

### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

**Course Number:** AEB 6817  
**Course Title:** Survey Research Methods for Economists  
**Term:** Spring 2020  
**Meeting Times:** MWF 9:35-10:25  
**Meeting Location:** MCCB 3124

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION AND CONTACT

**Name:** Bachir Kassas  
**Email Address:** b.kassas@ufl.edu  
**Office Hours:** MWF 8:30-9:30  
**Office Location:** 1099 McCarty Hall, B-Wing

**NOTE:** You are welcome to meet me in my office during my office hours. If you have a time conflict with the office hours, you are welcome to schedule an appointment by email.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide rigorous training in survey and experimental research methods. Students will learn the fundamental skills necessary to successfully use surveys and experiments to address research questions of interest. Specifically, the main focus will be on the design, development, execution, and analysis of surveys and experiments. The course will emphasize the wide applicability of surveys and experiments, while highlighting the advantages and drawbacks of each method. It will also include a primer on the basic data analysis methods used in this type of research.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this class, students will be able to:

1. Learn about the regulations and compliance policies related to research using human subjects
2. Develop an in-depth understanding of surveys and experiments and the application of these methods to economics and marketing research
3. Master the basic elements of a survey and/or experiment including questionnaire design, sampling, and data collection
4. Apply their knowledge to design and implement a survey and/or experiment to address a specific research question of interest
5. Critique the quality of a given survey and/or experiment and offer useful feedback
6. Analyze survey and/or experimental data and present the results

## TEXTBOOKS

**NOTE: There is NO official required textbook for this class. For reference purposes, the following textbooks might help as they contain several concepts covered in the course. You can supplement your knowledge of the material covered in the lectures by reading some of the chapters from those books, as suggested in the course schedule, in addition to the lecture notes. Some of the topics covered in the course may not appear in the textbooks and vice versa. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the lecture material for success in this course. Supplementary material will be posted on Canvas for the interested reader; this material is OPTIONAL. Only the material covered in the main lectures is required for the assignments and exams, you will not be asked about anything not covered in the lectures.**

Blair, J., Czaja, R. F., and Blair, E. A. *Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Sage, 2014.

Fowler, F. J. *Survey Research Methods*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Sage, 2014.

Singleton, R. A. JR. and Straits, B. C. *Approaches to Social Research*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Oxford University Press, 2017

Friedman, D. and Sanders, S. *Experimental Methods: A Primer for Economists*, Cambridge University Press, 1994

## COURSE WEBSITE AND CORRESPONDENCE

UF Canvas is the official class website. **This is where you will receive all class announcements, so you should check here regularly.** I will also be sending some announcements through email so you should check your email regularly. Missing an announcement posted on Canvas or sent by email is NOT a valid excuse for not following through with course related activities.

**NOTE: You should add the title AEB6817 to all emails correspondence with me. EMAILS NOT TITLED AEB6817 MIGHT NOT BE ANSWERED!**

## GRADING POLICIES

### **Final Score:**

Your final grade will be calculated based on the following weights:

Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Questionnaire Development	25%
Final Project	25%

The letter grade will be determined using the following grading scale

Points	Letter Grade
92%	A
89%	A <sup>-</sup>
86%	B <sup>+</sup>
82%	B
79%	B <sup>-</sup>
76%	C <sup>+</sup>
72%	C
69%	C <sup>-</sup>
66%	D <sup>+</sup>
62%	D
59%	D <sup>-</sup>
Below 59%	E

**NOTE: All grades calculated based on the above criteria are final and non-negotiable.**

### **Exams:**

There will be a midterm exam worth 25% and a final exam worth 25% of the final course grade. Each exam will cover roughly half of the course material (the final exam is NOT

cumulative). The exams will consist of short answer and problem-based questions. They will test the student's understanding of the material and ability to apply their knowledge and critical thinking skills in different scenarios. The exams will be administered in class based on the dates posted in the course schedule. The material covered in each exam will be announced in class and on Canvas.

