

## 1. ERMA 8200 Survey Research Methods

3 credit hours

## 2. Semester Summer 2012

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Office Hours: Monday 2-4pm and by appointment

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## 3. Resources

Required:

Andres, L. (2012). *Designing and Doing Survey Research*. Sage.

Other resources (on reserve at RBD Library when possible):

Dillman, D.A., Smyth, J.D., & Christian, L.M. (2014). *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. Wiley. **Electronic resource at RBD.**

Fink, A. (2003). *The Survey Kit* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fowler, F. J. (2008). *Survey research methods* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Engel, U., et al. (2015). *Improving Survey Methods: Lessons from Recent Research*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Trochim, W. M. (version current as of October 20, 2006). *The Research Methods Knowledge Base, 2nd Edition*.

Retrievable from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/>

4. **Course Description:** Overview of survey research, sampling issues, selection and construction of survey instruments, scaling techniques, response effects, issues influencing response rate, reliability and validity of survey data, and analysis of data.

## 5. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- recognize and discuss the uses of survey research
- recognize and apply the appropriate estimates of reliability and validity
- prepare an IRB application and cover letter
- discuss the advantages and limitations of different sampling procedures
- compare and contrast different modes (paper, electronic, personal interview, etc.) of survey administration
- describe procedures used to increase response rate in survey research
- construct a measurement instrument in accordance with guidelines discussed in class and the research literature
- pilot test a measurement instrument developed in class
- determine the appropriate data analysis procedure(s) given a specific set of research questions
- prepare a report detailing instrument development, pilot study, sampling and procedures used to implement the measurement instrument.

**Note: We will be using Canvas for this course. Check the Canvas site weekly for announcements and handouts for class.**

## 6. Tentative Course Content and Schedule

	Readings and coverage	Readings	Assignments (due at start of class unless noted)
Week 1 (8/17)	Survey design basics Research questions and purpose  <i>Start A1: Research purpose</i>		
Week 2 (8/24)	Survey design basics cont'd  <i>Power-user survey tip 1</i>	Andres Ch. 1 and 2 (intro) Schwarz 99 American_Psych, Self-Reports Other readings as assigned	A1: Research purpose (1-2pp) <b>Bring a survey and related research study from the literature to discuss</b> In-class assignment
Week 3 (8/31)	Survey blueprints  <i>Power-user survey tip 2, 3</i>	Andres Ch. 3 (concepts) Other readings as assigned	A2: Survey critique –be prepared to present/discuss your critique and the survey In-class assignment
<b>(9/7) Labor Day</b>			
Week 4 (9/14)	Item development  <i>Power-user survey tip 4</i>	Andres Ch. 4 and 5 (formats) Schwarz (1999) Dillman et al. Ch. 4 Sapsford Ch. 11 p, p222-227, 237-245 Other readings as assigned	A3: Survey blueprint  In-class assignment
Week 5 (9/21)	Sampling approaches, response rate  <i>Power-user survey tip 5, 6</i>	Andres Ch. 6 Fink <i>Survey Handbook</i> Ch 2 Other readings as assigned	Bring some draft survey items to review  In-class assignment
Week 6 (9/28)	Validity and reliability data collection techniques  <i>Power-user survey tip 7</i>	Andres Ch. 7 (val and rel) Sapsford Ch. 11 p, 228-236 Buros: “Questions to ask when evaluating tests” (for objective tests, but still helpful) Other readings as assigned	A4: Sampling plan (1p)  In-class assignment
Week 7 (10/5)	Validity continued, Item analysis  <i>Power-user survey tip 7, 8</i>	Andres Ch. 9 and 10 Anastasi & Urbina Ch 4 Other readings as assigned	In-class assignment
Week 8 (10/12)	Other analytical methods  <i>Power-user survey tip 9, 10</i>	Other readings as assigned	A5: Reliability and validity plan (including pilot testing) (1p) In-class assignment
Week 9 (10/19)	Discussion and peer review of survey draft		<b>A6: Share draft survey with class (2-3 copies)</b> A7: Turn in a copy of peer reviews (1p) <b>[Due by Wed. 10/21 midnight]</b>

Week 10 (10/26)	IRB and recruitment  <b>Power-user survey tip 11, 12</b>	Andres Ch. 8 Other readings as assigned	A8: CITI training due In-class assignment
Week 11 (11/2)	Online surveys, writing cover letters, and recruitment issues  <b>Power-user survey tip 13</b>	Matulewicz Coburn “presentation on UD for web surveys” Other readings as assigned	In-class assignment
Week 12 (11/9)	Novel approaches to survey development--Delta method  <b>Power-user survey tip 14, 15</b>	Pilcher (2015) A Modified Delphi Study to Define Ah ha Moments in Education Settings Hsu et al. The Delphi Technique...	In-class assignment
Week 13 11/16	Dr. Lakin away at conference <b>Work on final products</b> <b>Gather pilot data</b>		
11/23	<b>Thanksgiving</b>		
Week 14 11/30	Students present their pilot testing results and preliminary interpretations		A9: Pilot testing report (1-2pp)
Finals	<b>Final project due December 7, midnight</b>		

## 7. Assignments

All of the assignments are intended to help you think about your survey and design plans. These are details that you will need in your dissertation or (more succinctly written) in a journal article.

