

Chicano/Latino Studies 101

Research in the Latino Community

Professor Louis DeSipio

SSPB 5283

Office Hours: Tuesday, 2-4 pm

824-1420

LDESIPIO@UCI.EDU

Class Website: <https://eee.uci.edu/13f/61100>

Course Description

The purpose of this class is to design and implement a research project on an issue of relevance to Chicano/Latino communities in the United States. You will design the project and complete preliminary research in this course, complete the research and conduct preliminary analysis over the Winter break, and complete the analysis and write up your findings in the Chicano/Latino Studies 102W in the Winter quarter.

This course is probably unlike others that you have taken in that the responsibility will largely be on you to identify a research topic and to conduct primary (new) research. I will certainly help and provide some time during the course to conduct this research, but you will have to take the lead in identifying a topic and making time outside of class and, in many cases, off campus to do this research (and to doing more over the break). In order to succeed, you should select a topic that will sustain your interest for the next six months. If you aren't able to take this responsibility seriously, you will not do well in this course and be behind in 102W in the Winter.

Over the course of the quarter, students will:

1. identify a research question,
2. conduct a literature review of the subject,
3. develop hypotheses,
4. identify appropriate methods to conduct the research,
5. conduct preliminary *primary* research, and
6. refine their research proposals based on experiences in the field with primary research.

We will use the first part of the quarter to discuss various research methodologies and to connect research interests with strategies to answer questions being raised. We will also conduct small research exercises to demonstrate how to apply some of the research methodologies being discussed in class. By the mid-point in the quarter, students will begin to conduct their own research projects so as to refine preliminary research proposals and to prepare for further primary data collection over the break between the Fall and Winter quarters.

Primary research means to collect data that does not already exist. There are many methods of primary research, including:

- Observation – looking and recording how people behave in specific scenarios;

- Experiments – Exposing some respondents to specific stimuli and withholding these stimuli from other respondents in similar conditions;
- Surveys and interviews – asking respondents questions;
- Secondary analysis of existing data sets – conducting new analysis of surveys or other data sets collected by others to answer a new research question or to retest a research question asked by previous researchers; or
- Panels – following the same respondents over a period of time to identify why attitudes or behaviors change (not a research method that you will be able to use in this class due to our limited time together).

This course is designed to ensure that students have a carefully designed research proposal and to have conducted most, if not all, of their research prior to beginning Chicano/Latino Studies 102W in the Winter quarter. ***In order to get the most out of 102W, students will need to design a project that can reasonably be conducted between the mid-point of the Fall quarter and the beginning of the Winter quarter and have conducted most of their research prior to the beginning of the Winter Quarter. You will need to have a plan not only to collect the information that you need (data), but also to analyze that data.***

There will be very little time at the beginning of the Winter quarter to complete any undone research, so as you design your research project, you must be realistic about the research you can complete between October and early January.

Course Text and Optional Readings

We will use Daniel Chambliss and Russell K. Schutt's *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation* (Fourth Edition) (Sage Press, 2013). The text is available from local bookstores and is on reserve at the library.

In addition to Chambliss and Schutt, I have placed two books on reserve at Langston that you may want to consult as you design your research project and draft your research design. These are not required readings, but I believe that they will be of assistance to many of you. They are:

Diana Ridley. *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*. (Sage, 2008).

Chris Hart. *Doing a Literature Review : Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*. (Sage, 1998).

Course Requirements

The course has six requirements. The **first** of these is class attendance, active participation in class discussions, and an in-class presentation of the final research design. Class participation and research design presentations will count for 10 percent of the final grade.

Second, each student will be responsible for presenting a summary of one of the research method chapters in Daniel Chambliss and Russell K. Schutt's *Making Sense of the*

Social World: Methods of Investigation (chapters 4-12). These presentations, which should take no more than 15 minutes, should include:

- a brief discussion of the method and how to use it (you do not have to repeat each point in Chambliss and Schutt; I expect that all students will have read the text before your presentation—the chapters are relatively short); and
- an assessment what sorts of research questions can best be answered with the research method under discussion. Where appropriate, it would be particularly helpful to think about how the research method discussed in your chapter can be applied to researching questions of importance in Latino communities.

