**Questionnaire Design**
**UNC: Soc 761**
**Spring, 2021**

**Time:** Fridays, 1:00 – 3:30 (January 22 – May 7)

**Location:** Virtual (Online only)

**Instructors:**
- Emilia Peytcheva, Ph.D.
  Research Survey Methodologist
  RTI International
  peytchev@email.unc.edu
- Emily Geisen, M.S.
  Survey Methodologist
  Qualtrics
  egeisen@qualtrics.com

**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 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. NOTE: Although class participation is not part of the grade, it is expected that students will attend class and participate in discussions and small group activities.

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


Course Website:
Sakai.unc.edu – look for SOCI761.001.SP21

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

January 22
Class 1. Introduction, Measurement Error, Standardization, and Operationalizing Constructs
Assignment 1 available on the class website
Instructor: Peytcheva

Fowler, Chapter 1: pages 1 – 7.


January 29
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.


Chapters 4 & 5, pages 80 – 99 and 100 – 162.

February 5
Class 3. Writing Factual and Behavioral Questions / Memory Issues I
Assignment 1 due at 4:30pm
Assignment 2 available on the class website
Instructor:  Geisen

Fowler, Chapter 2, pages 8 – 33 only.

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

February 12
Class 4. Writing Factual and Behavioral Questions / Memory Issues II
Instructor:  Geisen


February 19
Class 5. Constructing Attitude and Other Non-Factual Questions
Assignment 2 due at 4:30pm
Assignment 3 available on the class website on
Instructor: Peytcheva

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

February 26
Class 6. Constructing Attitude and Other Non-Factual Questions II
Instructor: Peytcheva


March 5
Class 7. Design of Self-Administered Questionnaires
Instructor: Geisen


March 12
No Class – Wellness Days

March 19
Class 8. Web and Mobile Phone Surveys
Assignment 3 due by 4:30 pm
Instructor: Geisen


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


April 2
NO CLASS - HOLIDAY

April 9
Class 10. Questionnaire Pretesting Methods 2
Instructor: Geisen

Geisen and Romano Bergstrom (2017), Chapters 1-3, 7
April 16
Class 11. Mode Differences and Mixed-Mode
Assignment 4 due by 4:30pm
Assignment 5 available on class website

Instructor: Geisen

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


April 23
Class 12. Translation and Other Issues Related to Surveys in Multiple Languages
Instructor: Peytcheva


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

Fowler, Chapter 3: pages 33 – 44 only

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


April 30: Final Exam Available on the class website

May 7: FINAL EXAM DUE by 6 pm