

PPHA 41600
Survey Research Methodology
WINTER 2026

Instructors:

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:

Matt Stadnicki (Head TA)

TBD

TA office hours:

TBD (will be posted on Canvas)

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 lectures, and the second part hands-on activities (e.g., Q&A, group discussions, invited guest speakers, and 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:

- Groves, R. M., Fowler Jr., F. J., Couper M. P., Lepkowski J. M., Singer E., and Tourangeau R. 2009. *Survey Methodology* (Second ed). Hoboken N.J: Wiley.

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:

- Dillman D. A. 2024. *You have been randomly selected. A Life Dedicated to Turning Research Findings into Practical Applications*. Washington State University Press.
- Fowler F. J. 2014. *Survey Research Methods* Fifth ed. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Gideon L., (ed) (2012). *Handbook of Survey Methodology for the Social Sciences*. New York: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-3876-2>.

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 instructors.

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

Grade letter	Range	
	Min	Max
A	470	500
A-	450	469
B+	435	449
B	420	434
B-	400	419
C+	385	399
C	370	384
C-	350	369
F	<350	

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 — Harris Disability Liaison for more information by the end of the first week of the quarter.
- The University's policies on diversity and inclusion are available [here](#). Harris's mission and vision for diversity and inclusion 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.**
- 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.

Class and Assignment Schedule

Week of	Class topic	Timeline	Points	Cumulative points
(1) January 7 Bilgen and Sterrett	Introduction to class and background: - Introductions - Background & History of Survey Research - Survey Examples	Class: Wed 01/07, 4.30pm CT HW#1 Due: Sunday 01/11, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas)	HW1: 20 pts	
(2) January 14 Sterrett	Ethical Principles Ethical Disclosures and Survey Organizations	Class: Wed 01/14, 4.30pm CT HW#2 Due: Sunday 01/18, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas)	HW2: 50 pts Course Attendance (CA): 10 pts	80 pts
(3) January 21 Bilgen	Main Theoretical Concepts: Survey Lifecycle, and Total Survey Error Framework Introduction to Survey Modes	Class: Wed 01/21, 4.30pm CT HW#3 Due: Sunday 01/25, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas)	HW3: 50 pts CA: 10 pts	140 pts
(4) January 28 Sterrett	Sampling and Coverage	Class: Wed 01/28, 4.30pm CT HW#4 Due: Sunday 02/01, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas)	HW4: 50 pts CA: 10 pts	200 pts
(5) February 4 Bilgen	Survey Modes – Deep Dive Methods of Data Collection & Survey Interviewing	Class: Wed 02/04, 4.30pm CT HW#5 Due: Sunday 02/08, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas)	HW5: 50 pts CA: 10 pts	260 pts
(6) February 11 Sterrett	Survey Nonresponse	Class: Wed 02/11, 4.30pm CT HW#6 Due: Sunday 02/15, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas).	HW6: 50 pts CA: 10 pts	320 pts
(7) February 18 Bilgen	Research Questions and Constructs Measurement & Questionnaire Design	Class: Wed 02/18, 4.30pm CT HW#7 Due: Sunday 02/22, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas).	HW7: 50 pts CA: 10 pts	380 pts
(8) February 25 Sterrett	Data Processing and Weighting	Class: Wed 02/25, 4.30pm CT Work on your final assignment	CA: 10 pts	390 pts
(9) March 4 Bilgen	Mixed Mode Data Collection	Class: Wed 03/04, 4.30pm CT Final Assignment Due: Sunday 03/08, 11:00 pm CT (via Canvas).	Final Assignment: 100 pts CA: 10 pts	500 pts
(10) March 11 Finals Week	NO CLASS	NO FINAL EXAM	--	--

Class Readings (subject to change)

Week 1 (January 7) Introduction to class and background

- No “official” readings prior to class

Optional:

- Oldendick, R. W. (2012). Chapter 3: Survey research ethics. In *Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences* (pp. 23-35). Springer New York.
- American Association for Public Opinion Research Code of Ethics https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/AAPOR-2020-Code_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf

Week 2 (January 14) Survey Reporting and Ethical Disclosures

- Chapter 11 (Groves et al. 2009): Principles and Practices Related to Ethical Research
- Peter V. Miller, PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: The Road to Transparency in Survey Research, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 74, Issue 3, Fall 2010, Pages 602–606, <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfq038>
- AAPOR Transparency Initiative Disclosure Elements <https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/TI-Attachment-C.pdf>

Optional:

- 538's polls policy and FAQs. Mary Radcliffe and G. Elliott Morris. November 27, 2023. <https://abcnews.go.com/538/538s-polls-policy-faqs/story?id=104489193>
- OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET's Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies; Republication. 2022. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2002-02-22/pdf/R2-59.pdf>

Week 3 (January 21) 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:

- Groves, R. M., Singer, E., & Corning, A. (2000). Leverage-Saliency Theory of Survey Participation: Description and an Illustration. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64(3), 299–308.
- Dillman, D. A. (2022). Fifty years of survey innovation. *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique*, 154(1), 9-38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07591063221088317>
- Robert M. Groves, Lars Lyberg, Total Survey Error: Past, Present, and Future, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 74, Issue 5, 2010, Pages 849–879, <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfq065>

Week 4 (January 28) Sampling and Coverage

- Chapter 3 (Groves et al. 2009): Target Populations, Sampling Frames, and Coverage Error
- J. Michael Brick, The Future of Survey Sampling, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 75, Issue 5, Special Issu 2011, Pages 872–888, <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfr045>

Optional:

- Hughes, Adam G, Stefan D McCabe, William R Hobbs, Emma Remy, Sono Shah, and David M J Lazer. 2021. “Using Administrative Records and Survey Data to Construct Samples of Tweepers and Tweets.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 85 (March): 323–46. doi:10.1093/poq/nfab020.