### **Questionnaire Development Project:**

This will be a group project, where the class will be split to 4-5 groups (depending on class size). You will coordinate with your group members to design a survey questionnaire or experiment. You will be given the discretion to decide on a topic of mutual interest, but you must clearly state your research question and objectives. You will design your survey or experiment to accurately address the research question. You will be graded based on the quality of your questionnaire (or experimental design) and its effectiveness in appropriately addressing the research goals and objectives. You will present your work as a group at the end of the semester and submit a short report. This project will be worth 25% of the final course grade. The grade will be broken down into 5% placed on peer evaluations and the remaining 20% placed on my evaluation of the final deliverable. More instructions will be given out later.

### **Final Project:**

The final project will be completed in groups (you CAN use the same groups as the questionnaire development project). You will be given a dataset from a questionnaire or experiment along with a description of the variables included in the dataset. Your job is to analyze the data (in any way you choose) to address a certain research question of interest. You can decide to use all or a subset of the variables in the dataset, but you have to formulate an interesting question and use the dataset to address it. You will present your work as a team and submit a report explaining the research question, analysis conducted, and results found. This project will be worth 25% of the final course grade. The grade will be broken down into 5% placed on peer evaluations and the remaining 20% placed on my evaluation of the final deliverable.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

1. Survey Practice
  - a. Research Methods
  - b. Primary Vs. Secondary Data
  - c. Introduction to Surveys
  - d. Surveys Vs. Other Methods

- g. Ethical Considerations (Policies and Regulations)
- 2. Survey Error
  - a. The Perfect Survey
  - b. What is Survey Error
  - c. Types of Survey Error
  - d. Mean Squared Error
- 3. Planning the Survey
  - a. The Stages of a Survey
  - b. Survey Design and Preliminary Planning
  - c. Questionnaire Design and Pretesting
  - d. Final Survey Design and Planning
  - e. Sample Selection and Data Collection
  - f. Data Coding, Analysis, and Final Report
- 4. Data Collection
  - a. Selecting a Data Collection Method
  - b. Mail Surveys
  - c. Internet Surveys
  - d. Telephone Surveys
  - e. Face-to-Face Surveys
  - f. Intercept Surveys
  - g. Combinations of Methods
  - h. Emerging Technologies
- 5. Sample Representation and Quality
  - a. Sample Representation and Error
  - b. Sampling Error and Sample Bias
  - c. Probability Samples
  - d. Non-Probability Samples
  - e. Guidelines for Good Sampling
  - f. General Advice
- 6. Questionnaire Development I
  - a. A Model of the Response Process
  - b. Factors in Questionnaire Development
  - c. Writing Questions
  - d. The Structure of Survey Questions
  - e. Response Categories
  - f. Rating Scales

- g. Avoiding or Identifying Weaknesses in Survey Questions
- 7. Questionnaire Development II
  - a. Introducing the Survey
  - b. What Questions Should the Questionnaire Begin With?
  - c. Grouping Questions Into Sections
  - d. Question Length and Respondent Burden
  - e. Formatting Instruments for Multimode Data Collection
- 8. Introduction to Experiments
  - a. What is Experimental Economics
  - b. Main Uses of Experiments
  - c. Internal and External Validity
  - d. Laboratory Vs. Field Experiments
  - e. Terminology Used and Components of an Experiment
  - f. Do's and Don'ts in Experiments
  - g. Commonly Used Institutions in Experiments
- 9. Primer on Data Analysis
  - a. Weighing Observations
  - b. One-Sample and Two-Sample Tests
  - c. Testing Discrete Vs. Continuous Variables
  - d. Parametric Vs. Non-Parametric Tests
  - e. Regressions
- 10. Sample Size
  - a. Type I and Type II Error
  - b. What is Power
  - c. Power Analysis Approach to Sample Size

### **MAKE-UP POLICY**

There is no make-up for the questionnaire development project and the final project. However, if a student misses the midterm or final exam, they will be allowed to sit for a make-up only if the absence is for a valid reason as defined by UF policy. Students should submit their excused absences through U Matter We Care, which will process the documents and send me an email verifying the request. Students are encouraged to communicate with me during the process in order to make sure that everything is being done in a timely manner.

