SOCS2400: Applied Social Research
Semester 2, 2010
Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Emma Kirby
Room: Callaghan: W312, Ourimbah: HO.05
Ph: Callaghan: 4921 5094, Ourimbah: 4348 4053
Email: Emma.Kirby@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: By appointment

Semester: Semester 2 - 2010
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods:
Lecture
Workshop
Computer Lab

Brief Course Description
This course is a prescribed course for students enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Science and is also open to all students as an elective.

In this course students develop a comprehensive understanding of social science methods for the design of social inquiry, the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and the reporting of results. Students develop an understanding of the uses, strengths and limitations of various methods, ethical issues in conducting social inquiry, debates over epistemology, and skills in design, report writing, and interpretation of numerical and qualitative data. The computer workshops will include an introduction to appropriate software packages such as: Excel, and SPSS. The course does not require previous statistical knowledge.
Contact Hours
Computer Lab for 2 Hours per Week for 7 Weeks
Workshop for 2 Hours per Week for 6 Weeks
Lecture for 1 Hour per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Required text:


This is a set text used week by week – you will need to buy a copy from the Campus bookshop or the Ourimbah Coop bookshop or read the text in the short loans section of the library.

Course Objectives
On successful completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of a range of social science methods, related ethical issues, and the relationship between social science methods and social theory.
2. Critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of various social science methods and select appropriate methods to answer and resolve social science questions and problems.
3. Effectively communicate results in written and oral form.

Course Content
This course is a prescribed course for students enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Science and is also open to all students as an elective. It particularly provides grounding in social science methods as preparation for SOCS3200 Applied Social Research.

In this course students develop a comprehensive understanding of social science methods for the design of social inquiry, the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and the reporting of results. Topics will include consideration of the relationship between knowledge and social science methodology, the use and misuse of social science techniques, the use of evidence to substantiate conclusions, and the ethics of social inquiry. In relation to quantitative research, the course will develop competencies in the collection and processing of numerical data, visualisation and presentation techniques, questionnaire design and processing, descriptive and inferential statistics, using a range of computing packages which may include Excel and SPSS. In relation to qualitative research the course will develop competencies in semi-structured interviews, participant observation, ethnography and unobtrusive approaches. Through this students will develop an understanding of the strengths and limitations of various methods, ethical issues in conducting research, debates over epistemology and interpretation, skills in social inquiry design, report writing, and interpretation of numerical and qualitative data.

Assessment Items
| Essays / Written Assignments | 2500 words, 50%, due week 14 |
| Examination: Formal | 20% |
| Other: (please specify) | Workshop Exercises; 1 x 500 words 10%; 1 x 1500 words 20%; due throughout semester. |

Assumed Knowledge
40 units of study at 1000 level.
Callaghan Campus Timetable

SOCS2400

Applied Social Research

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 2 - 2010

Computer Lab
Thursday 15:00 - 17:00 [HC47] Wks 1 to 7 only
or Thursday 10:00 - 12:00 [HC47] Wks 1 to 7 only
or Friday 10:00 - 12:00 [HC47] Wks 1 to 7 only
or Friday 12:00 - 14:00 [HC49] Wks 1 to 7 only

and Lecture
Thursday 9:00 - 10:00 [EF02]

and Workshop
Thursday 10:00 - 12:00 [RW221] Wks 8 to 13 only
or Thursday 15:00 - 17:00 [HC19] Wks 8 to 13 only
or Friday 10:00 - 12:00 [W238] Wks 8 to 13 only
or Friday 12:00 - 14:00 [W218] Wks 8 to 13 only

Ourimbah Timetable

SOCS2400

Applied Social Research

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 2 - 2010

Computer Lab
Monday 16:00 - 18:00 [O_ITLAB5] Wks 2 to 7 only
or Monday 14:00 - 16:00 [O_ITLAB3] Wks 2 to 7 only

and Lecture
Monday 11:00 - 12:00 [O_CS218]

and Workshop
Monday 12:00 - 14:00 [O_CS103] Wks 1, 8 to 13 only
or Monday 14:00 - 16:00 [O_CN2102] Wks 1, 8 to 13 only

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

**Academic fraud** is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;

b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;

c) reusing one’s own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);

d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;

e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and

f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.

g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one’s own.
**Plagiarism** is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;

b) using another person’s ideas without due acknowledgment;

c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

**Turnitin** is an electronic text matching system. During assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or

- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking).

- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**RE-MARKS AND MODERATIONS**

Students can access the University’s policy at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html)

**MARKS AND GRADES RELEASED DURING TERM**

All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

*Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations* items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the University policy specified in [Late Penalty](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html) (under student) at the link above.

Requests for Extensions of Time must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:

- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

- whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment.

Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**Note:** different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

**Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:**

- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.

- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

*Late applications may not be accepted.* Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating
circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer.

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**

University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au. As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

**CHANGING YOUR ENROLMENT**

Students enrolled after the census dates listed in the link below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/fees/censusdates.html

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of term. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of term will result in a fail grade.

**Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term,** except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au

**STUDENT INFORMATION & CONTACTS**

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit:

www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Callaghan Campus</th>
<th>Port Macquarie Student Hub</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building</td>
<td>The University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre</td>
<td>A Block, Administration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Widderson Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Precinct</td>
<td>Port Macquarie NSW 2444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Hub &amp; Information Common, University House</td>
<td>Phone: 49215000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)</td>
<td>Singapore students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria</td>
<td>contact your PSB Program Executive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Singapore students contact your PSB Program Executive
OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Faculty Websites
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/

Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html

General enquiries
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Dean of Students Office
The Dean of Students and Deputy Dean of Students work to ensure that all students receive fair and equitable treatment at the University. In doing this they provide information and advice and help students resolve problems of an academic nature.
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/dean-of-students/
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: Dean-of-Students@newcastle.edu.au

University Complaints Managers Office
The University is committed to maintaining and enhancing fair, equitable and safe work practices and promoting positive relationships with its staff and students. There is a single system to deal with all types of complaints, ranging from minor administrative matters to more serious deeply held grievances concerning unfair, unjust or unreasonable behaviour.
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/complaints/
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: Complaints@newcastle.edu.au

Campus Care
The Campus Care program has been set up as a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour.
Phone: 02 4921 8600
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: campuscare@newcastle.edu.au

This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School

Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/regdates.html

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.
Important Additional Information

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site. Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments

Preferred Referencing Style

Wherever you use information from another author’s work, either a direct quotation or paraphrased information (rewritten in your own words) you must correctly reference the source of the information in a consistent format. In this course, it is recommended that you use the the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. For example: (Citizen 2003: 10). At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). All in-text references require page numbers, not just direct quotes.

Student Representatives

Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Expectations of students: Attendance and tutorial preparation

Tutorial preparation consists of completing the prescribed textbook reading and any associated discussion questions and tutorial exercises. As you read, it is advisable to make well-organised notes; they will improve your understanding and help you to complete your assessment items as well as make it easier to revise for the exam. Please bring your Course Outline and Textbook to the tutorial each week.

Students should complete all assessment items. A pass is achieved when the combined marks for all assessment items total 50% or more, meaning that you may be able to fail an assessment item and still pass the course.
Assessment Items, Due Dates and Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Items</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Computer Lab exercise 1: 500 words</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This task is to be completed during computer labs. Computer lab exercises will</td>
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<td>be explained by your tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Computer Lab exercise 2: 1500 words</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This task is to be completed during computer labs. Computer lab exercises will</td>
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<tr>
<td>be explained by your tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Qualitative research report (2500 words)</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due at the end of the semester, this assessment reports on the small scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>qualitative research project conducted by students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Exam (2 hour, closed book, short answer and short essay)</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designed to examine knowledge and understanding of the breadth of course</td>
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<td>material. Questions are based on lecture content and prescribed readings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students required to define key terms, and answer one of a choice of essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>questions.</td>
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Grading Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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Useful Reference Books for Assessment Items

Week 1: Research and Sociology: An Introduction

The first lecture provides an introduction to research in the discipline of sociology. The nature of the relationship between theory and research is explored, as is the degree to which a natural science approach is appropriate and applicable to studies of society. It is here that the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is first encountered. The lecture provides an introduction to these two different research strategies, and how they conceptualise people and society.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapters 1 & 2

Key concepts: Quantitative and qualitative research, epistemology, ontology, empiricism, deductive and inductive theory.

