

SOSC 1200 Quantitative Social Analysis Fall 2020 (subject to revision)

Course credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Wednesday and Friday, 16:30-17:50, Zoom

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Office hours: by appointment

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## Overview

This survey course introduces students to quantitative social analysis by showing how it is used to examine a range of important topics and questions. In the first half of the semester, students will learn the basic building blocks of social science research and develop their own research ideas. In the second half of the semester, faculty from the Division of Social Science will join as guests to introduce their own research topics. The class will also introduce the major sources of data for quantitative social analysis, with an emphasis on the ones that are publicly available.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Understand what sorts of **social phenomena** are amenable to research by the application of quantitative techniques.
2. Understand the **basic building blocks** of social science research.
3. Learn to **evaluate** social science research by using the basic building blocks of social science research.
4. Learn to develop research ideas and **design a research project**.
5. Develop awareness of the major **sources of data** available for quantitative studies of social science.

## Grading

**60% In-class exercises and homework assignments** (homework 5.1 is worth 20% and other assignments will weigh 40%)

- 2.1 (homework) Research question and literature
- 2.2 (in-class exercise) IV and DV
- 2.2 (homework) Variables & hypothesis formation
- 3.1 (in-class exercise) research topic in 2 steps
- 3.2 (in-class exercise) sampling MC
- 4.1 (homework) finding measures for IV and DV in 3.1
- 4.2 (homework) hypothesis testing and data presentation

5.1 (homework) Putting everything together (1.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2)

Additional in-class exercises and quizzes will be given periodically

**40% Reflection papers** (see weekly topics for due dates)

Students will submit four written reflections, each about 500 words or so (one typed page) based on one guest lecture. Each reflection should contain a title and three paragraphs, addressing the following three questions:

1. What is the main point of the lecture(s) and how is this point supported, and by what evidence? (about 300 words)? [Please use your own words (paraphrase), do not repeat the speaker's words without quotation marks, and use as few quotation marks as possible.
2. What is interesting/unexpected, what do you learn, and why? (>100 words)
3. What new research idea/opportunity/unanswered question can be developed/answered based on this research and why is it necessary/worthwhile? (>100 words)

Students should try to evaluate guest lectures with the analytical tools they learn in the first few weeks, including the importance of the research question, relevant literature, appropriateness of research design, IVs and DVs, accuracy of measurements, and clarity of data presentation, etc.

All written work will be graded on a scale of 1-5:

1. Substantially incomplete. This roughly corresponds to an F.
2. Partially incomplete. The content suggests substantial misunderstanding of material in class or incomplete answers to the above questions, and no evidence of independent thinking. This roughly corresponds to a D.
3. Adequate. The written work reflects a reasonable attempt to respond to the above three questions and some understanding of the analytical tools learned in the first half of the class. This roughly corresponds to a C.
4. Good. The content clearly addresses the above three questions, evidence of understanding of key materials in the first half of the class, and there is some effort at independent, creative thinking. This roughly corresponds to a B.
5. Excellent. The content reflects complete discussion of the above three questions, evidence to use the analytical tools learned in the first half of the semester, and substantial evidence of independent, creative thinking. This roughly corresponds to an A. This will be given out only rarely.

All assignment due dates are posted at the course website on Canvas

**Class attendance and participation**

Attendance is required. Each un-excused absence will receive a one-point deduction from the final grade. Three or more un-excused absences will result in an F grade.

Final grades will be awarded based on the following ranges:

A	B	C	D	F
A+ > 97	B+ 86-89	C+ 76-79	D+ 66-69	F < 59
A 94-96	B 83-85	C 73-75	D 63-65	
A- 90-93	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

### Guest Speakers

Many of the class sessions will include talks by Social Science faculty who will introduce themselves, their sub-discipline, and their work. Their names are listed in the schedule below. You should also visit their web page so you can learn more about them before they arrive (<https://sosc.ust.hk/people/faculty/>). Some of these talks are recorded and others will be conducted in real time.

