Course Title: **J395 Advanced Social Science Methods** (07995)  
TTh 8:00-9:30 a.m.; CMA 3.128

Instructor: Dr. Paula Poindexter, Associate Professor  
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Office Hours: TTh 1-2:30 p.m. or by Appointment

Course Description:  
J395, Advanced Social Science Methods, which takes students through the final steps of the research phase and introduces students to the post-research phase, is a hands-on seminar designed to develop proficiency in using SPSS, analyzing data, selecting statistics, interpreting statistically significant results, and writing research-based conference papers and journal articles. Through a combination of readings, hands-on computer data analysis assignments, class demonstrations and presentations, and research paper writing, editing, and reviewing assignments, students will be able to:  
1. integrate research, theory, and data analysis.  
2. use SPSS to analyze data with proficiency.  
3. conduct bivariate and multivariate analyses.  
4. understand the theory and execute the analytical steps for intervening variables.  
5. write, revise, and submit a scholarly conference paper.  
6. critique a scholarly conference paper using the blind peer review process  
7. prepare a research poster presentation and present the results.  
8. develop a plan for getting the conference paper published in an academic journal.  
9. think like a scholar.

Class Time:  
Class time will be used for lectures, preparations for and presentations of data analysis assignments, discussions of writing assignments, hands-on SPSS data analyses, and one-on-one consultations.

SPSS Help Sessions:  
As soon as a time and room are determined, SPSS help sessions will be scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday. These sessions will be used to help with SPSS assignments due on Thursday. To participate, you must bring a laptop with SPSS. Laptops with SPSS can be checked out.
Procedure for Data Analysis and Writing Assignments:
As a rule of thumb, procedures for the data analysis and writing assignments will be discussed on Tuesday and the assignments will be presented on Thursday. Two print copies of the data analysis and writing assignment are due at the beginning of class on Thursday. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Additionally, you are required to post your assignment on BlackBoard no later than 7a.m. on the day the assignment is due. The data analysis assignment will consist of an SPSS printout with appropriate statistics. (Copy and paste the SPSS printout into a Word file before posting on BlackBoard. In addition to the SPSS printout with appropriate statistics for the data analysis assignments, students should write a description of the results and construct a results table. (For examples of what the description of the results should look like, please see the journal articles and conference papers among the required readings.)

Required Readings:


5. **Required for Content Analysis Conference Papers:** Mark Coddington, Building Frames Link by Link. Presented at AEJMC 2011, St. Louis

6. **Required for Depth Interview Conference Papers:** Emily Donohue Brown, For Love or Money?: The Role of Online Non-Profits in Preserving Journalism


*Copies will be distributed in class.*

**Grades will be based on:**
1. Completion of individual computer data analysis assignments, writing assignments, and review assignments (30%).
2. Peer review of AEJMC conference paper drafts (10%).
3. Data-based paper submitted to AEJMC conference (50%). Papers not submitted to AEJMC by the deadline will automatically receive a grade of F. A copy of the submission confirmation must be turned in.
4. Showing Our Work Poster Presentation of AEJMC Paper (10%). Poster presentations that do not meet all requirements will automatically be dropped two letter grades.

**All deadlines must be met for all assignments. No exceptions!**

**Expectations of Students:**
1. Always come to class early!
2. Listen, take notes and participate during class discussions.
3. Attend all scheduled classes.
4. Meet all assignment deadlines. Late assignments will not be accepted.
5. If an emergency prevents a student from meeting the deadline of an assignment, the student must notify the instructor prior to the deadline.
6. Always turn in professional-level written work. Work must be proofed and edited. Points will be deducted for spelling, grammatical, punctuation, and capitalization errors.
7. Uphold the University Honor Code and have academic integrity as stated below:

**University of Texas at Austin Policies.**
1. **Honor Code.** Abide by the University of Texas at Austin Honor Code, which reads: “The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.”
2. **Scholastic Dishonesty.** Abide by the University of Texas at Austin Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty, which reads: The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must
adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student’s learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. See: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php.

