

16-23

LSC App 9/1/16

UWUCC App 9/6/16

Senate App 10/4/16

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO USE W-DESIGNATION

LSC # _____
Action _____

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

Professor _____ Phone _____

Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when?) _____

Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)

Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

Department Contact Person Beth Mabry Phone 724-840-6360

Course Number/Title SOC 460, Social Research Methods I

Statement concerning departmental responsibility

Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

Professor(s) _____ Phone _____

Course Number/Title _____

Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) [Signature]

Department Chairperson [Signature]

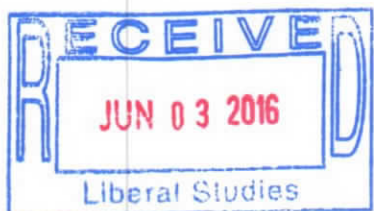
College Dean [Signature] 6/3/16

Director of Liberal Studies [Signature]

COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

- I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.
- II. Copy of the course syllabus.
- III. Two or three samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students. Limit: 4 pages. (Single copies of longer items, if essential to the proposal, may be submitted to be passed among LSC members and returned to you.)

Please number all pages. Provide one copy to Liberal Studies Committee.
Before you submit: Have you double-checked your proposal against "The Liberal Studies Committee's Most Frequently Asked Questions"?



Proposal for Designating SOC 460, Social Research Methods I as a Writing Intensive Course

I. Writing Summary

A. How Writing is Used in the Course

Distinctive characteristics of the content (and of students)

Students in SOC 460 are seniors (or advanced juniors) in the major. They typically have taken at least 12 hours in the major, and usually postpone the course until the end of their undergraduate program of study. The content is centered on introducing students to ways that basic and applied research are done in the discipline and by practitioners in the field, from conceptualization, to linking theory and methods, to reporting the research and interpreting results from research.

In SOC 460 writing is used to help students learn about the variety of topics sociologists study and the research methods they use, as well as to think about and develop elements of a research proposal through a series of writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate activities.

Students learn research by doing research in SOC 460 & 461. In SOC 460 (fall), they write the research proposal, and in SOC 461 (already a WI course) in the following (spring) semester, they conduct and report the research. Writing is part of each step of the proposal development process in SOC 460: conceptualizing a project-- students explain what they want to study for their course project and why it is important (building a context for the topic as a social issue); building a foundation--students write a formal review of the literature; planning the conduct of research—student layout a technical description of the sampling strategy, operationalizing the concepts they are studying, their data collection procedures, and their plan to analyze the data; and protecting human subjects—students write about ethical considerations of their research topic and procedures and how they will address them.

B. Types of Writing Activities

Informal (Writing-to-Learn)

Students engage in a variety of daily one to two-page informal (primarily) in-class activities and (sometimes) out-of-class homework assignments that give them a chance to engage critically with the course material, explore ideas, apply their knowledge, and practice what they have learned. Some of these activities require students to synthesize material from the course readings and class lectures, and some will help them to develop the components of their Research Project Proposal. These are submitted for feedback and students get credit for putting in thought and effort, but otherwise they are not graded. These are low-stakes assignments that comprise just 12.5% of the final grade. An example is included among the sample assignments.

Formal (Writing-to-Communicate)

Over the course of the semester, students develop a Research Proposal (that they executive in the follow-up course, SOC 461) that makes up 50% of their grade. They develop the proposal in a series of four assignments: Introduction (3-5 pages), Review of the Literature (5-7 pages), and Methods/Research Plan (5-7 pages), and IRB Human Subjects Protocol (typically about 3-5 pages of new writing). They submit one section of the proposal roughly every month during the semester. They get feedback for use in revision before they re-submit their previous work along with the following component of the proposal (excepting the final component, the IRB Protocol that they revise at the outset of Spring semester to get

II. Copy of the course syllabus.

COURSE SYLLABUS

IUP Catalog Course Description

SOC 460 Social Research Methods I 3c-01-3cr **Prerequisites:** SOC 320, junior standing.

First in a two-course methods sequence. Examines diverse research designs used in the social sciences, i.e., survey, field study, experiment, documentary, and existing statistical data. Focuses both on logic and practice of social research. Students develop a research design to be implemented in the second course in the research sequence.