## CAMPUS HELPING RESOURCES

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Several resources are available on campus for students, especially if academic performance is at stake. In general, the Dean of Students Office provides a hub for these services: Location: P202 Peabody Hall Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>) Telephone: 392-1261

Students with disabilities are encouraged contact the Disability Resource Center and coordinate the needed accommodations. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Please contact this office at 0001 Reid Hall, 392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/).

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources at the following link (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/supportservices/campuscounseling.php>). Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- Counseling and Wellness Center (<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>) Location: 3190 Radio Road Telephone: 392-1575
- Student Health Care Center (<http://shcc.ufl.edu/>) Location: SHCC Infirmary Building Telephone: 391-1161
- Career Resource Center (<http://www.crc.ufl.edu>) Location: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor (CR-100), Reitz Union CR-100 Telephone: 392-1602

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Honesty (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>). The academic community at UF prides itself on intellectual growth as well as stimulating and encouraging moral development. This is accomplished through nurturing and maintaining an environment of honesty, trust and respect. The responsibility to maintain this environment falls with student as well as faculty members.

Students who enroll at UF commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Thus, on all work submitted for credit, the following pledge is implied: "On our honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Moreover, any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Conduct Code. For example, conduct such as cheating and plagiarizing constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017), which will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

***Student Responsibility:*** Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean or Student Honor Court.

***Faculty Responsibility:*** Faculty members have a duty to promote honest behavior and to avoid practices and environments that foster cheating in their classes. Teachers should encourage students to bring negative conditions or incidents of dishonesty to their attention. In their own work, teachers should practice the same high standards they expect from their students.

***Administration Responsibility:*** As highly visible members of our academic community, administrators should be ever vigilant to promote academic honesty and conduct their lives in an ethically exemplary manner. (Source: 2016-2017 UF Undergraduate Catalog).

***On-Line Students Complaints:*** <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaintprocess>

***Online Course Evaluation Process:*** Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

## **COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Suggested Reading</b>
January 6	M	Syllabus/Course Overview	Ch 1 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 8	W	Survey Practice	Ch 1 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 10	F	Survey Practice	Ch 1 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 13	M	Survey Error	Ch 2 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 15	W	Survey Error	Ch 2 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 17	F	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 20	F	Holiday	MLK Day
January 22	W	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 24	F	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 27	M	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
January 29	W	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 31	F	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 3	M	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 5	W	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 7	F	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 10	M	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 12	W	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 14	F	Questionnaire Development I	Ch 8 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 17	M	Midterm Exam	Regular Class Time
February 19	W	Questionnaire Development I	Ch 8 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 21	F	Questionnaire Development I	Ch 8 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 24	M	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 26	W	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
February 28	F	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
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TABLE – CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Date	Day	Class	Suggested Reading
March 2	M	Holiday	Spring Break
March 4	W	Holiday	Spring Break
March 6	F	Holiday	Spring Break
March 9	M	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 11	W	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 13	F	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 16	M	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 18	W	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 20	F	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
March 23	M	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
March 25	W	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
March 27	F	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
March 30	M	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
April 1	W	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
April 3	F	Sample Size	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
April 6	M	Sample Size	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
April 8	W	Sample Size	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
April 10	F	Presentations	
April 13	M	Presentations	
April 15	W	Presentations	
April 17	F	Presentations	
April 20	M	Presentations	
April 22	W	Presentations	

Continued on next page

TABLE – CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Suggested Reading</b>
April 28	T	Final Exam	8AM - 9:30AM in MCCB3124