Survey Research Methods Fall 2025
MMC6936, class 26364 (3 credits)
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Thursdays

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Frazer
Office: Weimer Hall 2066B
Office hours: To be announced, and by appointment
Email: r.frazer@ufl.edu (Email is the best way to reach me when I'm not in my office. Please allow 36 hours for a response, excluding weekends and holidays.)
Office Phone: (352)-392-3081

Course description and goals:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This is research methods class focusing on survey research theory, design, construction, implementation, and analysis. The course focuses primarily on quantitative survey research, with some attention given to mixed-method survey designs as the course progresses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
Through this course, students will:
* Identify problems and questions best addressed by survey methods.
* Learn to specify the goals of survey research, the nature of survey data, and the limitations of those data.
* Examine the theoretical foundations of survey research.
* Understand how to critically evaluate survey methods, considering both internal and external validity.
* Evaluate and compare a variety of survey designs, with attention to the strengths and weaknesses underlying various approaches.
* Learn how to evaluate the validity and reliability of survey measures.
* Gain practical skills in constructing strong survey tools using Qualtrics.
* Gain proficiency in basic principles of survey analysis, including differing approaches for analyzing cross-sectional vs. longitudinal data, as well as approaches for analyzing statistical validity of survey measures.
* Evaluate key ethical concerns in survey research.

CLASS LOGISTICS

Deadlines

Unless stated otherwise in the assignment description on Canvas, all written assignments **must** be submitted **to Canvas,** in word (.doc, .docx) or .pdf format, by the assigned deadline unless otherwise stated.

> *****NOTE: Only assignments submitted**
> > **1) <u>through Canvas AND</u>**
> > **2) <u>before the assigned deadline</u> AND**
> > **3) <u>in .doc, .docx, or PDF file format</u>**
>
> **will be accepted and graded! All assignments not conforming to the above guidelines will be given a grade of 0.*****

Unless I determine that an extenuating circumstance has occurred (per <u>university guidelines</u> regarding reasons for failure to engage in class), submissions emailed to me after the Canvas submission box has closed will not be graded. **<u>It is your responsibility to not wait until the last minute</u> to finish** assignments, in order to avoid technical problems such as spotty internet connections, computer crashes, etc. that may interfere with timely submission.

If submission of your assignment is delayed because of technical issues with Canvas, please report the problem immediately, receive a ticket number from the UF Computing Help Desk and email it to me immediately. The ticket will document the time and date of your issue.

For technical issues related to Canvas, contact the UF Help Desk at http://helpdesk.ufl.edu or (352) 392-HELP (4357).

Attribution in writing assignments
In every assignment for this course, you must clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' web sites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source, without putting quotes around it and crediting the source.

Course technology and software

You will need reliable Internet access and a reliable laptop computer with Microsoft Word (or other word processing software that can generate a .doc or .docx file), Microsoft Excel, and Adobe PDF reader. You should also have access to Zoom in case the need for virtual class-related meetings arises. Additionally, you will need RStudio on your laptop. RStudio can be downloaded for free at https://posit.co/download/rstudio-desktop/#download/. (Note: Prior experience with RStudio or R is not required). Finally, all students in the course will need access to Qualtrics; all UF students have free access to Qualtrics if they register their account (see https://www.qualtrics.com/academic-solutions/university-of-florida/). <u>Students must bring their computer to every class</u>.

Class attendance

Attendance is crucial to student success in this class. **Students are expected to attend every class period**, except in the event of a pre-approved excused absence or true emergency. **Each unexcused class absence will result in a grade-level deduction (e.g., from B to B-, from C+ to C).**

Excused Absences: I follow the university's guidelines regarding student absences that are excusable (i.e., absences that will not result in a penalty to the student's grade). Please read these guidelines carefully to note what types of absences can be excused. Examples of excusable absences include health emergencies, required university athletics participation, and religious holidays. Please note that for such an absence to be excused by the instructor, the student **must provide prior written (or email) notice to the instructor prior to the event whenever possible.** In the event of an unexpected emergency, the student must notify the instructor of the reason for their absence in a timely manner as soon as the emergency has passed. A student may not wait until weeks after a crisis or illness has passed to contact the instructor about excusing absences or making up missed work; I will not honor such requests. The instructor reserves the right to request supporting documentation for excused absences as appropriate.