I will want to get your preferences for which chapter to review in class on October 1 (the second class meeting). So, you will need to read ahead to identify chapters that you would be interested in summarizing. Most of these presentations will be done by teams of three students, so you are welcome to propose a team for the chapter you are interested in presenting. Please identify three chapters that you would be interested in reviewing (you can rank them 1, 2, 3).

I would encourage you to select chapters focusing on research methods that you might want to use in your own research for the class.

This class presentation will be worth 10 percent of the final grade. Each student on the team will receive the same grade.

Third, each student must complete three research activities, discuss the results of the activities in class, and submit a one- to two-page summary of the results. The activity must be completed by the Tuesday of each week for purposes of class discussion; the written summary can be submitted on Thursday. The assignment should be submitted to DropBox in EEE prior to the start of class on the due date.

These assignments will each be worth 5 percent of the final grade (for a total of 15 percent).

Fourth, students will complete a preliminary research design that will be due on October 29. I will review the research designs and return comments in the order that I receive preliminary research designs. Considering the size of the class, it will take me a while to grade and provide comments on the research designs, so getting your research design in early can mean that you will have comments significantly quicker than a student who submits the research design a few hours later.

This research design should be for a quarter-length research project on a Chicano/Latino issue. Your research design must not only discuss how you will collect primary data, but also how you plan to analyze these data. My experience is that most students considerably overestimate what they can do in a quarter. So, I would encourage you both to identify a question and identify realistically how much evidence you can collect to answer the question.

The design should include:

- 1) a statement of the problem;
- 2) a preliminary literature review identifying at least *six* academic sources relevant to your research project (*this should make up no more than half of the preliminary research*

design). The literature reviewed in the preliminary design should be selected to show why the question being asked is important and why you are adding to knowledge in your area of study with the research design that you propose. You will most likely need to present a much richer literature review in the final paper that you submit to Chicano/Latino Studies 102W;

- 3) a set of specific questions or hypotheses that will be tested;
- 4) a discussion of the analytical method(s) to be used in answering the question, with a discussion of why you think the methods you are using are the most appropriate for the question(s) you are asking; and
- 5) a statement of the significance of the project for the larger study of Latino communities in U.S. society. Depending on how you lay out your discussion, this may appear near the beginning of the research design rather than at the end.

The preliminary research proposal should also identify a small piece of primary (original) research that can be conducted in the period from October 29 to November 19 that will advance the project and help you refine the research design. Primary research could include data collection, participant observation, primary analysis of secondary data, or another activity. The successful completion of this primary research will be essential to the completion of the revised research proposal due on November 21.

This preliminary research design should be 6 to 8 pages and will be worth 20 percent of the final grade.

Fifth, students will complete a revised research design that will be due on November 21. The revised research design should be submitted to DropBox. I will review the research designs and return comments in the order that I receive them.

This revised research design should incorporate the findings of the primary research conducted during the fieldwork period to revise the preliminary research design. The final research design should include all of the elements of the preliminary research design and a discussion of how the research design changed as a result of the primary research conducted for your project. I will expect that you will have revised the research design in response to the comments that I make on the preliminary research design, that it will reflect revisions based on the preliminary research that you have done, and that you will have expanded the literature review to identify sources more specific to the question(s) that you are asking.

The revised research design should be 12 to 15 pages and should serve as a foundation for the research projects to be conducted in Chicano/Latino Studies 102W. The revised research design will be worth 35 percent of the final grade.

Finally, by the end of final's week (December 13), I will expect a summary of no more than two pages of research completed since the submission of the Revised Research Agenda and a plan for continuing the research over the Winter break. Please submit this to DropBox.

This final activity will constitute 10 percent of the final grade. Aside from its value to your grade for 101, continuing to conduct research on your project will be critical you your being able to make the most of Chicano/Latino Studies 102W.