- Singh, Ajay S., and Micah B. Masuku. "Sampling techniques & determination of sample size in applied statistics research: An overview." *International Journal of economics, commerce and management* 2, no. 11 (2014): 1-22.
- Kalton, Graham. *Introduction to Survey Sampling*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983.
- Bansal, Archana. *Survey Sampling*. Oxford: Alpha Science International Ltd., 2017.

Week 5 (February 4) Survey Modes & Methods of Data Collection & Survey Interviewing

- Stern, Michael, Ipek Bilgen, and Don A. Dillman. (2014). The State of Survey Methodology in the 2010s. *Field Methods*. 26 (3): 284-301.
- Chapter 9 (Groves et al. 2009): Survey Interviewing

Optional:

- Chapter 5 (Groves et al. 2009): *Methods of Data Collection*
- Olson, K., and Bilgen, I. (2011). *The Role of Interviewer Experience on Acquiescence*. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75(1), 99-114.
- Bilgen, I., Dutwin, D., Singh, R., Hendarwan, E. (2023). Peekaboo! The Effect of Different Visible Cash Display and Amount Options During Mail Contact When Recruiting to a Probability-Based Panel, *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*, 2023, smad039, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jssam/smad039>

Week 6 (February 11) Survey Nonresponse

- Chapter 6 (Groves et al. 2009): Nonresponse in Sample Surveys
- Roger Tourangeau, Presidential Address: Paradoxes of Nonresponse, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 81, Issue 3, Fall 2017, Pages 803–814, <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfx031>

Optional:

- Cavari, Amnon, and Guy Freedman. 2023. "Survey Nonresponse and Mass Polarization: The Consequences of Declining Contact and Cooperation Rates." *American Political Science Review* 117 (1): 332–39. doi:10.1017/S0003055422000399.
- Peytchev, A. (2013). *Consequences of Survey Nonresponse*. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 645(1), 88-111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716212461748>
- Tourangeau, R., Plewes, T. J., & National Research Council. (2013). *Nonresponse in social science surveys: A research agenda*. National Academies Press.
- Robert M. Groves, Emilia Peytcheva, *The Impact of Nonresponse Rates on Nonresponse Bias: A Meta-Analysis*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 72, Issue 2, Summer 2008, Pages 167–189.

Week 7 (February 18) 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:

- Floyd J. Fowler, J., & Cosenza, C. (2008). *Chapter 8: Writing Effective Questions*. In E. D. d. Leuw, J. J. Hox & D. A. Dillman (Eds.), *International handbook of survey methodology*. New York: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Bilgen, I., and Belli, R. F. (2010). *Comparison of Verbal Behaviors between Calendar and Standardized Conventional Questionnaires*. *Journal of Official Statistics*, 26(3), 481-505.

- Gideon, L. (2012). *The art of question phrasing*. In L. Gideon (Ed.), *Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences*. New York, NY: Springer., pp. 91-107.
- Yan, T., Kreuter, F., & Tourangeau, R. (2012). *Evaluating survey questions: A comparison of methods*. *Journal of Official Statistics*, 28(4), 503-529.

Week 8 (February 25) Data Processing and Weighting

- Chapter 10 (Groves et al. 2009): Postcollection Processing of Survey Data
- American Association of Public Opinion Research Task Force On 2024 Pre-Election Polling, An Evaluation of the 2024 General Election Polls, https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AAPOR-Task-Force-on-2024-Pre-Election-Polling_Report.pdf

Optional:

- Gelman, Andrew. (2007). "Struggles with survey weighting and regression modeling." *Statistical Science*. Vol. 22, No. 2, 153-164.
- Urlacher BR. *Gender Identification and Survey Weighting: A Shifting Landscape*. *PS: Political Science & Politics*. 2023;56(1):56-60. doi:10.1017/S1049096522001081
- Valliant, Richard, Jill A. Dever, and Franke Kreuter. *Practical tools for designing and weighting survey samples*. Vol. 1. New York: Springer, 2013.
- Solon, Gary, Steven J. Haider, and Jeffrey M. Wooldridge. 2015. "What Are We Weighting For?" *The Journal of Human Resources* 50 (2): 301–16. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjrs&AN=edsjrs.24735988&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

Week 9 (March 4) Mixed Mode Data Collection

- De Leeuw, E. (2005). To Mix or Not to Mix Data Collection Modes in Surveys. *Journal of Official Statistics*, 21(2), 233-255.
- De Leeuw, E. (2018). Mixed-Mode: Past, Present, and Future. *Survey Research Methods*, 12(2), 75-89.

Optional:

- Tourangeau, R. (2017). *Mixing Modes. Tradeoffs Among Coverage, Nonresponse, and Measurement Error*. In P. Biemer, E. de Leeuw, S. Eckman, B. Edwards, F. Kreuter, L. E. Lyberg, N. C. Tucker, & B. T. West (Eds.), *Total Survey Error in Practice* (pp. 115-132). New York: Wiley.
- Olson, K., et al., *Transitions from Telephone Surveys to Self-Administered and Mixed-Mode Surveys: AAPOR Task Force Report, Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology, Volume 9, Issue 3, June 2021, Pages 381–411.*
- Dillman, D.A. (2017). *The promise and challenge of pushing respondents to the Web in mixed-mode surveys*. *Survey Methodology, Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 12-001-X, Vol. 43, No. 1*. Paper available at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/12-001-x/2017001/article/14836-eng.htm>.

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](#)
- [UChicagoGRAD](#)

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies

- [Harris School Policies](#)
- [University General Policies](#)
- [University Academic Policies](#)
- Policy on audio and video [recordings](#)