Instructor:
Ipek Bilgen, PhD
Email: Bilgen-Ipek@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 me know that you are there looking for the instructor.

Teaching Assistants (TA):
TBD

TA office hours: To be announced by TAs

Time: 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
The questionnaire has played a critical role in gathering data used to assist in making public policy, evaluating social programs, and testing theories about social behavior (among other uses). This course offers a systematic way to construct and evaluate questionnaires. We will learn to think about survey questions from the perspective of the respondent and in terms of cognitive and social tasks that underlie responding. We will examine the impact of questions on data quality and will review past and recent methodological research on questionnaire development. The course will help students to tell the difference between better and worse types of survey questions, find and evaluate existing questions on different topics, and construct and test questionnaires for their own needs.

In general, the purpose is to provide fundamental knowledge on theoretical basis for questionnaire design and to provide opportunities to develop critical thinking related to design. The course intends to cover the basics of major stages of questionnaire design. The assignments and live discussions are intended to offer practical experience.
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 4th 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 book:

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 385 points (no grading scale based on percentage distribution; it’s based on points).

At the end of the quarter, if you are the upper end of any range, you will not automatically go up to the next range; for example, if you earned 365 points in the quarter, you wouldn’t go automatically to 366. I encourage you to make sure to work so you are well within the range where you would like to be. 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.
- I welcome any comments you may have throughout the course, and I would like to hear about any difficulties you experience. The sooner I hear from you, the sooner I can resolve these difficulties.
- Always feel free to speak to me 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.**
- 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.
# Weekly Topics and Assignments (subject to change)

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<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Class topic</th>
<th>Homework Number &amp; Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Cumulative points</th>
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| (1) March 20 | Introduction to class and initial discussion. Survey Research Background/Best Practices & Ethics | Class: Wed 3/20, 4:30pm CT
HW#1: Your background & Ethics questions.
HW#1 Due: Saturday 3/25, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW1: 40 pts | -- |
| (2) March 27 | Fun 101: Research Plan | Class: Wed 3/27, 4:30pm CT
HW#2: Proposed research (or topic of choice)
HW#2 Due: Saturday 4/1, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW2: 40 pts | 80 pts |
| (3) April 3 | Total Survey Error | Class: Wed 4/3, 4:30pm CT
HW#3: Selection of 20 survey questions on assigned topic (or topic of choice)
HW#3 Due: Saturday 4/8, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW3: 40 pts | 120 pts |
| (4) April 10 | Writing Questions | Class: Wed 4/10, 4:30pm CT
HW#4: Draft 1 of proposed questionnaire
HW#4 Due: Saturday 4/15, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW4: 60 pts | 180 pts |
| (5) April 17 | Visual principles | Class: Wed 4/17, 4:30pm CT
HW#5: Draft 2 of proposed questionnaire
HW#5 Due: Saturday 4/22, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW5: 65 pts | 245 pts |
| (6) April 24 | Measuring Attitudes & Measurement Effects | Class: Wed 4/24, 4:30pm CT
HW#6: Feedback to assigned peers on HW5.
HW#6 Due: Saturday 4/29, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW6: 60 pts | 305 pts |
| (7) May 1 | Cognitive Testing & Evaluation Methods | Class: Wed 5/1, 4:30pm CT
HW#7: Cognitive testing protocol and report.
HW#7 Due: Saturday 5/6, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW7: 40 pts | 345 pts |
| (8) May 8 | Cognitive Testing & Evaluation Methods | Class: Wed 5/8, 4:30pm CT
HW#8: Final questionnaire
HW#8 Due: Saturday 5/13, 8:00 pm CT (via Canvas). | HW8: 40 pts | 385 pts |
| (9) May 15 | Practical considerations in surveys | Class: Wed 5/15, 4:30pm CT (AAPOR week)
HW#9: TBD - Maybe provided for extra points. | -- | |
| (10) May 22 | No Class (Reading Period) | Class: Wed 5/22, 4:30pm CT (NO CLASS) | -- | |
Class Readings

Week 1 (March 20) Introduction to class and initial discussion, Survey Research
Background, Best Practices & Survey Research Ethics

- No “official” readings prior to class

Optional:

Week 2 (March 27) Fun 101: Research Plan & Conceptualizing Survey Questions

- Chapter 4 (Dillman): The fundamentals of writing questions
  - Read the following sections:
    - Introduction
    - Basic Survey Questionnaire Elements
    - Conceptualizing Survey Questions

Optional:
- Chapter 1 (Dillman): Sample surveys in our electronic world
- Chapter 2 (Dillman): Reducing people’s reluctance to respond to surveys

Week 3 (April 3) Total Survey Error


Optional:
Week 4 (April 10) Writing Survey Questions

- Chapter 5 (Dillman): How to write open- and closed-ended questions

Optional:


Week 5 (April 17) Visual Principles for Questionnaire Design

- Chapter 6 (Dillman): Aural vs Visual design of questions and questionnaires

Optional:


Week 6 (April 24) Measuring Attitudes & Measurement effects

  https://methods-sagepub-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/foundations/measuring-attitudes
- Chapter 7 (Dillman): Ordering questions and testing for question order effects

Optional:


Week 7 (May 1) Cognitive testing and Evaluation Methods

Optional:

Week 8 (May 8) Cognitive testing and Evaluation Methods, Continued.
- Chapter 8-11 (Dillman)

Week 9 (May 15) Practical considerations in surveys
Optional (but strongly encouraged):
Applications of an Analytic Framework on Using Public Opinion Data for Solving Intelligence Problems: Proceedings of a Workshop (2022); Free download available:

Other suggested sources (good references for your professional life):
- https://academic.oup.com/jssam
- https://academic.oup.com/poq
- https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/12-001-x/index-eng.htm
- https://ojs.ub.uni-konstanz.de/srm/
- https://sciendo.com/journal/JOS

General Resources Available to Students
- Harris Academic Support Programs and Handbook
- Student Wellness
- University Learning Resources

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies
- Harris School Policies
- University General Policies
- University Academic Policies
- Policies on audio and video recordings and deletion.