Tutorial Activity:
No tutorial

Quantitative Methods Tutorials – Computer Labs – Weeks 2-7

The tutorial program for weeks 2-7 are in the form of computer labs. Students are required to complete various tasks using SPSS. These tasks form the basis of the two Quantitative assessment items. Each week students must read the week’s prescribed ‘Tutorial Reading’ in preparation for Lab work. Students should also bring their Bryman textbook along to the computer labs, as this book provides excellent step by step guides for SPSS and is thus invaluable for labs such as these.

Your tutor will explain each assessment task – there are also worksheets, which provide detailed criteria of the assessments. These Assessment Worksheets can be found in the ‘Assessments’ section of Blackboard. It is a good idea for students to print these sheets and bring them to the Labs.

The Computer Labs are designed for students to complete Assessment 1 during class, and complete 90% of Assessment 2 during class – therefore attendance for these Labs is vital.

At the beginning of each Lab, your tutor will provide a brief ‘lesson’, teaching students how to complete the necessary tasks using SPSS.

Don’t panic, these Labs are designed for students who are not necessarily statistically minded, ‘statistics for people who hate statistics’. You will be taught all of the skills required to complete assessment tasks, and all of the information you need is located in lecture material, the Bryman text, and given by your tutor during the Labs.

Week 2: The Numbers Game: Understanding Quantitative Research

This lecture explores the nature of quantitative research, and aims to provide a context for the further applied quantitative methods. The theory that underpins quantitative inquiry is explored, as are the aims of a quantitative approach. Various methods of quantitative research are introduced, in preparation for Computer lab exercises.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapter 6

Key concepts: Quantitative methods, positivism, objectivism, concepts and indicators, validity and reliability.

Tutorial Activity: Computer Lab 1.
- Your tutor will highlight key features of the Course Outline, answer any questions, and outline the expectations of students.
- Tutorial class lists will be confirmed: students should ensure they have enrolled in a tutorial via the Online Registration System.
- Search and locate examples of empirical quantitative social research. Your tutor will explain and discuss examples from the Journal of Sociology.
- Introduction to SPSS software.
- Your tutor will explain assessment items and expectations for lab work. The criteria for Lab assessment items can be found in the ‘Assessments’ section of Blackboard – your tutor will talk through these tasks, and be available for questions and consultations throughout the Labs.

**Week 3: Crunching the Numbers: Getting familiar with SPSS**

Lecture three gives explanation and discussion of the basic operations of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). How and why SPSS is used to analyse quantitative data is explained, providing a context for Lab tasks. The basics of data analysis are also introduced to present a reference for Lab tasks.

**Tutorial Reading:** Bryman, Chapter 15

**Key concepts:** SPSS, variables, statistical operations, data input, data analysis.

**Tutorial Activity:** Computer Lab 2.
- Your tutor will explain the expectations for the first assessment item.
- Students will import data into SPSS, and begin to process this data – adding titles, labels etc.

**Week 4: Choosing a tool and acquiring a sample**

This lecture explores some of the practicalities involved with preparing to conduct quantitative research. First we look at the various research designs that can be used for quantitative data collection. Once the research design is chosen, a sampling strategy must be identified. The lecture outlines various sampling methods and discusses the rationale for using particular strategies. The purpose of the lecture is to highlight the importance of the planning phases in quantitative research, as well as showing the reasons why sampling strategies must be used.

