Instructor:
Ipek Bilgen, PhD
Email: Bilgen-Ipek@norc.org

David Sterrett, PhD
Email: sterrett-david@norc.org

Instructor office hours: Wed 3:00-4:00pm (CST) at 1155 60th East Street, 2nd Floor, (NORC at the University of Chicago). Ask NORC front desk office to let us know you are there looking for instructors.

Teaching Assistants:
Rohit Kandala rohitk@uchicago.edu
Shana Metcalf shanametcalf@uchicago.edu
Sharowar Khan sharowarkhan@uchicago.edu

TA office hours: To be announced by TAs

Class Wed 4:30 PM - 7:20 PM U.S. Central Standard Time
Room: KELL1022

We’ll use CANVAS for class assignments and group communications

Class format
This class will follow Harris School guidance for format. At the time of preparation of the syllabus, the class is planned to be in person.

We ask students to do readings posted for class on Canvas the week before the class meets and come prepared with questions for class. PowerPoint slides will be posted before each class. The first part of the class will be lecture, and the second part hands-on activities (e.g., answer questions, group discussions, invite guest speakers, and provide any clarification on materials or assignments).

Course Description
This course focuses on helping students become more sophisticated consumers of survey data and analyses. Whether you will be a policy analyst analyzing survey data, a policy maker assessing analyses that use survey data, or a researcher designing studies that will inform your questions of interest, you can benefit from a theoretical and practical understanding of survey methodology.

Students will learn about the methods used to collect survey data, how to develop researchable policy questions that can be answered with the survey data, and about the limitations of the survey data for answering policy research questions. We will explore the survey methodology literature, review survey descriptions and survey results as presented in a variety of settings (popular press,
policy analyses, etc.), and develop techniques for understanding how well research questions can be answered using survey techniques.

Course Goals and Objectives:

1. Become knowledgeable about the survey process and the implications of that process for survey quality.
2. Learn to ask research questions that can be answered with available survey data.
3. Understand the strengths and limitations of using survey data to answer policy research questions, especially in the context of alternate data sources.
4. Be able to critique survey findings as a survey consumer.

Please note that this class is not a hands-on practicum for conducting surveys. Nor is it a course in statistical or econometric analysis.

Course Prerequisite

No prerequisites. The course is part of the Survey Methods Certificate.

Graduate standing (no undergraduate standing). Students enrolled in this class are expected to have completed at least one course on research methods OR to be familiar with the scientific method applied to social science; that is, students are expected to have a basic understanding of motivation of research, formulation of hypotheses, collection of data, testing of hypotheses, empirical analysis, and dissemination of results, etc. Some background in psychology is helpful, but it is not required.

Course materials:

Required book:


Note: the 2nd edition has been substantially revised for various chapters. Previous editions won’t be useful for this class.

➢ (You may want to purchase an e-copy from Wiley.com or an e-text from Amazon.com)

Optional books:


Miscellaneous readings and PowerPoint slides will be posted on CANVAS, or links will be provided. Required readings are listed at the end of this syllabus. Some readings may change over the course of the quarter at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading

This course relies on continuous work during the quarter (weekly assignments). Grading is based on quality of assignments and timeliness of submissions. Quality of assignments mean addressing all aspects asked on a given homework. For example, if there are 3 aspects to be developed and only 2 are addressed, only 2/3 of the points will be granted.
Each of these aspects has assigned points for a total of 500 points (no grading scale based on percentage distribution; it’s based on points).

At the end of the quarter, if you are at the upper end of any range, you **will not** automatically go up to the next range; for example, if you earned 469 points in the quarter, you wouldn’t go automatically to 470. We encourage you to make sure to work consistently throughout the course period, so you are well within the range of the grade you desire.

There is neither a mid-term nor a final exam in this course, but a series of homework and a final assignment.

