Data Collection Methods
Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques
June/July 2016

Course Numbers and Class Time
University of Michigan: SURVMETH 623
University of Maryland: SURV 623
Monday and Wednesday, 3:00 – 5:30 PM (UMi: G300 Perry; UMd: 1208 LeFrak Hall)

Instructors
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GSI & Grader
TBD

Overview and Goals of Course
This course will present research conducted to increase our understanding of how data collection decisions affect survey errors. This is not a “how-to-do-it” course on data collection, but instead reviews the literature on survey design decisions and data quality in order to sensitize students to how alternative survey designs might impact the data obtained from those surveys.

This course reviews a range of survey data collection methods that are both interview-based (face-to-face and telephone) and self-administered (paper questionnaires that are mailed and those that are implemented online, i.e. as web surveys). Mixed mode designs are also covered as well as several hybrid modes for collecting sensitive information e.g., self-administering the sensitive questions in what is otherwise a face-to-face interview. The course also covers newer methods such as mobile web and SMS (text message) interviews, and examines alternative data sources such as social media. It concentrates on the impact these techniques have on the quality of survey data, including error from measurement, nonresponse, and coverage, and assesses the tradeoffs between these error sources when researchers choose a mode or survey design.

Office Hours and Access to Instructors
This course will be taught using compressed video technology, allowing two-way interaction between College Park and Ann Arbor. The instructors are based in Ann Arbor, but may travel to
College Park for some classes. Office hours are available by appointment; students are encouraged to communicate by e-mail and telephone as needed.

**Online Class Participation**
For students who are not able to attend particular classes on the College Park or Ann Arbor campuses, it is possible to participate live by online video through BlueJeans. If you plan to attend a class via BlueJeans, be sure to notify the instructor ahead of time. To join the class online, go to [https://bluejeans.com/518753485](https://bluejeans.com/518753485) and log in with a webcam.

**Readings**
Required and recommended readings for each lecture are listed below. All readings will be available online for downloading by students on the class website at [https://ctools.umich.edu/gateway/](https://ctools.umich.edu/gateway/).

**Evaluation**
Grading will be based on:
- Participation in class discussion and/or submission of questions via e-mail demonstrating understanding of the required readings (10% of grade).
- Four short exercises (3-5 pages each) reviewing specific aspects of the material covered (60% of grade). Exercise 2 will be worth twice as much as the remaining exercises in the assignment total.
- A final exam (30% of grade)

Dates of when exercises will be handed out and when they are due are indicated in the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangement with the instructors. Assignments should be submitted as a MS Word document on the course website on the due date before class starts.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
**University of Michigan**
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; [http://ssd.umich.edu](http://ssd.umich.edu)) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

**University of Maryland**
In order to receive services you must contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) office to register in person for services. Please call the office to set up an appointment to register with a DSS counselor. Contact the DSS office at 301.314.7682; [http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/).
Academic conduct
Clear definitions of the forms of academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, as well as information about disciplinary sanctions for academic misconduct may be found at the Rackham web site for the University of Michigan
http://www.rackham.umich.edu/policies/academic_and_professional_integrity/statement_on_academic_integrity
and the University of Maryland Graduate School web site
http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/policies/misconduct.html

Knowledge of these rules is the responsibility of the student and ignorance of them does not excuse misconduct. The student is expected to be familiar with these guidelines before submitting any written work or taking any exams in this course. Lack of familiarity with these rules in no way constitutes an excuse for acts of misconduct. Charges of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will be dealt with very seriously and may result in oral or written reprimands, a lower or failing grade on the assignment, a lower or failing grade for the course, suspension, and/or, in some cases, expulsion from the university.

Course Outline and Readings

June 6: Overview of course; Introduction to errors in surveys; Methods of data collection (Conrad)

Readings:


Module A: Modes of Survey Data Collection

June 8: Classic modes of data collection: Phone, Face-to-Face, Mail (Keusch)

Readings:


Recommended:


**June 13: Web and mobile Web (Keusch)**

- Assignment 1 handed out (due on June 22 before start of class)

Readings:


Recommended:


**June 15: Web and mobile Web (continued) (Keusch)**

Readings:


Recommended:

**June 20:** Mixed mode studies; Mode comparison (Keusch)

- Assignment 1 due
- Assignment 2 handed out (due on June 27 before start of class)

Readings:


Recommended:


**Module B: Interviewers**

**June 22:** The role of the interviewer in survey data collection; Respondent selection (Conrad)

Readings:


**June 27:** Interviewing technique; Interviewer training and evaluation (Conrad)

- Assignment 2 due
- Assignment 3 handed out (due July 6 before start of class)
Readings:


Recommended:


**June 29: Interviewer effects (Conrad)**

Readings:


Recommended:


**July 4: No class (Independence Day)**

**Module B: Nonresponse error**

**July 6: Nonresponse error; Response rates (Keusch)**

- Assignment 3 due

Readings:

Recommended:


July 11: Nonresponse error; Nonresponse reduction (Keusch)

- Assignment 4 handed out (due July 18 before start of class)

Readings:


Recommended:


Module D: Variations on a theme

July 13: New modes and new data (Conrad)

Readings:

Recommended:


**July 18: Longitudinal surveys; Establishment surveys (Keusch)**

- Assignment 4 due

Readings:


Recommended:


**July 20: Biomarker data collection (Guest lecturer: Colter Mitchell)**

Readings:

Recommended:

**July 25: Review session**
July 27: Final Exam due