Required Texts

Adler, Emily Stier and Roger Clark. 2014. *An Invitation to Social Research: How It's Done*, 5th Ed. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Krieg, Eric J. 2011. *Statistics and Data Analysis for Social Science*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

INTRODUCTION

How do we know what we know about the social world? How can we study how culture, social arrangements, social situations, and being part of groups affect us as individuals and collectively as a society? Sociology seeks to understand how people are organized in society; how people cooperate and deal with conflict to make social life possible; patterns of what people think, feel, and do; and how individuals reproduce and change society. That requires applying the tools of science to study, **logically and systematically**, the structures and processes of the social world that shape us as individuals, as members of groups, and as a society. This course, and the next course in the sequence, will introduce you to social research methods and give you an opportunity to try them out for yourself, as you develop your critical thinking skills as a consumer (and potential producer) of social research.

Issues in the news, personal and public problems that we discuss with our family and friends, everyday observations and behaviors, and timeless social dilemmas are all in the domain of sociological research. **Sociological research investigates what we often take for granted as “common sense” knowledge about the social world.** It allows us to explore issues, problems, and widespread myths, such as the belief that what people do is simply a matter of individual choice. As a discipline, sociology scientifically addresses questions such as: Why do social inequalities exist and how are they perpetuated? How do cultural trends come and go? Who and what are considered deviant? Why do most of us conform to social norms in most situations? How does our place in society shape our experiences and the way we see ourselves? What can people do to address social problems or to change and improve social conditions? How we can go about studying questions like these is at the heart of this course.

We all have informal “theories” or explanations about the social world to make sense of experiences and observations. However, **sociologists seek verifiable knowledge** and organize that knowledge into theories that help us understand and **explain the social causes and consequences** of people’s behavior, social patterns, social problems, and the products of human activity such as technologies. In this course, we will explore the important link between theoretical perspectives and research methods for studying the social world.

You will develop your own research project on a significant sociological question or issue of interest to you. In the following course, SOC 461, you will conduct your study, analyze the results, and present your findings to the class and, perhaps, to the broader campus community of scholars at the IUP Undergraduate Scholars Forum, and/or other conferences or journals and to address a broader popular audience.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Quizzes and Exams (375 points—3 x 25 points; and 100, 100, and 100 points, respectively)

There are three quizzes and three exams in this course. Quizzes review the most recently covered material. Exams include material covered since the previous exam. **The final exam is cumulative.** Exams will include course material from readings, videos, class presentations, and discussions. All exams consist of multiple choice questions and may also include short answer and/or essay questions based on important concepts. They will test your ability to *understand and apply* course material, not simply to identify correct definitions, for example.

Research Proposal (500 points)

Over the course of the semester, you will be developing a research proposal (you will carry out the research project as part of SOC 461, in the spring). We will do this in stages. You will receive feedback on each major component (Introduction, Review of the Literature, and Methods/Research Plan). You should use feedback to revise your previous work before you re-submit it along with the following component. Part of your grade will depend on the inclusion and revision of previously submitted portions of the proposal. **The detailed assignments and rubric for each of the component of the proposal is available from the first day of the course; please follow those detailed assignments carefully. They tell you exactly what's expected** (this is just an overview). They are intended to help you, so read them carefully, and ask questions.

Unlike our in-class writing activities and homework (see below), which are informal writing activities, the proposal components are **formal** writing assignments, so submissions should reflect solid college-level writing and proper citations of sources. Submissions that lack proper citations maybe returned without a grade as they are incomplete. Points for each component of proposal are awarded for the inclusion of required elements, quality of thinking evident in your work, accurate application of course material, and quality of your writing (grammar, spelling, clarity, citations, etc.). Again, the rubric for each of the components of the research proposal is provided with the detailed assignment so you know what is expected in each section of the proposal. **Expect the research project proposal assignments will take more time** than you may usually spend on paper assignments and plan accordingly.

I strongly encourage you to use the IUP Writing Center for assistance in developing your writing and for help editing outlining and each assignment. I provide detailed directions for each component of the assignment well in advance of each due date so that you have time to produce your best work. **Follow the assignment directions and checklists carefully.** They are intended to help you.

In-Class Activities, Homework, and Participation (125 points)

Research methods is a course that requires your attendance, attention, and participation to perform well. Your preparation for class and participation are expected. I want you to succeed, so I offer an incentive: **you can earn up to 5 points per class** through simple daily in-class activities and attentive participation.

Throughout the semester, we will have a variety of in-class activities (and an occasional out-of-class homework that we will use in-class) that give you a chance to engage critically with the material, apply your knowledge, and practice what you have learned. Some of these activities will require you to synthesize material from the course readings, and some will help you to develop the components of your Research Project Proposal. These are informal writing assignments; you receive credit for the quality of thought and effort you put into them, but not on how “correct” they are in terms of your writing or your answers. They are to help you think through the material and get some feedback on your thinking.

