

SOSC 1200 Quantitative Social Analysis Fall 2019 (subject to revision)

Wednesday and Friday, 13:30-14:50, Rm 6573 (lifts 29-30)

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Office hours: W 3-5pm, Rm 2375 (lifts 13-14)

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Overview

This survey course introduces students to quantitative social analysis by showing how such techniques are used to examine a range of important topics and questions. For these and other topics, faculty from the Division of Social Science will join as guests to introduce their own research topics and where relevant discuss classic as well recent studies that make exemplary use of data and methods, and which have advanced our understanding of the relevant social phenomena. The class will also introduce the major sources of data for quantitative social analysis, with an emphasis on the ones that are publicly available. Along the way, students will learn about the differences between the concerns, paradigms, and methodologies of the major social science disciplines. Strengths and limitations of quantitative techniques for the study of social phenomenon will be discussed, as will the relationship of quantitative approaches to other methodologies.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Understand what sorts of *social phenomena* are amenable to research by the application of quantitative techniques.
2. Understand the differences between the *foci and key paradigms and methodologies* of the major social science disciplines.
3. Appreciate the *relationship of quantitative and qualitative approaches* in conducting social science research.
4. Develop awareness of *exemplary classic and recent studies* in different areas of the social sciences which have advanced our understanding of important social phenomena.
5. Develop familiarity with the *basic components of quantitative research* including literature, background, data, methods, results and conclusions.
6. Develop awareness of the major *sources of data* available for use in quantitative studies of social science.

Grading

20% In-class exercises and homework assignments

These include Assignments 1.2 and 3.1, and In-class exercises 2.1, 3.1 and 3.2 (see below). In addition, we will give in-class short quizzes periodically.

30% Written reflections

Students will submit three written reflections, each about 500 words or so (one typed page), roughly one at the end of each month. For each reflection, they will select one of the faculty guests who joined class that month, briefly introduce that guest's research focus, discuss what they found most interesting in the presentation, and then discuss what more they would like to learn in this area. You should try to evaluate the guest lecture with the analytical tools you learned in the first 3 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.

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. This roughly corresponds to a D.
3. Adequate. The written work reflects a reasonable attempt to respond to the prompt. This roughly corresponds to a C.
4. Good. The content clearly reflects understanding of key material in class, and there is some effort at independent, creative thinking. This roughly corresponds to a B.
5. Excellent. The content reflects substantial evidence of independent, creative thinking. This roughly corresponds to an A. This will be given out only rarely.

For every day late that a reflection is turned in, one point will be deducted. Reflections that are 5 or more days late will not receive credit.

15% Proposed questions for the final exam

Each student will be responsible for proposing one multiple choice question based on each lecture. The question should be designed to assess knowledge of a key point that emerged in class.

20% Multiple-choice final exam

From the questions proposed by students, I will randomly select a subset to be on a final exam, possibly with some modification.

5% Suggestions for class discussion

Students will be asked to post a topic, question or idea in advance of each class that they would like to propose for discussion during class. I will select some of these questions to be the focus of class discussion. If I select your suggested topic, question, or idea, I will call on you and ask you to introduce it, so please be prepared to say something. The prompts will be posted at the Discussion Board at the Canvas website, so please check that site frequently.

These will be graded 0-1 according to whether they are posted on time, and whether it represents a serious effort. After the first week of class, no credit will be given if the suggestion is posted late.

The lowest score will be dropped when calculating the final grade.

10% Class attendance and participation

Attendance is required. We will take attendance with the Personal Response System (PRS). Please download the **HKUST iLearn** app before the first day of class.

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.

I will keep a record of contributions to class discussion.

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	

Reading/Viewing in Preparation for Guest Lecturers

Faculty guests will be invited to supply readings or viewings related to their research, and these will be available on Canvas before each class.

Guest Speakers

Many of the class sessions will include talks by Quantitative Social Analysis faculty who will introduce themselves, their sub-discipline, and their work. Their names are listed in the schedule below. You will be given reading or viewing to complete before each visit. You should also visit their web page so you can learn more about them before they arrive (<https://sosc.ust.hk/people/faculty/>).

Classroom Conduct

Talking during class is not acceptable. This is especially the case when we have a guest speaker. If I see or hear you talking in the midst of a presentation by a guest speaker, I may ask you to leave the room, and/or give you a zero for attendance/participation that day.

More generally, please be attentive, especially during presentations by guest speakers. I would prefer that you take notes on pen and paper or on a tablet. If you feel that you must have a laptop open during class, you should be using it for note-taking. If I see anyone during class using their laptop for other activities, I may give you a zero for attendance/participation that day.

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

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 the 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.

Weekly Topics

Note: **All assignment due dates are posted at the course website on Canvas.** Prompts for ideas proposed for class discussion and readings contributed by guest speakers will be posted directly to the Canvas site and not listed here.

1.1 (W Sept 4) Introductions and course overview (Tang)

1.2 (F Sept 6) The process of social science research (Tang)

2.1 (W Sept 11) Theory, hypothesis and variable (Tang)

2.2 (F Sept 13) NO CLASS

3.1 (W Sept 18) Operationalization and measurements (Tang)

3.2 (F Sept 20) Sampling and data (Tang)

4.1 (W Sept 25) NO CLASS

4.2 (F Sept 27) Franziska Keller

5.1 (W Oct 2) Xiaogang Wu

5.2 (F Oct 4) Discussion

6.1 (W Oct 9) Kevin Tam

6.2 (F Oct 11) Wenfang Tang

7.1 (W Oct 16) Discussion

7.2 (F Oct 18) Kira Matus

8.1 (W Oct 23) Stuart Gietel-Basten

8.2 (F Oct 25) Jean Hong

9.1 (W Oct 30) Discussion

9.2 (F Nov 1) Guojun He

10.1 (W Nov 6) Wenfang Tang

10.2 (F Nov 8) Cameron Campbell

11.1 (W Nov 13) Miao Jia

11.2 (F Nov 15) Jin Wang

12.1 (W Nov 20) Eva Chen

12.2 (F Nov 22) Discussion

13.1 (W Nov 27) Wang Hongbo

13.2 (F Nov 29) Han Li

TBD Final exam (The date and time of the final exam is set by ARRO, and usually announced sometime in the middle of the semester).