3. Students with Disabilities. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259; http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssl/

4. Observance of a Religious Holy Day. By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.”


Assignments:

1. Week of Jan. 14:
   First Day of Class: Tues., Jan. 15:
   1. Introductions, course goals, and expectations.
   2. Review Ethical Research Guidelines.
   3. Update and consultations on research projects.
   4. Introduction to SPSS fundamentals.
   5. Become familiar with Pew-People-Press 2010 Media Consumption Questionnaire, Methodology, and Dataset.
   6. SPSS-laptop computers. Each week a student (to be determined by alphabetical order/assigned number) will be responsible for picking up and returning the cart of SPSS-laptop computers from first floor.
   7. Discuss format/outline of conference paper; APA Style; Endnotes.
   8. Best times for hands-on:
      SPSS Help Sessions
      Online Survey Data Software Help

2. Week of Jan. 21:
   SPSS fundamentals, including variable labels, value labels, recodes, missing values, etc.
   **Data Analysis Assignment #1.** Run a frequency. Re-run with missing values and recode commands. Due: Thurs.
   Discuss introduction of conference paper.
3. Week of Jan. 28:
Data Analysis Assignment #2. Run a crosstab with appropriate statistics. **Due: Thurs.**
Writing Assignment #1. **Two printed copies** of draft introduction/background of conference paper. **Due: Thurs.**

4. Week of Feb. 4:
**Introduction to factor analysis.**
**Introduction to using a compute statement to create a new variable or index.**

Discuss literature review and theory sections of conference paper.
**Writing Assignment #2.** Draft literature review of conference paper. **Two Printed Copies Due Thurs**
**Writing Assignment #3.** Draft theoretical section of conference paper. **Two Printed Copies Due Thurs.**
**Writing Assignment #3A.** Draft research questions/hypotheses. **Two Printed Copies Due Thurs.**

5. Week of Feb. 11:
Data Analysis Assignment #3. **Intervening Variables. Due: Thurs.**

Discuss Methodology section of conference paper.
**Writing Assignment #4.** Draft Methodology section of conference paper. Integrate research questions/hypotheses into methodology section. **Two Printed Copies Due Thurs.**


6. Week of Feb. 18:
Discuss Results, Implications, and abstract of conference paper.
Writing Assignment #5. (1). Outline Results section with RQ’s/Hypotheses. (2). Results section. (3). Discussion section, and (4) Abstract of conference paper. Two Printed Copies Due Thurs.

7. Week of Feb. 25:
Discuss submission requirements and appropriate AEJMC Division for conference paper. Consultations on AEJMC Drafts and Peer Reviews.

8. Week of Mar. 4:
Consultations on AEJMC conference papers.
Writing Assignment #6. AEJMC Draft Paper for Peer Review. Due Tues., March 6.
Writing Assignment #7. Peer Review Due: Thurs., March 8.


10. Week of Mar. 18:
Due: Mon. March 18.
Consultations on AEJMC conference papers.

11. Week of Mar. 25:
Consultations on AEJMC conference papers

12. Week of April 1:
Due to AEJMC April 1: AEJMC conference paper and abstract submitted to appropriate AEJMC Division.
Due to Instructor Tues., April 3: Print copy of submitted AEJMC Paper and Abstract plus AEJMC confirmation that paper was submitted.

Post-Research Phase
Debriefing on submission of AEJMC conference papers.
Planning for conference presentations: Research Sessions, Poster Presentations, High Density Sessions

13. Week of April 8:
Expanding your research horizons.
Faculty/Ph.D. Student Presentations on Publishing Experiences/Current Research/Other Statistical Analyses.

14. Week of April 15:
Faculty/Ph.D. Student Presentations on Publishing Experiences/Current Research/Other Statistical Analyses.
Attend International Online Journalism Symposium research paper presentations.
Blanton Museum
Attendance will replace Thursday, April 19th class.
15. Week of April 22:
Due: Wed., April 24: Poster Presentation of AEJMC Paper during Showing Our Work Exhibition, 1-3 p.m. or 3-5 p.m. depending on class conflicts.
Wednesday’s Showing Our Work replaces Tuesday’s class.
De-briefing on Poster Presentations during Showing Our Work Exhibition.

16. Week of April 29:
Turning Conference Papers into Published Journal Articles.
Evaluations.
Last Day of Class: Thurs., May 2.