

**URBAN STUDIES-315W**  
**URBAN STUDIES RESEARCH METHODS**  
Prof. Paul Adams

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*Prerequisites: Mathematics 408C or 408K with a grade of at least C; Mathematics 316 or the equivalent with a grade of at least C; and URB-301.*

This class introduces a range of data types relevant to urban studies, how to obtain such data, and common techniques for data analysis. It also addresses the types of questions that can be answered by quantitative and/or qualitative methods, and the suitability of different methods to particular questions. A computer spreadsheet (Excel) will be used to calculate correlations and conduct ordinary least squares regression with census data, as well as performing other statistical techniques. This is a writing-intensive course and students will be expected to read professional-level research papers and do substantial writing in conjunction with projects.

**Readings:**

Required text: *An Introduction to Scientific Research Methods in Geography* by Daniel Montello and Paul Sutton (Sage, 2006)

Other readings will be available on the library's E-Reserve system (<http://reserves.lib.utexas.edu/eres>) accessible with the password "polis"

E-Reserves will also be used to share data. You will need to upload data to the discussion board that is provided, and review others students' data you can find there.

**Grading:**

ASSIGNMENT	SPECS	POINTS
Reading Notes	20 @ 1 pg.	20
Research Questions	1 @ 1-2 pg.	10
Structured Observation (group)	1 @ 3 pg.	10
Survey Data	1 @ unspecified pg.	10
Interview Data	1 @ unspecified pg.	10
Correlation & Regression Findings	1 @ unspecified pg.	10
Research Paper (must be a <i>corrected</i> version)	1 @ 12-15 pg.	100
<u>Final Exam</u>		<u>30</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200</b>

## SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	REQUIRED READING
JAN 16	Introduction to class and professor, pre-test	none
JAN 18	Goals and assumptions in urban studies	M&S Chapter 1
JAN 23	Causality, levels of measurement, and scale	M&S Chapter 2
JAN 25	Data collection	M&S Chapter 3
JAN 30	Behavioral observations & archives, <b>Research questions, location &amp; scale due</b>	M&S Chapter 5
FEB 1	Examples of behavioral observation	
FEB 6	Walking tour of “the drag” and collaborative observation	Jacobs
FEB 8	The nature of surveys, developing survey and interview questions	Suminski et al.
FEB 13	Examples of survey research <b>Structured Observation Study due</b>	M&S pp. 81-95 M&S Chapter 8
FEB 15	Guest Lecture: Rosie Tighe, CRP in-class work on surveys	Fowler
FEB 20	Introduction of interview methodology	M&S pp.284-292
FEB 22	Analysis of your survey data	Salcedo & Torres
FEB 27	Ethics of human subject research <b>Survey Data due</b>	
MAR 1	An interview study with quantitative and qualitative analysis	Gilbert (mainly focus on pp. 603-616)
MAR 6	An interview study with policy analysis	Mitchell & Staeheli (mainly focus on pp. 803-811)
MAR 8	Analysis of your interview data	
MAR 20	Introduction to focus group studies	Krueger
MAR 22	Introduction to participant observation <b>Interview Data due</b>	Limb & Dwyer
MAR 27	Utilizing census data	M&S pp. 95-109
MAR 29	Correlation and Regression with census data	M&S Chapter 9
APR 3	Analyzing census data	Pamuk
APR 5	Constructing indices	Florida
APR 10	Maps, graphs, charts and other techniques for quantitative data display	M&S Chapter 10
APR 12	Scholarly writing: the good, the bad, and the ugly	
APR 17	In-class writing collaboration <b>Correlation &amp; Regression Findings due</b>	
APR 19	In-class writing collaboration	
APR 24	<b>Paper Draft Due</b>	
APR 26	Visiting Speaker(s)	self-directed reading: 1 article
MAY 1	Visiting Speaker(s)	self-directed reading: 1 article
MAY 3	<b>Paper Due</b>	
DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED	FINAL EXAM	

note: Readings are tentative. Depending on student interests certain readings may be substituted for the non-book readings.

## CLASS POLICY

Attendance: It will be impossible to do well in this class without attending class. The reading notes must be turned in in-person and may not be submitted late.

Reading Assignments: Each reading assignment must be completed before the class period in which it is scheduled and summarized in your reading notes.

Projects: Projects should contain references with parenthetical citations and a list of "Works Cited." The amount of citation that is appropriate depends on the project. Projects are due at the time specified on the project handout/web-posting. Late projects will be penalized 10% per weekday (weekends count as one day). Projects may be turned in early. Turn in early or late projects by handing them to Dr. Adams or dropping them off in his mailbox in GRG-334 not by using the box on his office door or slipping them under his door.

Exam: The Final Exam will include topics covered in the lecture, the readings, and the projects. It will include a mix of multiple choice, true-false, short answer, and essay questions. "Makeup" exams are not normally given in this class; if you anticipate a schedule conflict with the Final Exam date DO NOT TAKE THIS COURSE.

Computation of Grades: Grades will be computed on the following scale: A=90% and up, B=80%-89%, C=70%-79%, D=60%-69%, F=0%-59%. Fractional values will be rounded to the nearest integer. Exams will not be "curved." Grades cannot be replaced or raised through "extra credit."

Honesty: All work submitted must be your own. You may discuss assignments with other students, but all that you write, map, and turn in should be entirely your own creation. If you wish to incorporate someone else's ideas, you must explicitly acknowledge your sources and *place quotation marks around anything you quote verbatim*. Plagiarism is a serious offense and may result in partial or total loss of course credit, a permanent record of the offense in your academic file, and other penalties. When in doubt, ask how to cite the information you are using. For more information, refer to the Student Judicial Services statements and links on scholastic dishonesty.

Problems: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic adjustments for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY. You are responsible for bringing any problems, concerns and/or complaints to my attention in sufficient time for me to try to address the concerns. Nothing can be done at the last minute. "I had to work," "I had to babysit," "my car broke down," "my computer broke down," and "my dad bought my plane ticket for the day before the exam" are not acceptable excuses and will not alter the requirements in the syllabus.