

Political Science 7702: Questionnaire Design

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Fall, 2016
Thursday s, 12 – 2:45
2078 Derby Hall

This course will present psychological theories of the survey response process and their implications for questionnaire construction. The course is part of the Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Survey Research.

Requirements and Grading

1. Reading required assignments prior to the class sessions at which they are discussed and participating in those discussions (10%)
2. In-class presentation and critique of a published survey (10%).
3. Mid-term examination (30%)
4. Final project, consisting of a verbal and written report of an original survey of the student's own design (50%). Written report is due by **11:50 PM, Monday, Dec. 12**. Oral report is presented to the class on our last meeting. This project includes timely completion of weekly assignments.

Readings

Two books are required for purchase: *The Psychology of Survey Response*, by Roger Tourangeau, Lance J. Rips, and Kenneth Rasinski (Cambridge University Press, 2000); and *Asking Questions: The Definitive Guide to Questionnaire Design...* by Norman Bradburn, Seymour Sudman, and Brian Wansink (2004 Revised edition, Jossey-Bass). Additional readings are available from the course website.

Course web site

The course web site may be accessed through the Carmen system. I will post a lot of useful information and resources on the course web site, including the syllabus, links to readings, assignments, lecture outlines, and more. Please use the web site to upload your papers, exams, and weekly assignments.

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#)”

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience

academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Week 1 August 25	Introduction
Week 2 September 1	Theories of the Response Process
Readings	<i>Psychology of the Survey Response</i> (PSR), chapters 1, 2. Asking Questions.... (AQ), chapter 1
Assignment	(1) Turn in a 1-paragraph description of your research area and your interest in survey research; (2) Sign up for a discussion/critique week
Week 3 September 8	Measurement Theory
Readings	DeVellis, Robert F. 2016. <i>Scale Development: Theory and Applications</i> . Chapter 3 (Reliability), Chapter 4 (Validity)

Week 4 September 15	Memory
Readings	<p>PSR, chapters 3, 4. AQ, chapter 2</p> <p>Lilienfeld, Scott O. 2010. <i>50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology: Shattering Widespread Misconceptions about Human Behavior</i>. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. Pgs. 65-82, "Myths about Memory." Available on course website.</p> <p>Koriat, Asher, Morris Goldsmith, and Ainat Pansky. 2000. "Toward a Psychology of Memory Accuracy." <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> 51 : 481-537.</p> <p>Ross, Michael, and Roger Buehler. 1994. "Creative Remembering." In <i>The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative.</i>, ed. Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush. Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, US, 205-235. Available on course website.</p>
Assignment	Meet with your research team to discuss common interests
Week 5 September 22	Objective Questions
Readings	<p>PSR, chapter 5. AQ, chapters 5, 6</p> <p>Menon, Geeta, and Eric A. Yorkston. 2000. "The use of Memory and Contextual Cues in the Formation of Behavioral Frequency Judgments." In <i>The Science of Self-Report: Implications for Research and Practice</i>, ed. Arthur A. Stone. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. Available at OSU library website: http://library.ohio-state.edu.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/record=b5363836</p> <p>Fricker, S., M. Galesic, R. Tourangeau, and T. Yan. 2005. "An Experimental Comparison of Web and Telephone Surveys." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 69 (3): 370-92.</p>
Week 6 September 29	Attitude Theory
Readings	Oskamp, Stuart, and P. Wesley Schultz. 2005. <i>Attitudes and Opinions</i> . Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates. Excerpt available on course website.
Assignment	Turn in at least one formal research hypothesis and two additional hypotheses or research questions.
Week 7 October 6	Opinion Questions
Readings	<p>PSR, chapter 6 AQ, chapter 4</p>