### Academic Integrity

The work you submit must be your own. Unattributed use of the work of others is plagiarism and is not acceptable. If you do feel the need to include text from another source, set it off in quotes and include a proper citation. If you have any questions about how to attribute sources, how to use quotations, etc., ASK! Do not put yourself in jeopardy by submitting an essay that includes material that appears to be plagiarized. Keep in mind that I have complete files of every essay submitted in this class since I began teaching it and electronically compare essays with those submitted in previous years.

The Office of Teaching and Learning offers resources to help you avoid plagiarism and copying. Please read the materials here:

[https://acadreg.ust.hk/C\\_Regulations\\_for\\_Student\\_Academic\\_Integrity\\_20190219.pdf](https://acadreg.ust.hk/C_Regulations_for_Student_Academic_Integrity_20190219.pdf)

If you discuss the assignments with classmates, or otherwise work together, be mindful of the boundary between collaboration and academic dishonesty. I certainly encourage you to discuss the homework with each other, but the work you turn in must be your own and reflect that you completed the assignment on your own. **Paraphrase** instead of quoting. By successfully paraphrasing, you demonstrate your understanding of the material. By providing quotations, you just demonstrate that you can type. **If your assignment has too many quotations, it will be penalized.**

If you make a claim or assertion that is not clearly based on material from lecture or any reading, and the validity of it is not self-evident, you must provide evidence to back it up, in the form of a citation or a brief argument. If you can't do that, you at least must clarify that what you are saying represents a personal opinion by prefacing the claim with "I believe that..." or something equivalent.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Guest</b>
1.1 (W Sept 9)	Introductions and course overview (Tang)
1.2 (F Sept 11)	No class (APSA conference)
2.1 (W Sept 16)	The process of social science research (Tang, homework 2.1 due at 11:59 pm on Friday)
2.2 (F Sept 18)	Theory, hypothesis, and variable (Tang, in-class exercise 2.2, homework 2.2 due at 11:59 pm next Monday)
3.1 (W Sept 23)	Operationalization and measurements (Tang, in-class exercise 3.1)
3.2 (F Sept 25)	Sampling and data (Tang, in-class exercise 3.2)
4.1 (W Sept 30)	Data sources and data presentation (Tang, homework 4.1 due at 11:59 pm on Friday)
(F Oct 2)	No class (National Day)
4.2 (W Oct 7)	Hypothesis testing (Tang, homework 4.2 due at 11:59 pm on Friday)
5.1 (F Oct 9)	Survey experiment (Tang, homework 5.1 due at 11:59 pm on 13.2)
5.2 (W Oct 14)	Professor Jean HONG
6.1 (F Oct 16)	Professor Eva CHEN
6.2 (W Oct 21)	Professor ZHANG Han
7.1 (F Oct 23)	Professor Kevin TAM (First reflection paper due at 11:59 pm the following Monday)
7.2 (W Oct 28)	Professor WANG Jin
8.1 (F Oct 30)	Professor Stuart GIETEL-BASTEN
8.2 (W Nov 4)	Professor CHEN Wanjing
9.1 (F Nov 6)	Professor HAN Li (Second reflection paper due at 11:59 pm the following Monday)
9.2 (W Nov 11)	Dr. Angela TRITTO
10.1 (F Nov 13)	Dr. Edward GOLDRING
10.2 (W Nov 18)	Professor WANG Wen
11.1 (F Nov 20)	Professor Kira MATUS (Third reflection paper due at 11:59 pm the following Monday)
11.2 (W Nov 25)	Dr. WANG Hongbo
12.1 (F Nov 27)	Professor HE Guojun
12.2 (W Dec 2)	Professor Franziska KELLER
13.1 (F Dec 4)	Professor James WONG (Fourth reflection paper due at 11:59 pm the following Monday)
13.2 (TBA)	Homework 5.1 due