



Political Survey Design

Instructor

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Course Outline

Questionnaires are among the most common data collection methods that political researchers and other social scientists employ. This course introduces the principles of survey design and standard practices in the field. Practically oriented to initiate students to the design, administration, and analysis of surveys, it will cover the main aspects of survey methodology: key concepts and techniques; how design decisions affect empirical results; sampling and response maximization; questionnaire design gauging the impact of question wording; modes of data collection; and the basics of political survey data analysis. The course emphasizes learning and applying general insights as students work with concrete examples.

While this is a stand-alone course, it is designed to complement at least 2 additional QPA courses:

- Longitudinal Data Analysis (Panel and Time Series data).
- Research Design and Causal Inference in Political Science.

Learning outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will have the knowledge and skills to:

- Understand and apply the foundations of survey research.
- Assess different survey methods and ways to administer a survey.
- Describe different types of close-ended questions.
- Develop the project plan including questionnaire, pilot, fieldwork, and analysis.
- Design and develop the survey instrument.

Course Structure

Students are expected to spend approximately 24 hours on this course. The course will be spread over 3 periods:

1. Pre intensive week (6 hours of content and study)

2. Intensive week (12 hours of face-to-face and flipped learning)
3. Post intensive week (6 hours of study and assessment)

Indicative Assessment and Schedule

- **Assignment 1:** Students will complete individual online assignments during the intensive week (50% of the final mark)
- **Assignment 2:** Students can choose between 2 possible assignments (50% of the final mark). *Due date: One week after completion of the course*
 - 1) Design and develop a short project plan (2-3 pages).
 - 2) Write a report on a published study explaining its methodology and assessing the complementary materials (e.g. questionnaire, sampling, administration, challenges) (2-3 pages)

Course Content

Day	Lecture	Topics
1	Introduction	Survey methods, sampling, bias
2	Survey Design	<i>How to plan a survey</i>
3	Questionnaire Design	Close-ended questions, item response
4	Data Collection	Pilot, administration, recruitment, fieldwork, incentives
5	Data Analysis / Q&A	Data cleaning, storage, analysis

Readings and Online Content

Readings

1. Brady, Henry E. "Contributions of survey research to political science." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 33, no. 1 (2000): 47-58
2. Jann, Ben, and Thomas Hinz. "Research question and design for survey research." *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology* (2016)
3. Smyth, Jolene D. "Designing Questions and questionnaires." *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology* (2016)
4. Revilla, Melanie, Diana Zavala-Rojas, and Willem E. Saris. "Creating a good question: How to use cumulative experience." *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology* (2016)
5. Kalton, Graham. "Sampling frames." *Introduction to Survey Sampling*. No. 35. Sage Publications, (2020).
6. Thiessen, Victor, and Jörg Blasius. "Another look at survey data quality." *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology* (2016)

Online Resources

1. <https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-survey-implementation/>
2. <https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-survey-design/>
3. <https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-pilot-studies/>

4. Australian Election Study, *The 2022 Australian Federal Election*:
<https://australianelectionstudy.org/wp-content/uploads/The-2022-Australian-Federal-Election-Results-from-the-Australian-Election-Study.pdf>
5. American National Election Studies: https://isr-anesweb.isr.umich.edu/ANES_Data_Tools/Beta/anes-the-guide-index.html