COURSE DESCRIPTION: This workshop distills research about survey questions to principles that can be applied to write survey questions that are clear and obtain reliable answers. The workshop provides students with tools to use in diagnosing problems in survey questions and in writing their own survey questions. Sessions combine lecture with group exercises and discussion. The lecture provides guidelines for writing and revising survey questions and illustrates how to revise troubled questions. Assignments require that students analyze problematic questions, revise them, and administer them to fellow students. Sessions consider both questions about events and behaviors and questions about subjective phenomena (such as attitudes, evaluations, and internal states).

Note: This course pairs well with Question Testing Methods, taught by Pam Campanelli in the afternoon during the same week.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments include completing readings and participating in exercises during class sessions and may also include completing exercises, such as revising questions and testing them, between classes, that is, overnight. Students taking the course for credit will complete an additional formal assignment that will be due after the course is completed.

Required Readings
There is a required coursepack that includes copies of overheads. The coursepack can be purchased from the copy shop at the Institute for Social Research by at least the first day of class. I will bring materials for the first day.

Readings are available online either in Canvas or by web link.

Key Classic and Current Sources for Later Exploration


Course Outline
NOTE: Priority readings are marked with *. I know that you don’t have time for everything in a week – but try to read these articles!

Monday

Lecture: Background
Readings: Overview


Tuesday  
Lecture:  Background, continued.  Begin General Guidelines.  
Readings:  Questions about Behaviors and Events  


Wednesday  
Readings:  Questions about Behaviors and Events  

Thursday  
Lecture:  Events and Behaviors.  
Readings:  Questions about Subjective Things.  


Friday  
Lecture:  Subjective Things.  Presentation of Self-Administered Questions. 
Readings:  Questions about Behaviors and Events, Question Testing  