Grading points for this class

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**Notes**

- This syllabus might be modified during the course at the discretion of the instructors.
- Any student who may need special accommodation should contact Student Disability Services or alert the instructor to make any necessary arrangements.
- The University’s policies regarding students with disabilities are available [here](#). Timely notifications are required to ensure that your accommodations can be implemented. Currently registered students are asked to reach out to Marley Mandelaro — Assistant Director of Academic Advising & Academic Services (mbmandelaro@uchicago.edu) for more information by the end of the first week of the quarter.
- The University’s policies on diversity and inclusion are available [here](#). The Harris School’s commitments to lively, principled, and respectful engagement are available [here](#).
- We welcome any comments you may have throughout the course and would like to hear about any difficulties you experience. The sooner we hear from you, the sooner we can act.
- Always feel free to speak to us directly or send an email to coordinate a conversation.
- There is a late-submission policy on assignments. Three points will be deducted per each hour past.
- **NO ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL BE TOLERATED. SERIOUSLY.**
- The Harris School’s student policies are available on the policies page of our website.
  - The Academic Honesty and Plagiarism section expresses the main principles.
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| (1) January 3 | Bilgen and Sterrett  
Introduction to class and discussion:  
- Background & Survey Examples  
- Best Practices & Ethics | Class: Wed 01/03, 4:30pm CT  
HW#1 Due: Sunday 01/07, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW1: 20 pts | 80 pts |
| (2) January 10 | Bilgen  
Main Theoretical Concepts: Survey Lifecycle, and Total Survey Error Framework; Research Questions and Constructs | Class: Wed 01/10, 4:30pm CT  
HW#2 Due: Sunday 01/14, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW2: 50 pts  
Course Attendance (CA): 10 pts | 140 pts |
| (3) January 17 | Bilgen  
Measurement & Questionnaire Design – Deep Dive | Class: Wed 01/17, 4:30pm CT  
HW#3 Due: Sunday 01/21, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW3: 50 pts  
CA: 10 pts | 200 pts |
| (4) January 24 | Bilgen  
Measurement & Methods of Data Collection & Survey Interviewing/The Role of Interviewers | Class: Wed 01/24, 4:30pm CT  
HW#4 Due: Sunday 01/28, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW4: 50 pts  
CA: 10 pts | 260 pts |
| (5) January 31 | Sterrett  
Sampling and Coverage | Class: Wed 01/31, 4:30pm CT  
HW#5 Due: Sunday 02/04, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW5: 50 pts  
CA: 10 pts | 320 pts |
| (6) February 7 | Sterrett  
Survey Nonresponse | Class: Wed 02/07, 4:30pm CT  
HW#6 Due: Sunday 02/11, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW6: 50 pts  
CA: 10 pts | 380 pts |
| (7) February 14 | Sterrett  
Data Processing and Weighting | Class: Wed 02/14, 4:30pm CT  
HW#7 Due: Sunday 02/18, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW7: 50 pts  
CA: 10 pts | 500 pts |
| (8) February 21 | Bilgen  
Mixed Mode Data Collection | Class: Wed 02/21, 4:30pm CT  
Work on your final assignment | CA: 10 pts | 590 pts |
| (9) February 28 | Sterrett  
Survey Reporting & Ethical Disclosures | Class: Wed 02/28, 4:30pm CT  
Final Assignment Due: Sunday 03/03, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | Final Assignment: 100 pts  
CA: 10 pts | -- |
| (10) March 7 | NO CLASS  
Finals Week | NO FINAL EXAM | -- | -- |
Required Readings (subject to change)

Week 1 (January 3) Introduction to class and discussion
- No “official” readings prior to class

Optional:

Week 2 (January 10) Main Theoretical Concepts
- Chapter 1 (Groves et al. 2009): An Introduction to Survey Methodology
- Chapter 2 (Groves et al. 2009): Inference and Error in Surveys

Optional:

Week 3 (January 17) Measurement and Questionnaire Design
- Chapter 7 (Groves et al. 2009): Questions and Answers in Surveys
- Chapter 8 (Groves et al. 2009): Evaluating Survey Questions

Optional:

Week 4 (January 24) Measurement & Methods of Data Collection
- Chapter 9 (Groves et al. 2009): Survey Interviewing

Optional:
- Chapter 5 (Groves et al. 2009): Methods of Data Collection

Week 5 (January 31) Sampling and Coverage
• Chapter 3 (Groves et al. 2009): Target Populations, Sampling Frames, and Coverage Error

Optional:

Week 6 (February 7) Survey Nonresponse
• Chapter 6 (Groves et al. 2009): Nonresponse in Sample Surveys

Optional:

Week 7 (February 14) Data Processing and Weighting
• Chapter 10 (Groves et al. 2009): Postcollection Processing of Survey Data

Optional:

• Urlacher BR. Gender Identification and Survey Weighting: A Shifting Landscape. PS: Political Science & Politics. 2023;56(1):56-60. doi:10.1017/S1049096622001081


Week 8 (February 21) Mixed Mode Data Collection


Optional:


Week 9 (February 28) Survey Reporting and Ethical Disclosures

• Chapter 11 (Groves et al. 2009): Principles and Practices Related to Ethical Research


Optional:


Other suggested sources (good references for your professional life):

- [https://academic.oup.com/jssam](https://academic.oup.com/jssam)
- [https://academic.oup.com/poq](https://academic.oup.com/poq)
- [https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/12-001-x/index-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/12-001-x/index-eng.htm)
- [https://ojs.ub.uni-konstanz.de/srm/](https://ojs.ub.uni-konstanz.de/srm/)
- [https://sciendo.com/journal/JOS](https://sciendo.com/journal/JOS)

General Resources Available to Students

- [Harris Academic Support Programs and Handbook](https://harrisacademicprograms.uchicago.edu)
- [Student Wellness](https://wellness.harris.uchicago.edu)
- [University Learning Resources](https://learn.harris.uchicago.edu)

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies

- [Harris School Policies](https://harris.uchicago.edu/policies)
- [University General Policies](https://catalog.uchicago.edu/cps/uchicago/en-US/academic-policies/general/)
- [University Academic Policies](https://catalog.uchicago.edu/cps/uchicago/en-US/academic-policies/)
- Policies on audio and video recordings and deletion.