Most assignments should be submitted through Canvas. You may also need to bring copies to class. All assignments are due at the start of class unless otherwise noted.

### ***A1: Research purpose (1-2pp)***

1. **Describe your research topic.** What are the research questions you want to answer? Why is this topic important? Support this using pertinent research (citations). Attach an annotated bibliography consisting of a minimum of three research studies.
2. **What are the variables/constructs to be measured?** Identify the variables in terms of constructs in the above research questions to be measured using a survey. Explain why a survey would be most appropriate. You will likely have to specify factors that define a construct (e.g., motivation is not a unitary construct directly measured, you have to use a theory of motivation to identify the factors that comprise motivation).

### ***A2: Survey critique (2-3pp)***

1. Find a survey (and a related research study) that pertains to your research interests.
2. Review the study and survey: What was the purpose of the study (research questions)? What variables were intended to be measured using the survey? What evidence is provided (or should be provided) to support survey instrument (e.g. reliability, validity, etc...)? What were the study details in terms of who was sampled, how the survey was administered and what findings emerged, etc.?
3. Critique the survey/study. What were the greatest strengths and what were the limitations?

4. Describe how this study and instrument can be used to help you design your survey research project.

### ***A3: Survey blueprint***

1. Prepare a survey blueprint that summarizes the major components/sections of the survey. Define each component carefully and estimate the number of items per component.
2. Include supporting references that support the inclusion of each section/component.
2. Specify the types of items to be developed.

### ***A4: Sampling plan (1-2pp)***

1. Describe the target population as well as the accessible population. Who will be sampled?
2. Describe the sampling approach (random, stratified, purposeful, etc.) and explain why this is most appropriate. Describe the tradeoffs of the approach you choose.
3. How will the survey be administered? (mail, phone, electronic, mixed) and explain why this approach is most appropriate. Describe the tradeoffs (costs/benefits, pros/cons) of the method you choose.
4. What attempts/approaches will be used to maximize the response rate to this survey?

### ***A5: Reliability and validity plan (1-2pp)***

1. For your survey study, what type(s) of reliability are most appropriate and how will they be supported?
2. What type(s) of validity are most appropriate and how will they be supported? Specifically, what kind of data needs to be collected to provide each type of validity evidence?

### ***A6: Draft survey***

1. Submit a full draft of your survey instrument (include your updated survey blueprint)

### ***A7: Summarize main points of peer reviews (1p)***

1. Submit your review of a peer's survey instrument (this can be written comments or a marked up copy of the survey). In this review, provide constructive feedback pertaining to:
  - a. Overall layout/design and flow of survey
  - b. Clarity of directions
  - c. Survey item and response scales/formats – appropriateness, item order, validity, etc.
2. Give detailed comments to the survey author as soon as you can so that they can incorporate this feedback in their survey.

### ***A8: CITI training***

CITI training is an online resource that provides training in the ethical issues related to human subjects research. Completing these training modules is required by the university before you can conduct research with human subjects. If you have completed CITI training within the last three years, you can simply print out your completion page and upload it.

You must complete the basic course in Social and Behavioral Research (the one for AU personnel). It's also a good idea to complete any relevant optional courses you may use in your research (e.g., research with children, students in research, working with prison populations, etc.). This Auburn site gives you the details you need on how to use the site:

<https://cws.auburn.edu/OVPR/pm/compliance/irb/training>

This is the actual training site: <https://www.citiprogram.org/>

***A9: Pilot testing report (1-2pp)***

1. Identify an appropriate pilot testing plan (Can you collect enough data to do item analyses? Or should you do a think aloud with 2-3 people?)
2. Recruit an appropriate number of participants for your pilot test (remember their data will not contribute to your research sample)
3. Summarize your findings and how you plan to respond to the results of the pilot test

