E10.2139 -- Survey Research Methods

The survey is the leading mechanism for collecting information on a wide array of topics in our data-driven world. This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamental aspects of the survey and ways for evaluating this form of data collection. Principal topics include: survey design; coverage, sampling, and non-response; modes of data collection; questionnaire construction and evaluation. Throughout this course, students will be given opportunities to engage in actual survey research activities.

Instructors: Professors Sharon L. Weinberg, Fang Lai and Marc Scott
Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 3:30 to 6:00pm
Location: TBD
Prerequisite: One year of statistics (e.g., E10.2001/E10.2002) is strongly recommended
Assessments: Graded Weekly Homework (20%)
Two Take-Home Projects, one at midterm and one at end-of-term (80%)

Syllabus:

January 17 Introduction; History of Survey Research; Examples of Current Surveys
GFCLST – Preface and Chapter 1

January 24 Sources of Error that Impact Survey Quality
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 2

January 31 Achieving Target Population Coverage
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 3

February 7 Modes of Data Collection: An Overview
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 5

February 14 The Self-Administered Questionnaire: Soliciting Facts and Attitudes
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 7

February 21 Evaluating the Quality of Survey Questions
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 8

February 28 The Interview: Standardizing Interview Questions and Behavior
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 9

March 6 Methods of Sampling I: Approaches for Achieving Representativeness
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 4

March 13 No class (Spring Break)

March 20 Methods of Sampling II: Multistage Sampling
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 4

March 27 Non-response at the Unit Level: Improving Response Rates
Readings: GFCLST – pp. 169 to 187 in Chapter 6

April 4 Non-response at the Item Level: Handling Missing Data
Readings: GFCLST – pp. 187 to 196 in Chapter 6

April 11 Post-Collection Data Processing Continued: Coding, Editing, Applying Weights;
Secondary Analysis of Complex Surveys
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 10

April 18  Respecting Respondents’ Rights; Miscellaneous Topics
Readings: GFCLST – Chapter 11

April 25  Putting It All Together: Critiquing a Survey from a Total Survey Error Perspective
OR
Putting It All Together: Using Surveys in Practice – Perspectives from NYU’s Director of Institutional Research

May 9  Final Project Due