Class Professionalism and Participation

Students are expected to be on time to class.

Allowed use of electronic devices in this course is limited to notetaking and viewing class-related content. Students should not text, check email, check social media, browse unrelated websites, or do other work during class. The instructor reserves the right to limit all access to electronic devices at any point in the course if deemed necessary to facilitate the learning environment.

Students are expected to speak up and actively participate in class discussions, and failure to do so will negatively affect students' grades. Please be collegial and respectful in your interactions with your fellow students, and welcome and treat with respect the different perspectives of others. Threats, profanity directed at others, personal attacks, discriminatory slurs, etc. are never appropriate in any type of class communication.

Additionally, the following behaviors may result in a penalty assessed to your grade.
- Persistent tardiness or regularly leaving class early without prior permission.
- Failure to actively participate in class activities.
- Inattentiveness in class (e.g., texting, checking social media/email, sleeping, etc.).
- Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior or communication with the instructor or peers.

Except in extreme circumstances that clearly violate the UF code of conduct, the instructor will warn any student of a potential participation penalty prior to implementing the penalty, in order to give the student the opportunity to correct their behavior and avoid a grade reduction.

Class-related notifications
Please log in to Canvas daily to check for class-related announcements. Please also check your email daily. You are responsible for course updates sent via Canvas or the university email system.

Grading

Below is a list of core assignments and how grading will be weighted (please note: assignments and grade weights are tentative and subject to change):

Assignment Summaries (Details Provided on Canvas)	Points / %
Reading Comprehension Assessments (5; in class) • During 5 <u>unannounced</u> class periods throughout the semester, students will be asked to write answers to open-ended comprehension questions regarding that week's assigned readings (assigned via Canvas), in order to demonstrate careful reading and comprehension. Each reading comprehension assessment is work 5 points.	25 pts / 25%
Survey Review Assignment (submitted via Canvas) • Students will write a formal review of an existing survey research publication, applying course concepts regarding survey design and construction. Detailed assignment expectations will be provided via Canvas.	10 pts / 10%
Factor Analysis Assignment (submitted via Canvas) • Students will perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on provided datasets and report their results in a short write-up.	10 pts / 10%
Milestones for Final Project (submitted via Canvas) • Throughout the course, students will complete a series of graded milestones related to their final project, such as literature review, measurement selection, and questionnaire design. Each milestone will be worth 5-10 points. <u>Further details and deadlines will be provided via Canvas.</u>	30 pts / 30%
Final Project: Proposal Paper (submitted via Canvas) • At the end of the course, students will submit a final paper, which pulls together and refines work completed throughout the course through milestone assignments and in-class collaboration. The final paper will be in the form of a polished survey study proposal, including literature review, hypotheses and/or research questions, methods (including full questionnaire programmed in Qualtrics), and analysis plan. (Note: Depending on the course size, students may be assigned to work in a group or groups to complete their final project. Recognizing that students from multiple social science disciplines are currently registered for this course, the instructor will work to facilitate research topic selection(s) relevant to cross-disciplinary interests.)	25 pts / 25%
TOTAL	100 pts / 100%

[Note: Grade penalties may be assessed for attendance and participation violations; please see sections above on class attendance and class participation/professionalism.]

Grading scale

A = 93 - 100%
A- = 90 - 92.99%
B+ = 87 - 89.99%
B = 83 - 86.99%
B- = 80 - 82.99%
C+ = 77 - 79.99%
C = 73 - 76.99%
C- = 70 - 72.99%
D+ = 67 - 69.99%
D = 63 - 66.99%
D- = 60 - 62.99%
E = below 60%

For more information, please see the university's policy on grades and grading.

