November 23: THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 30: Class 13. Sensitive Questions and Designing Questionnaires for Special Populations
Assignment 5 due by 4:30pm 11/30
Instructor: Geisen

Fowler, Chapter 3: pages 33 – 44 only

Tourangeau, et. al., Chapter 9: pages 255 – 288.


December 3: Final Exam Available on the class website

December 10: FINAL EXAM DUE by 6 pm