COURSE PRE-REQUISITES: The completion of P11.1011 (Statistical Methods) is required prior to taking this course. A waiver may be granted in some cases.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This workshop will provide students with the skills they need to design, conduct and analyze mail, telephone, and internet surveys, focus groups and face-to-face interviews as well as critically evaluate those designed and implemented by others. These types of instruments are designed for a variety of purposes and for different settings including public policy, the study urban problems, as well as for program implementation analysis and evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, and more.

To supplement the class discussions of the required readings such as Don Dillman’s *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys*, students will be examining a sample of mail, telephone, and internet surveys, focus groups and face-to-face interviews in a “Survey Clinic” that will be held each time the class meets. On the first day of class, for example, students will examine a face-to-face interview and focus group of welfare mothers about their experience with seeking child care services. In subsequent classes, several other instruments designed to evaluate the cost effectiveness of various programs and their impact will be closely examined. For example, students will examine an interview schedule designed for an evaluation of the implementation of the NYC Board of Education’s Performance Driven Budgeting (PDB), a form of school based budgeting. In another “Survey Clinic,” students will examine a web survey designed to study the uses of the internet by nonprofit organizations and also mail and internet surveys that were designed to study the nonprofit sector in New York City.

Students are encouraged to bring drafts of their own surveys and interviews or focus groups to each of the “Survey Clinics.” The primary purpose of this workshop, and the “Survey Clinics,” is to enable students to use the knowledge and skills they acquired in this class in their Wagner Capstone projects, in their current work elsewhere, and in their future professional careers.

The three-day workshop will begin with a discussion of the ever changing nature of the survey research field and the impact of new technologies on it. The workshop, like

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1 These are examples of well designed and executed surveys in which Prof. Naphtali was directly involved. For example, the findings of the survey of the NYC nonprofit sector in [http://www.nycnonprofits.org/](http://www.nycnonprofits.org/)

2 See Chapter 1 in Dillman’s book *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys* and his website [http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/dillman/TDM_3rd_Ed.htm](http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/dillman/TDM_3rd_Ed.htm)
Dillman’s books and articles, will be organized around the stages of questionnaire and interview design, and also implementation, data management and statistical analysis, and the reporting of results. A close examination of the sources of errors in surveys and what makes surveys work will be central to these discussions.

Issues that are particular to internet surveys, telephone and face-to-face interviewing, focus groups, mail and other modes of data collection will be closely addressed. In examining the sample of surveys provided by Prof. Naphtali, the class will pay close attention to how they were designed, to issues related to question writing, the order of questions, the importance of the first question, of “don’t know”, etc. Sampling issues will be examined briefly.

One central concern addressed in this workshop is how to decide when an internet or mail survey is appropriate and when to use other methods, and when to employ a combination of methods. Following Dillman, it will be argued that the mixed-mode strategy offers the best protection against common errors that affect accuracy in surveys and interviews -- such as sampling, coverage, measurement and non-response errors.

To summarize, students will be learning about
- Conceptualization and design issues
- Internet and mail questionnaire design and implementation
- Interview and focus group schedule development and refinement
- Interviewer training and supervision
- Item editing and coding and data processing, data cleaning, and data analysis issues
- Practical sampling design strategies

After completing this workshop, students should be able to design and implement high quality surveys and interviews (and other types of data gathering instruments) and critically examine surveys designed by others. This workshop focuses on the practical side but does not lose sight of theoretical and methodological issues dealing with what makes various approaches work.

REQUIRED READING


(2) Don Dillman, Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys, (Wiley, 2009). See also the available papers on http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/dillman/papers.htm

(3) One or two chapters in ONE of the books on RESERVE (see list on page 4).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ONE PRACTICE EXERCISE 40% of your grade

Students are required to evaluate a major telephone survey on “How Americans Responded” to the September 11, 2001 attack. This mail survey was designed and conducted by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. The assignment is to examine the survey and discuss its design, the sampling strategy and the questions included (question order, etc) and make suggestions of how it might be improved. Students are required to write a short, three pages or more, reaction paper/memo with their comments to the Institute for Social Research staff.

Further instructions for the Practice Exercise will be available in class handouts and on BLACKBOARD. Students should come prepared to discuss their reaction paper/memo in class on December 4. The telephone survey and the results of the study are available on http://www.isr.umich.edu/cps/har/combined_topline.pdf. A copy will also be available on Blackboard.

FINAL PROJECT PAPER 50% of your grade

Students are required to design TWO data collection instruments on any topic they choose using the mixed-mode approach recommended by Don Dillman. The Final Project paper involves a review the literature on the subject of the survey, a discussion of the methodology of designing the data collection instruments used, a discussion of the research design, sample questions (at least 10) should be attached to the two types of data collection instruments, e.g. a mail questionnaire and a focus group or a telephone survey and a web survey.

The Final Project paper should be at least six pages long, in which three pages are sample questions for each of the instruments of data collection used. Students are required to present their Final Project papers in class on December 4th as well as submit the Final Project paper on that day. [Note that Students will also have an opportunity to present surveys they are currently working on in the Survey Clinic held each time the class meets]. Sample Final Project papers from previous years will be available for inspection in class as well as on Blackboard.

FOUR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 10% of your final grade

(to be distributed in class) & A REPORT ON READINGS

Books are available at the NYU Professional Bookstore and also on Reserve

(1) Priscilla Salant and Don. A. Dillman, How to Conduct Your Own Survey, (Wiley, 1994). Chapters 1-7 should be read prior to the first day of class.

(2) Don Dillman, Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys, (Wiley, 2009); Chapter 1 on “Turbulent Times for Survey Methodology” should be read prior to the first class.

(3) Select ONE of the following from the list of recommended books on RESERVE.
RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON RESERVE AT THE BOBST LIBRARY

(1) Floyd J. Fowler and Thomas W. Mangione, **Standardized Survey Interviewing: Minimizing Interviewer-Related Error**, (Sage Publication 1990)


(4) Fredrick G. Conrad, et. al, **Envisioning the Survey Interview of the Future**, (Wiley, 2008)


Some other excellent books

(7) Norman Bradburn, Seymour Sudman and Brian Wansink, **Asking Questions**, (John Wiley, 2004)


(9) Robert M. Grove, et. al., **Survey Nonresponse** (John Wiley, 2002).


(12) David Colton, Robert W. Covert, **Designing and Constructing Instruments for Social Research and Evaluation** (Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Inprint, 2007)


(14) Linda B. Bourque and Virginia A. Clark, **Processing Data: The Survey Example**, (Sage Publication #85, 1992).

(15) Jean Converse & Howard Schuman, **Conversation at Random**, (Wiley, 1974).


(17) Patricia A. Gwartney, **The Telephone Interviewer Handbook** (Jossey-Bass, a Wiley imprint, 2007)


(19) Folz, David H., **Survey Research for Public Administration**, (Sage, 1996)

(20) Irwin Deutscher, et. al., **Sentiments and Acts** (Walter de Gruyter, NY, 1993)

Any questions? Feel free to contact Professor Naphtali: zvia.naphtali@nyu.edu
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Office Hours: By appointment (or immediately after class)