**Tutorial Reading:** Bryman, Chapter 7.

**Key concepts:** Sampling strategies, generalising, research design, sample size, sampling error.

**Tutorial Activity:** Computer Lab 3
- Students continue to work on the first Lab assessment item.

**Week 5: More than conversation: The Interview as a Quantitative research instrument**

Previous lectures have outlined the reasons why quantitative methods are used in social research, the ways that these data can be processed and analysed using computer packages such as SPSS, and the planning and preparation involved with quantitative data collection. Now we begin to look at the different methods by which we can collect quantitative data. This lecture is concerned with the kind of interviewing that takes place in survey research, that is, structured interviewing. Examples of structured interviews are discussed, as are important issues such as the types of language used to structure a question. The lecture gives a comprehensive overview of structured interviewing techniques, followed by a critique of the use of the structured interview in social inquiry.
Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapter 8.

Key concepts: Quantitative interviewing, structured interviewing, interview techniques, open versus closed questions.

Tutorial Activity: Computer Lab 4
- Your tutor will introduce you to your second Lab assessment item.
- Your tutor will show you ‘how to’ complete various tasks using SPSS.
- By the conclusion of this tutorial students must submit their first assessment item. Your tutor will explain how this assessment item must be submitted through the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard.
- Students may begin to work on Lab assessment item 2: deciding on a survey topic, working on suitable survey questions, inputting these into a blank SPSS file.

Week 6: Questions, Questions, Questions: Research using a self-completion questionnaire.

This week we look at another method of quantitative data collection, the self-completion questionnaire, also known as the self-administered questionnaire. The advantages and disadvantages of using this method of data collection are examined, followed by a discussion of best practices for design and implementation of self-completion questionnaires.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapters 9 and 10

Key concepts: Self completion questionnaire, postal survey, electronic survey, response rate, design issues, diaries.

Tutorial Activity: Computer Lab 5
- Students continue to work on the second Lab assessment.
- By the conclusion of Lab 5 students should have made significant progress on their second assessment task. All data should now be input into your SPSS file, and you should be starting to think about how you will analyse this data, and which analytic tests you will choose. Remember, you need to include bivariate analysis.

Week 7: Putting it all together: Analysing and reporting data

This lecture provides further context for the data analysis tasks undertaken during computer labs. The different types of analysis are explored – analysis of single variables, followed by analysis of two, or more variables. The ways that these analyses can be depicted using tables and graphs are outlined, followed by a discussion of the best practices in regard to writing up quantitative research. An example of the structure used to report quantitative findings is offered, along with tips and hints for persuasive quantitative reporting.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapters 13 and 14

Key concepts: Univariate analysis, bivariate analysis, multivariate analysis, significance, error, correlation, writing up and presenting.

Tutorial Activity: Computer Lab 6
- Students continue to work on the second Lab assessment.
- Your tutor will show you ‘how to’ complete the statistical analysis required for your assessment item.
- Students should aim to complete the necessary tasks using SPSS by the end of this tutorial. NB – this is your last opportunity to work on SPSS during class, so use this time to ask any questions.
Qualitative Methods Tutorials: Week 8 onwards

From Week 8, computer Labs are replaced my classroom tutorials. The content of these tutorials is as below:

Tutorial Activity:
- **Group discussion of the week’s textbook reading.**
- **Journal Article discussion** – each student must bring one or more journal articles which report on qualitative research. Students must be prepared to discuss the methods used and the way that the authors relate the method to the theory and content of the paper. *You don’t need to print the entire article, just abstract and methods section, but make sure you have read the whole article.*

  When reading your journal article, consider the following questions:
  - What have the researchers done?
  - What are they trying to find out?
  - How have they described their methods?
  - How did they link their method to their research topic and theoretical framework?

  – See ‘Template for collecting Journal Articles for discussion’, at the back of course outline (page 16).

- **Skill development:** Students will practice skills required for qualitative research, and discuss progress of qualitative projects.