Students with disabilities
Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Academic honesty
UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Read the Honor Code here. You are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask me.

Plagiarism

The Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code states that "A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.

- Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.

- Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.

- Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author."

In every assignment for this course, you must clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' web sites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source, without putting quotes around it and crediting the source.

Use of Generative AI
In this class I want you to produce all your own work. The only appropriate use of generative AI without citation in this course is for spelling and grammar check purposes. Any other use of generative AI's assistance must be clearly cited within your work. No direct quotes from generative AI may be used, and any summary or paraphrasing of ideas generated by AI must be clearly cited as such. It is important for me to be able to ascertain what you know and can produce unaided on your own. The use of generative AI for your assignments in this class that do not conform to the standards just detailed is a violation of the honor code, as you are presenting content as your own that was not fully created by you. There are various AI detection tools available (built within Canvas and externally such as ZeroGPT), and many AI platforms follow very formulaic response patterns. If I am concerned that your work is not your own, I will try to verify the originality of your work, and if evidence is found that your work is AI generated, I will submit your assignment as violating the honor code.

Course evaluation
Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.

Recording of class
Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person

injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: This schedule may change as the semester progresses to reflect the needs of the class. Last updated 8/17/2025. *****See Canvas weekly modules for required readings and additional assignments/details*****

Week 1 (Thurs., August 21)
- Intro to class, epistemological grounding of survey research, contexts for survey research

Week 2 (Thurs., August 28)
- Survey designs and modalities; choosing the right survey design for a research goal; types of data; topic selection for final projects

Week 3 (Thurs., September 4)
- Measurement theory, types of measurement validity
- Final Project Milestone 1 due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 4 (Thurs., September 11)
- Types of error in survey research; threats to validity

Week 5 (Thurs., September 18)
- Participant sampling, recruitment, and retention, part 1

Week 6 (Thurs., September 25)
- Participant sampling, recruitment, and retention, part 2
- Survey Review Assignment due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 7 (Thurs., October 2)
- Types of measures; choosing the right measure

Week 8 (Thurs., October 9)
- Item and scale development
- Assessing reliability and validity of scales, part 1
- (NOTE: you MUST have RStudio working on your computer before class on 10/9. See Canvas for details)
- Final Project Milestone 2 (paper prospectus) due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 9 (Thurs., October 16)
- Assessing reliability and validity of scales, part 2
- Survey construction: Format, order, randomization, coding, quotas (using Qualtrics)
- Final Project Milestone 3 (scale selection) due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 10 (Thurs., October 23)
- Survey construction: Advanced considerations
- Mixed methods designs in survey research
- Factor Analysis Assignment due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 11 (Thurs., October 30)
- Analysis and interpretation of cross-sectional survey data
- Analysis and interpretation of longitudinal survey data
- Final Project Milestone 4 (survey draft for peer review + peer reviews) (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 12 (Thurs., November 6)
- Flex week (topic TBA; reserved for catch up in event of a class cancellation; otherwise, time for instructor feedback on final projects)
- Final Project Milestone 5 (final survey) due (details and exact deadline on Canvas)

Week 13 (Thurs., November 13)
- Ethical issues in survey design and implementation

Week 14 (Thurs., November 20)
- (No regular class due to National Communication Association Annual Conference; except additional asynchronous activities)

Week 15 (Thurs., November 27th)
- NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK

NO FINAL EXAM; *Final Paper Due December 3rd at 5 p.m.**

READING MATERIALS

Required Textbook:

Lam, T. C. M., & Green, K. E. (2023). *Survey Development: A Theory-Driven Mixed-Method Approach*. Routledge. **(Available as a free eBook through the University of Florida Libraries.)**

(Please note: more readings—in the form of book chapters and peer-reviewed academic journal articles—will be assigned via Canvas throughout the semester; all readings will be provided to students by the instructor at no cost. This course requires no textbook purchases.)

ADDITIONAL UF RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road,
Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392- 4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.