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

September 26 – Class Introduction and Overview

October 1 and 3 – What is Social Science Research?

READINGS: Chambliss and Schutt, chapters 1-3

Assignments for October 1:

- 1) Review Chambliss and Schutt and bring a list to class of the three chapters, in ranked order, that you would most like to review. You can select from chapters 4 to 12.
- 2) Give some preliminary thought to a research project that you would like to design and conduct the preliminary research for (in this class) and complete (in Chicano/Latino Studies 102W in the Winter). Come to class prepared to discuss briefly your research project and how you will go about collecting data. I understand this the idea that you present will be preliminary and can be changed.

Research activity: Read a local newspaper and bring in an article that identifies a problem that you would like investigate more thoroughly. Be prepared to discuss how you would go about conducting this research and a hypothesis (or hypotheses) that would guide your research.

Please note that as with each of the three research activities, you will need to have done this by the Tuesday of the week (October 1, in this case), but you do not need to hand it the written assignment until the Thursday of the week (October 3, in this case).

October 8 and 10 – Social Science Data

READINGS: Chambliss and Schutt, chapters 4-6

Student presentations of Chambliss and Schutt, chapters 4 (October 8) and 5 & 6 (October 10)

Research Activity: Conduct an observation of an event or events at two local (off-campus) sites. For example, go and sit at two different commercial sites (a mall and a business street) or two different churches or two different community-based organizations. Observe each site for at least half an hour and write down your observations. What sorts of questions are you able to answer by simple observation? How does comparison improve your understanding of what occurred at each research site?

October 15 and 17 – Methods for Collecting Social Science Data

READING: Chambliss and Schutt, chapters 7, 8 and 9

October 15 – Student presentations of Chambliss and Schutt, chapter 7 and 8

October 17 – Student presentations of Chambliss and Schutt, chapter 9

Research Activity: Read the *editorial* pages of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, the *New York Times*, and *La Opinion* (if you read Spanish) and identify at least two editorials on the same or similar subjects in at least two of the papers (you may need to look for

a couple of days to find editorials on the same subject; you are welcome to look backward). Evaluate the assumptions made about the subject of the editorial by the editorial writers in each newspaper. How do these assumptions differ? How do they guide the position taken by newspaper on the issue? Design a research project that could evaluate which of these assumptions was more valid.

Each of these newspapers is available on-line: <http://www.latimes.com/>, <http://www.ocregister.com/ocregister/sections/opinion/>, <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/opinion/index.html>, <http://www.laopinion.com/>.

Please note that an editorial is where the newspaper states its opinions. You should not use news articles to complete this assignment.

October 22 and 24 Analyzing Social Science Data

READING: Chambliss and Schutt, chapters 10 and 11

October 22 – Library Visit with Christina Woo, Chicano/Latino Studies Librarian. We will meet in Langson Library 228 (the computer classroom behind the wood-and-glass exhibit case in the lobby).

October 24 – Student presentations of Chambliss and Schutt, chapter 10 and 11

October 29 and 31

READING: Chambliss and Schutt, chapter 12

October 29 – Student presentation on Chambliss and Schutt, chapter 12

October 31 – Workshop for students who will need to submit an IRB protocol for their research projects.

Preliminary Research Design Due (October 29). The preliminary research design should be submitted to DropBox.

November 5-7 and 12-14 – Preliminary Fieldwork – no class meetings

November 19, November 21, November 26, December 3, and December 5 – Student Presentations

Student presentations of final research designs for class reactions and suggestions. I will assign days for presentations after I review the preliminary research designs. The presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes and should focus on:

- 1) the area of your class research;
- 2) a brief overview of what scholars researching this question in the past have found;
- 3) a set of specific questions or hypotheses that guide your project;
- 4) a discussion of the analytical method(s) to be used in answering the question; and

5) your research findings so far from the preliminary research conducted in November.

Revised Research Design Due (November 21). The revised research design should be submitted to DropBox.

End of Final's Week (December 13) – One to two page statement of research completed and plans for conducting research prior to Winter quarter. The statement should be submitted to DropBox.