Class Norms and Expectations

Respect: Let's respect one another. We may at times discuss sensitive and/or controversial topics that require maturity and civility. Please support your positions with credible evidence, and challenge ideas—mine or other students—but respectfully. Also, we all have different experiences and learning needs; please be mindful that some people may find some issues more difficult to grasp or some students may need a moment to consider before responding. It takes some practice, too, to be comfortable with silence. Let's be careful not to interrupt one another and to listen to one another with full attention and kindness.

Electronic Devices: Research indicates that laptop and tablet note taking are less effective for learning than hand writing notes. Electronic devices also provide too great a temptation to do things other than note taking, and thus are distracting to you, and to those sitting around you who can see your screen. Please silence your phone and place it out of sight, unless I ask you to use it for an in-class activity. If you need to receive important information via your mobile device during a class, please let me know.

Note: If you experience stress-related to this course or otherwise, the IUP Counseling Center has walk-in hours for initial contacts, questions, and concerns on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 1:00-3:00 pm at the Suites on Maple East, Room G31 (CHWB building). If you would prefer to set up an appointment at a specific time, it is best to call 724-357-2621 and ask about an initial appointment time, or you can stop by Monday-Friday from 8:00 am-4:30 pm and set up an appointment at their reception desk. **If you are distressed and/or struggling, please let someone know. We care and support is available.**

Attendance Policy and Other Issues

Sometimes an **absence from class** is unavoidable. University policy allows for 2 unexcused absences in classes that meet twice a week, such as ours. If you do not attend class, you will miss important information, you cannot participate, you cannot complete and get credit for in-class activities, and you will not receive homework assignments. Therefore, **more than two absences may negatively affect your grade**. If you miss a class, you should ask a classmate for notes (it is inappropriate to ask the instructor or graduate assistant for notes since it is your responsibility to get the missed material).

With this syllabus, you have the semester's schedule of major course assignments, quizzes, and exams. This should allow you to make arrangements (including medical appointments) that **avoid conflicts with course requirements**. Please note that extracurricular activities (athletics, band, theater, etc.) and work are **not** excused absences. Everyone has busy lives and an array of commitments and responsibilities. To be fair to everyone, everyone has two unexcused absences to reserve for their needs.

In the rare case that someone **misses a quiz, exam, or assignment** with a valid excuse, an alternate form of that work, in either an oral or essay format, *may* be offered at the instructor's discretion. Valid excuses include: **death** of an *immediate* family member (parent, sibling, child); your own unanticipated **hospitalization**, your own *extremely* serious illness (typically involving emergency room care, not just a trip to the doctor or student health center), or a **court hearing** at which you must appear. Please provide proper documentation for your excuse. Examples of proper documentation include as a printed funeral home notice, hospital admission documents, emergency room physician certification, or a court order. **Valid excuses do not include** *visits to the student health center or a local urgent care type facility; minor illnesses; non-emergency medical appointments; family events; transportation issues; going home for the weekend; job interviews; having to work; alarm clock failure; interpersonal conflicts; or not being prepared.* **If in doubt, talk with me about your situation. I can only help if I hear from you.**

If you have any questions, *please ask*—and communicate with me as soon as feasible, preferably in advance whenever possible, about absences or other course-related concerns.

QUIZ #2

Covers all course material since Exam #1.

Week 8 *Experimental Research*

Tues. 10/13 True, Quasi-, & Non-Experimental Studies: What's the Difference (and Why Do We Care)?

Thurs. 10/15 What are the Strengths, Weaknesses, and Challenges of Experiments?

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 8

**PROPOSAL: REVISED INTRO AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE DUE
(UPLOAD TO TURNITIN.COM)**

Week 9 *Surveys and their Various Forms*

Tues. 10/20 What Can We Learn from Survey Research? What Kinds of Surveys are Available?

Thurs. 10/22 Hazards, Details, and Finding Out What we Want to Know Using Surveys

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 9

EXAM #2

Covers all course material since Exam #1.

Week 10 *Qualitative Interviewing*

Tues. 10/27 What Do We Ask?: How Do We Elicit Data to Answer Our Research Question?

Thurs. 10/29 What Makes for a Good Interview? (And what makes for a good interviewer?)

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 10

Week 11 *Observational Techniques*

Tues. 11/03 When, Why, and How Do We Conduct Observational Research?

Thurs. 11/05 Observer Roles, Access, and Ethical Considerations in Observational Research

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 11

QUIZ #3

Covers all course material since Exam #2.

Week 12 *Using Available Data*

Tues. 11/10 Why Not Use Data That Social Scientists Have Already Collected?!