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**Week 8: Hanging out, talking to people, reading the papers: Characteristics of Qualitative research**

Having discussed the practice of quantitative methods at length, we now move on to explore the use of qualitative methods in social research. The lecture begins by outlining the differences in epistemology and ontology of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The lecture then focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative methodologies. An overview of ethical considerations when conducting qualitative research is given, followed by an explanation of the Qualitative assessment item – a small sample qualitative research project.

**Tutorial Reading:** Bryman, Chapters 16 and 5

**Key concepts:** Qualitative methods, mixed methods, epistemology, ontology, ethics.

**Tutorial Activity:**
- **Group discussion of the week’s textbook readings.** Look at the questions on Pages 135, 398 and 399 and make some notes about what you have read so that we can summarise the answers.
- **Journal Article discussion.** Bring an example of qualitative research, and be prepared to discuss.

- **Skill development:** *Brainstorming research topics in small groups.*
  - What topic would you like to research using a qualitative method?
  - Is it feasible within time and ethical constraints?
  - How would you phrase your research question?
  - How does your question relate to a wider framework? – essential concepts, underlying assumptions, theoretical ideas.

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**Week 9: Qualitative Research: Interviews and Focus Groups**

This lecture builds on knowledge about epistemology and ontology, reinforcing the importance of the link between theory and research. The focus then shifts to two examples of qualitative data collection, interviews and focus groups. The practical issues involved with conducting interviews and focus groups are explored, providing students with a awareness of the processes of qualitative data collection.
Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapters 18 and 19

Key concepts: Qualitative interviewing, semi-structured interviewing, informal interviewing, focus groups, epistemology, ontology.

Tutorial Activity:
- Group discussion of the week’s textbook readings. Look at the questions on Pages 470, 471 and 491, and make some notes about what you have read so that we can summarise the answers.
- Journal Article discussion. Bring an example of qualitative research, and be prepared to discuss. Look for interview studies.  
  - Hint: Look for examples of qualitative research articles that relate to your research topic – you can use these in the literature review of your Qualitative Assessment Item.
- Skill development: Brainstorming research topics in small groups.
  - What issues do you need to include in your interview guide?
  - What kinds of questions will you ask?
  - You may also want to consider the wider issue: How does your topic relate to a wider framework? – Essential concepts, underlying assumptions, theoretical ideas.
  - We will pilot interview guides by practice interviewing students from other groups.

***Recess: Monday 27 September to Friday 8 October***

Week 10: More rigorous than you imagine: Qualitative data analysis.

This lecture provides a ‘how to’ guide for the analysis of qualitative data. The various types of analysis are discussed, and the importance of a rigorous approach to the analysis of language is reinforced. The best practices for transcribing, coding, and analysing qualitative data are discussed. The lecture concludes with a discussion of the aims of qualitative analysis – what are we looking for?

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapters 20, 21, 22

Key concepts: Content analysis, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, analytic induction, grounded theory, coding.

Tutorial Activity:
- Group discussion of the week’s textbook readings.
- Journal Article discussion. Bring an example of qualitative research, and be prepared to discuss.
- Skill development: Brainstorming research topics in small groups.
  - Report on progress with interview schedule, interviews and transcriptions.
  - Have you found any literature relating to your topic? Has this given you any concepts, underlying assumptions, theoretical ideas which may be useful in your analysis?
  - We will practice coding transcripts on some samples provided by the lecturer, or students who have partially transcribed their interview.
Week 11: Ethnography and Combined methods

While students are busy collecting and analysing qualitative data from small scale projects, we take some time to consider larger scale qualitative research. Analysis of qualitative studies in the real world is discussed, using examples of ‘pure’, ‘applied’ and ‘action’ research. Then, the qualitative process of ethnography is examined.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapter 17

Key concepts: Large scale qualitative research, ethnography, participant observation, applied research, action research.

Tutorial Activity:
- Group discussion of the week’s textbook reading.
- Journal Article discussion. Bring an example of Ethnographic research, and be prepared to discuss. (Studies using participant observation would be very useful).
- Qualitative Research Projects: In small groups.
  - Report on progress of project.
  - Review ‘Guidelines for writing up research’ (in Blackboard, under Assessment Items).
  - Discuss how your research could be scaled up for academic or applied purposes and how you would apply for funding.

