Survey Research Methods, E10.2139

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Spring 2009, M: 4:55-7:35

1 Contact Information

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2 Prerequisites

At least one year of applied statistics (including multiple linear regression) and familiarity with the use of one or more standard statistical software packages (e.g. R, Stata, SAS, SPSS) is strongly recommended.

3 Overview

The social survey is an essential tool for researchers in the social, behavioral and policy sciences and in the applied professional fields, such as education, social work, public health, and marketing. The goal of this course is to provide a broad overview of the many aspects of survey research methodology including sampling, instrument design, the psychology of survey response, field testing, survey operations, nonresponse bias analysis and correction, and primary and secondary analysis of survey data. No prior experience in survey methods is expected and the course is designed primarily for those who intend to use surveys in their own research–whether designing original surveys or performing secondary analysis on survey data collected by others. Whenever possible, we will use examples and data from real surveys employed by academic researchers, professional survey firms, and Federal statistical agencies. Course assignments will require students to actively participate in every stage of the survey process, from initial design to final analysis.

4 Course Text

The only required text for this course is:

Groves, Fowler, Couper, Lepkowski, Singer, and Tourangeau. 2004. *Survey Methodology.* Wiley Series in Survey Methodology.

Additional materials will be available online at JSTOR, other databases on BOBCAT, or other websites as specified.

5 Course Requirements

- Problem Sets (approximately weekly) 30%
- Midterm project (take-home) 30%
- Final project (take-home) 40%

Problem sets will consist of about 2-5 short exercises drawn from either the book's problems (including computer exercises) or other sources and will be assigned at most meetings of the class. They are due no later than the next meeting of the class, and they will be discussed at this time, so they may not be handed in late unless prior arrangements have been made with me. *Each student will be expected to turn in their own work*, which will be graded and returned. Students are welcome to submit problem sets electronically to my email addresses above if they are unable to attend a given class meeting.

The midterm and final projects will be of longer length and will require the synthesis of several course topics.

6 Accommodations

NYU is committed to facilitating equal access for students with disabilities, including hearing and visual impairments, mobility impairments, learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders, chronic illnesses, and psychological impairments. If you are not comfortable discussing your special needs with me, I encourage you to contact the Moses Center on 240 Greene Street, 2nd Floor, 212-998-4980, for assistance in ensuring that you receive any necessary accommodations.

7 Schedule

1. Introduction and overview. Readings: Ch. 1 and the material at http://www.whatisasurvey.info/
2. The lifecycle of a survey and sources of error. Ch. 2.
3. Introduction to sampling: populations, sampling frames, and coverage error. Ch. 3.

4. Sample design and sampling error. Ch. 4.

5. Sampling continued.
   Jowell, R., et. al. 1993. "The 1992 British Election: The Failure of the Polls." Public Opinion Quarterly, 57(2). (Bobcat)

6. Methods of data collection. Ch. 5.

   Cui, W. W. 2003. Reducing error in mail surveys. Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation 8 (18) online at http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=8&n=18

7. Methods of data collection continued.

   Couper, M.P. 2000. Web surveys: A review of issues and approaches. Public Opinion Quarterly 64(4). (Bobcat)

   Porter, S. R. and Whitcomb, M. E. 2007. Mixed-mode contacts in web surveys: paper is not necessarily better. Public Opinion Quarterly 71(4). (Bobcat).

   Fricker, S., Galesci, M., Tourangeau, R., and Yan, T. 2005. An experimental comparison of web and telephone surveys. Public Opinion Quarterly 69(3). (Bobcat)

   Ehlen, J. and Ehlen, P. 2007. Cellular-only substitution in the United States as a lifestyle adoption: implications for telephone survey coverage. Public Opinion Quarterly 71(5). (Bobcat)

8. Questions and answers in surveys. Ch. 7. MIDTERM PROJECT DUE

   Zaller, J. and Feldman, S. 1992. A simple theory of the survey response. American Journal of Political Science 36: 579-616. (JSTOR).

   Tourangeau, R. and Rasinski, K. A. 1988. Cognitive processes underlying context effects in attitude measurement. Psychological Bulletin, 103, 299-314. (Bobcat or online at http://www.business.uiuc.edu/klee6/BA431/Tourangeau.pdf)

9. Evaluating survey questions. Ch. 8.

   Oksenberg, L., Cannell, C., and Kalton, G. 1991. New strategies for pretesting survey questions. Journal of Official Statistics 7(3). Online at
   http://www.jos.nu/Articles/abstract.asp?article=73349

10. Survey interviewing. Ch. 9.

Anderson, B. A., Silver, B. D., and Abramson, P. R. 1988. The effects of the race of interviewer on race-related attitudes of black respondents in SRC/CPS National Election Studies. Public Opinion Quarterly, 52(3). (Bobcat)

11. Survey nonresponse. Ch. 6.

    Groves, R. et al. 2006. Experiments in producing nonresponse bias. Public Opinion Quarterly. 70(5) Special issue. (Bobcat)

12. Postcollection survey processing; imputing missing data. Ch. 10.

    Wallman, K. 2003. Privacy and confidentiality–a new era (the 11th Morris Hansen lecture). Journal of Official Statistics 19(4). Online at
    http://www.jos.nu/Articles/abstract.asp?article=194315

13. Postcollection analysis continued.

14. Survey ethics. Ch. 11
    and AAPOR statement at http://www.aapor.org/ethics/intro.html.

15. Advanced topics: getting answers to hard questions; comparing cross-cultural survey response.

    Warner, S. L. 1975. Randomized response: a survey technique for eliminating evasive answer bias. Journal of the American Statistical Association 60. (JSTOR)

    Abernathy, J. R., Greenberg, B. G., and Horvitz, D. G. 1970. Estimates of induced abortion in urban North Carolina. Demography 7. (JSTOR)

    King, G., Murray, C. J. L., Salomon, J. A., and Tandon, A. 2003. Enhancing the validity and cross-cultural comparability of measurement in survey research," American Political Science Review 97(4). (JSTOR or http://gking.harvard.edu/files/vign.pdf)

    Rossi, P, Allenby, G., and Gilula, Z. 2001. Overcoming scale usage heterogeneity: a bayesian hierarchical approach. Journal of the American Statistical Association 96. (JSTOR or http://faculty.chicagogsb.edu/peter.rossi/vita/)

16. FINAL PROJECT DUE