Thurs. 11/12 Other Data and Kinds of Analysis of Various Social Artifacts

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 12

**PROPOSAL RESEARCH PLAN DUE
(REVISED INTRO AND LIT REVIEW, PLUS METHODS SECTION)
(UPLOAD TO TURNITIN.COM)**

Week 13 *Content Analysis*

Tues. 11/17 Graffiti, Song Lyrics, Cartoons, Video Games, Advertising: Are there any Limits to
What We Can Study through Content Analysis?!

Thurs. 11/19 How Do We Systematically Break Down Variables for Content Analysis?

Reading: Adler & Clark, Chapter 13

11/24 & 11/26 Thanksgiving Break—NO CLASSES

III. Two or three samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students. Limit: 4 pages.

SOC 460 In-Class Daily Activity 12

In regard to your research project, answer the following questions as you consider your anticipated research design.

What is your current research question?

What is your unit of analysis?

What are some potential errors of reasoning you might make if you were not mindful of the pitfalls of faulty reasoning discussed in class and in the readings?

What are a few of the key theories that you plan to rely on to frame your research, and why/how does each provide explanation?

Will you be doing a cross-sectional study and, if so, why is this suited to your research question? Please describe your current thinking.

Will you be doing a longitudinal study and, if so, what kind? Please describe your current thinking.

Process Dates: Your *Introduction* is due Monday, 9/28, uploaded to TurnItIn.com by 11:59 p.m.

PLEASE start this assignment WELL before the due date! This level of scholarly work takes times, thought and effort; give yourself time accordingly. And, make time to go to the IUP Writing Center for help at each stage: organizing ideas; clarity and precision of expression; editing and citations. They are available to help and there is no fee for the service. Make an appointment today or just walk-in!

Criteria for Evaluation: This is a formal writing assignment. You should submit polished, scholarly work—not a draft. That means that **before you turn in your paper** you should plan to write a draft, revise your draft (at least a couple of times), take time to carefully proofread your paper for spelling, grammar, and proper citations, and check to make sure that you have addressed all of the components of the assignment. Remember, you can take your paper to the IUP Writing Center for assistance.

Rubric for the Introduction Assignment

Criteria (√++ = excellent, √+ = good, √ = acceptable, √- = needs improvement, 0 = missing)	✓
Does the Statement of the Problem clearly state the research issue, question, or problem?	
Are the concepts/variables of interest included in the Statement of the Problem?	
Is the Significance of the Study explained, including the sociological importance of the issue?	
Are reliable, scholarly sources used to provide the context and scope of the issue and the meaning of key concepts/terms?	
Is the Purpose of the Study explained, and does it include what we will learn from the study and how that is useful?	
Are the key concepts/terms/variables defined (as used in the scholarly literature)?	
Are the specific Research Questions for this study clearly stated and logically consistent with the information presented?	
Style, Grammar, and Mechanics	
Is the tone and vocabulary professional (not informal), using sociological concepts? Is the language clear and concise, without jargon or being overly complex?	
Are transitions used between sections and paragraphs? Are signpost sentences used to indicate topics? Is it clear how information presented is related to the research question?	
Are passive verbs avoided (e.g., “was studied,” “were found”)? Is it clear who is doing the action?	
Are wordiness and run-on sentences/paragraphs avoided? Are too short/too long paragraphs avoided?	
Are sources of <u>ALL</u> facts and others’ ideas and words (quotes) cited correctly (placement and format) and properly referenced?	
Are punctuation, grammar, and spelling correct? Is the writing college-level?	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100	

The proposal can be a challenge to start, but you can do it!

Summary Chart for Writing Assignments*

A. Writing Assignments					
Assignment Title	# of Assignments	# of total pages	Graded (Yes/No)	Opportunity for Revision (Yes/No)	Written Assignment represents what % of final course grade
Introduction to the Proposed Research	1	3-5	Y	Y	10
Review of the Literature	1	5-7	Y	Y	15
Methods	1	5-7	Y	Y	15
Human Subjects Protections Protocol	1	3-5	Y	N	10
Totals	4	16-24	NA	NA	50

B. Examinations (Complete only if you intend to use essay exams/short answers as part of the required number of pages of writing.)			
Exams	Approx. % of exam that is essay or short answer	Anticipated # of pages for essay or short answer, or approx. word count	Exam constitutes what % of final course grade
1.	0		
2.	0		
3.	0		
Totals	0		

**Total writing assignments should contain at least 5000 words (approximately 15-20 typed pages) in two or more separate assignments; written assignments should be a major part of the final grade—at least 50% or more.*