Week 12: Writing up Social Research

This lecture begins by comparing the style of writing used for quantitative and qualitative reporting. Then, the best practices for writing up qualitative research are discussed, linking with theory, and epistemological and ontological positions. A detailed ‘how to’ guide for writing up your qualitative report is offered. Finally, some tips and hints for the formal examination are discussed in the lecture.

Tutorial Reading: Bryman, Chapter 27

Key concepts: Qualitative reporting, key themes, discussion, empiricist repertoire, postmodernism.

Tutorial Activity:
- Group discussion of the week’s textbook reading. (This should help you in writing your major assignment.
- Journal Article discussion.

Week 13: Revision Lecture

This lecture revisits key themes and concepts from the semester, to aid students with revision for the examination.

Tutorial Activity:
- Q & A: Problem solving session about final reports.
- Your tutor will be available during tutorial time to answer any questions about the qualitative reports, or the examination.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week Commencing</th>
<th>SOCS 2400 2010 Lecture Topic &amp; Assessment at a Glance</th>
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<td>26th July</td>
<td>Introduction: Research and sociology: quantitative and qualitative methods</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2nd August</td>
<td>The Numbers Game: Understanding Quantitative Research Computer workshop exercises and their due dates will be explained at this lecture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9th August</td>
<td>The numbers game: getting familiar with SPSS</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>16th August</td>
<td>Choosing a tool and acquiring a sample</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>23rd August</td>
<td>More than conversation: The Interview as a Quantitative research instrument</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>30th August</td>
<td>Questions, Questions, Questions: Research using a self-completion questionnaire.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>6th September</td>
<td>Putting it all together: Analysing and reporting data</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>13th September</td>
<td>Hanging out, talking to people, reading the papers: Characteristics of Qualitative research</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>20th September</td>
<td>Qualitative Research: Interviews and Focus Groups</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>More rigorous than you imagine: Qualitative data analysis.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>18th October</td>
<td>Ethnography and Combined methods</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>25th October</td>
<td>Writing up Social Research</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>Revision lecture</td>
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<td><strong>Qualitative research assignment due 5pm Monday 8th November</strong></td>
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**Examination period:** Monday 8 November to Friday 26 November  
*Formal examination to be scheduled for during this period*
**Template for collecting Journal Articles for tutorial discussion.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Design/ Research questions</th>
<th>Argument, Key concepts, Theories</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Provide the full bibliographic details of the journal article</td>
<td>Describe the nature of the study (methods, sample)</td>
<td>Describe how the findings were interpreted: key concepts, theories, author’s argument – <strong>How did the theory fit with the method?</strong></td>
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**Broom, Alex 2005**
The eMale: prostate cancer, masculinity and online support as a challenge to medical expertise.
Journal of Sociology 41:87

Qualitative interviews with 33 Australian men and 18 prostate cancer specialists. Interviewed users and non-users of internet support groups. Recruited using existing support groups? exceptional or different patients. 37% response rate for patients 1-2 hour interviews at home. Doctors in their rooms.

Argues that men have different ways of relating to internet communities depending on their concepts of masculinity. They allowed some men to find social support without admitting their illness. Others distrusted the internet and thought it was more masculine to face up to your illness.

Finds that Doctors are paternalistic and resist patients getting involved. They find the internet a challenge – they depict it as feminizing male patients who used to be rational and do what the doctor said.

Depends on aConnell’s theory of dominant masculinity as culturally constructed and how this affects health behaviour

Methodology very well described. Limitations in response rate became part of the argument about not stigmatizing ‘difficult’ patients – is this fair?

Based on grounded theory – theory emerges from the data.

Data analysis based on Charmaz’s Grounded theory questions

What is the basis for the experience, action, belief, relationship or structure?

What do these assume about subjects and relationships?

Of what larger processes is this a part?

What are the implications?

Interesting approach to analysis – worth looking up?

Well described with good quotations