***Power-user survey tips (student presentations)***

1. We all need to be able to find innovative solutions to common survey research issues. Many of you will already have expertise to share and everyone should read current research to improve their practice. Start with one of the suggested ideas below, find your own, or share your own solution to a survey issue.
2. This presentation can consist of slides or a handout or just a verbal presentation. Does not need to be formal. **Presentations should be 5-10 minutes long.**
3. Suggestions (not limited to this list!)
  - Recruitment methods for teachers in schools
  - Contacting principals or superintendents about accessing teachers as participants
  - Making contact with businesses for research
  - Effectively using incentives to increase responses rate
  - Tips for effective subject headers (maybe look at marketing or public relations guides)
  - Promises/Pitfalls of social media for survey recruitment
  - Comparison of free survey administration websites (Google Forms, Survey Monkey, etc.)
  - Demonstration of a specific, unusual survey item format (e.g., Qualtrics offers constant sum, rank order, gap analysis)—be sure to mention any considerations in how to score/analyze the format
  - Surveying special populations (very young, low literacy, difficult topics, etc.)
  - Summary of a chapter from *Improving survey methods : lessons from recent research* (Engel et al.)

***Final project components:***

1. **Literature review.** Include the purpose statement with research questions [refined since week 1]. Also include extensive references to the literature and survey research that informed the present study. This should be 3-5 pages long.

2. **Survey instrument.** Revised copy of survey with cover letter in Qualtrics.
3. **Cover letter.** Prepare a cover letter/email to be sent to potential respondents. Be sure to include the necessary IRB elements/guidelines in this cover letter (but make it shorter and more appealing than the Information Letter). Also, make sure the letter is reasonably compelling to potential respondents. Include a subject line.
4. **IRB protocol.** Complete a draft IRB protocol.

Forms and training can be accessed from the link below: <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/>

### ***Bonus points***

Bonus points may be available for attending campus events. They will be listed as assignments in Canvas. All bonus point assignments must be completed by the deadline. **No additional bonus opportunities are available.**

## **8. Course Requirements and Evaluation**

*Learning Methods:* Lectures, discussions, readings, class exercises and projects.

### *Student Assessment*

Final project	10%
Homework projects, In-class Activities	85%
Power-user tip presentation	5%

You MUST be in class to earn in-class activity points. Assignments turned in late will receive a 5% reduction in earned points per day. The only exception will be in the case of university-approved excuses (health emergency, required work travel, etc.). Documentation may be required.

***If you are interested in doing less work and being eligible to receive a B in class, complete:***

All projects listed above EXCEPT the Final Project with at least 80% quality/completion score

***If you are interested in doing more work and being eligible to receive an A in class by demonstrating greater competency, complete:***

All projects listed above, including a Final Project with at least 90% quality/correct score

**See extended descriptions of projects and other activities on Canvas.**

### *Grading Scale*

A:	90 – 100%
B:	80 – 89%
C:	70 – 79%
D:	60 – 69%
F:	below 60%

## **9. Class Policy Statements**

### *Attendance Policy*

- Excellent attendance is expected, but not required. If you miss class, you will need to get notes from another student.
- I will start class on time, so if you are late you will need to get notes from another student.

### *Late Assignments Policy*

- Assignments turned in late will receive a 5% reduction in earned points per day. The only exception will be in the case of university-approved excuses (health emergency, required work travel, etc.). Documentation may be required.
- Except for in-class work or work requiring calculations, all work must be typed or it will not be graded. Late penalty will be applied to work completed in writing and then turned in late in typed format for a grade.

### *Incompletes and Withdrawals*

Grades associated with incomplete course work or withdrawal from class will be assigned in strict conformity to University policy (see Auburn University Bulletin). If you wish to drop this course you may do so by the 10th class day with no grade assignment. From the 10th class day to mid-semester a W (withdrawn-passing) grade will be recorded in your transcripts. After this period withdrawal from the course will only be granted under unusual circumstances and must be approved by the Dean of the College of Education.

Note that the incomplete grade (IN) policy is in effect. The new policy requires that students complete a form requesting that an IN grade be assigned. If this form is not completed and given to the instructor of the class, a grade will be assigned with a score of zero (0) for work that has not been completed and turned in by the time the instructor reports grades.

### *Academic Misconduct*

The Department of EFLT recognizes university policy regarding academic misconduct. Violations include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance during examinations, submitting another's work product as your own, using another's words as your own without appropriate citation, sharing unauthorized materials with another that contain questions or answers to examinations, altering or attempting to alter assigned grades. In accordance with University policy regarding academic misconduct, students may be subject to several sanctions upon violations of the Student Academic Honesty Code. See the Tiger Cub publication for the current year for specifics regarding academic misconduct as well as student's rights and responsibilities associated with the Code.

### *Disability Accommodations*

Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the PSD office, but need accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

### *Copyright and Course Materials (adapted from <http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)*

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