	<p>Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions Versus Revealing Preferences." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 36 (3): 579.</p> <p>Klein, Markus, Hermann Dulmer, Dieter Ohr, Markus Quandt, and Ulrich Rosar. 2004. "Response Sets in the Measurement of Values: A Comparison of Rating and Ranking Procedures." <i>International Journal of Public Opinion Research</i> 16 (4): 474-83.</p>
Week 8 October 13	Fall Break, no class
Week 9 October 20	Non-Attitudes
Readings	<p>Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In <i>Ideology and Discontent</i>, ed. David E. Apter. New York: Free Press, 206-261. Available on course website.</p> <p>Schuman, Howard, and Stanley Presser. 1981. <i>Questions and Answers in Attitude Surveys : Experiments on Question Form, Wording, and Context</i>. New York: Academic Press. Sections available on course website.</p> <p>Bishop, George F. 2005. <i>The Illusion of Public Opinion : Fact and Artifact in American Public Opinion Polls</i>. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Excerpts available on course website.</p>
Assignment	Take-home midterm examination distributed, due Oct. 27.
Week 10 October 27	Question types
Readings	<p>AQ, chapters 10, 11</p> <p>Cook, Timothy E., and Paul Gronke. 2005. "The Skeptical American: Revisiting the Meanings of Trust in Government and Confidence in Institutions." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 67 (3): 784-803.</p> <p>Langer, Gary. 2002. "Trust in Government...to do what?" <i>Public Perspective</i> (July/August): 7-10.</p> <p>Zaval, Lisa, Elizabeth A. Keenan, Erick J. Johnson, Elke U. Weber. 2104. "How Warm Days Increase Belief in Global Warming." <i>Nature: Climate Change</i>, 4, 143-147.</p>
Assignment	Upload midterm
Week 11 November 3	Context Effects
Readings	<p>PSR, chapter 7</p> <p>AQ, chapter 9</p> <p>Tourangeau, R., M. P. Couper, and D. M. Steiger. 2003. "Humanizing Self-Administered Surveys: Experiments on Social Presence in Web and</p>

	<p>IVR Surveys." <i>Computers in Human Behavior</i> 19 (1): 1-24.</p> <p>Tourangeau, Roger, Eleanor Singer, and Stanley Presser. 2003. "Context Effects in Attitude Surveys: Effects on Remote Items and Impact on Predictive Validity." <i>Sociological Methods & Research</i> 31 (4): 486-513.</p> <p>Bischooping, Katherine, and Howard Schuman. 1992. "Pens and Polls in Nicaragua: An Analysis of the 1990 Preelection Surveys." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 36 (2): 331.</p> <p>Anderson, Leslie. 1994. "Neutrality and Bias in the 1990 Nicaraguan Preelection Polls: A Comment on Bischooping and Schuman." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 38 (2): 486-95.</p> <p>Bischooping, K., and H. Schuman. 1994. "Pens, Polls, and Theories: The 1990 Nicaraguan Election Revisited: A Reply to Anderson." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 38 (2): 495-9.</p> <p>Booth, J. A. 1994. "Assessing Candidate Preference Polling and Other Survey Research in Nicaragua, 1989-90: Comments on Anderson, and Bischooping and Schuman." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 38 (2): 500-13.</p>
Assignment	Turn in draft questionnaire
Week 12 November 10	Elite Interviewing Guest Speaker: Richard Gunther
Readings	TBA
Week 13 November 17	Sensitive Questions
Readings	<p>Krysan, Maria. 1998. "Privacy and the Expression of White Racial Attitudes: A Comparison Across Three Contexts." <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 62 (4): 506.</p> <p>Berinsky, Adam J. 2004. "Can we Talk? Self-Presentation and the Survey Response." <i>Political Psychology</i> 25 (4): 643-59.</p> <p>Corkrey, R., and L. Parkinson. 2002. "A Comparison of Four Computer-Based Telephone Interviewing Methods: Getting Answers to Sensitive Questions." <i>Behavior Research Methods Instruments & Computers</i> 34 (3): 354-63.</p>
Assignment	Edit questionnaire; begin data collection
Week 14 November 24	Thanksgiving Break, no class
Week 15 December 1	Presentations

More on Requirements

Mid-term examination

A take-home midterm examination will be available on the course web site. It will consist of a few questions covering material in the first half of class.

In-class critique of published survey

Part of your discussion grade will be based on an in-class presentation and critique of a published survey. You will find a recently published poll, either from a news source or a scholarly article. Present the survey instrument, and offer your evaluation of its performance. Your presentation should last no more than 15 minutes. Consider the following points:

- What is the scientific hypothesis? Is a survey the proper method to apply?
- Is the operationalization of variables adequate?
- How does the mode of data collection impact data quality?
- Are the response alternatives adequate?
- In general, how would the survey benefit from the application of principles from this class?

Final project

The final project consists of an oral and written report on an original survey/questionnaire of your own design. To create the study you will meet with a small group of fellow students with similar research interests. You will design an instrument consisting of a small number of survey questions for each researcher. Depending on the size of groups and the number of questions, you may be asked to combine instruments with another group for purpose of data collection. Your design must include at least two different types of items, plus an experiment. In the latter half of the class you will collect data, using Amazon's Mechanical Turk service (I will provide the funds). You must code and enter the data by the final week of class. The final week of class will be devoted to in-class presentations by research teams. The final report is due via e-mail.

An important part of this project is the completion of weekly assignments. These assignments are intended to keep you on schedule for the timely completion of your project. Individual assignments will not be graded, but points will be deducted for late submissions. It is in your interest to devote adequate time to these assignments so that the final project is the best it can be.