

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number: AEB 6817
Course Title: Survey Research Methods for Economists
Term: Fall 2024
Meeting Times: MWF 9:35-10:25
Meeting Location: MAEB 0238

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION AND CONTACT

Name: Bachir Kassas
Email Address: b.kassas@ufl.edu
Office Hours: MW 10:30-12:00
Office Location: 1099 McCarty Hall, B-Wing

NOTE: You are welcome to meet me in my office or over Zoom during my office hours. The office hours Zoom link is <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/3522947621>. 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: The official textbook for this class is listed below, along with additional textbooks that 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.

Main Textbook

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

Supplementary Textbooks

Fowler, F. J. *Survey Research Methods*. 5th Edition, Sage, 2014.

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

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

COURSE STRUCTURE AND CORRESPONDENCE

UF Canvas is the official class website. **This is where you will receive all class announcements, so you should check Canvas 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.

Lectures will be held in MAEB0238. I will be uploading **lecture notes** on Canvas to help students review the lecture material. **Additional readings** related to each module will also be uploaded for the interested reader (*these are optional*). **Office hours** will be held in-person and online via Zoom to give students the flexibility to attend in the format they feel more comfortable with. For students interested in meeting via Zoom, the office hours Zoom link is <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/3522947621>. In order to give students privacy during office hours, I have set up a waiting room in Zoom that you will be automatically directed to if you log in while another student is meeting with me. You will be allowed into the Zoom office hour meeting as soon as your turn is up. Students will be admitted to the office hour meeting in the order in which they login to Zoom. If you have a time conflict with the office hours, you are welcome to meet by appointment. You are welcome to send me relatively short questions by email if you prefer. I usually reply to emails within an hour or so, but in case I am busy and could not reply this quickly, I will certainly reply back in less than 24 hours (on weekdays!).

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

GRADING POLICIES

Final Score:

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

Assignments	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%
Questionnaire Development Project	15%
Data Analysis Project	15%
Project Peer Evaluation	5%
IRB Certification	1% (Bonus Credit)

The letter grade will be determined using the following grading scale

Points	Letter Grade
92%-100%	A
89%-91.9%	A ⁻
86%-88.9%	B ⁺
82%-85.9%	B
79%-81.9%	B ⁻
76%-78.9%	C ⁺
72%-75.9%	C
69%-71.9%	C ⁻
66%-68.9%	D ⁺
62%-65.9%	D
59%-61.9%	D ⁻
Below 59%	E

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

Grades and Grade Points: For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Assignments:

There will be a total of 4 homework assignments, which will collectively count towards 20% of the final course grade (5% weight on each). The assignments will be announced in-class and on Canvas and you will be given around 1 week to work on each assignment. The assignment due dates are also included in the course schedule on pages 14-16. The assignments will consist of short answer questions and will be similar in difficulty to the

questions you see on the exams. The purpose of the assignments is to help you evaluate your understanding of the course material and to prepare you for the exams.

The penalty for late submissions is an automatic 20% deduction from the assignment grade and an additional 10% deduction for each day (24 hours) the assignment is late.

Exams:

There will be a midterm exam worth 20% 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 following the dates and times posted in the course schedule. Detailed instructions for 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 groups of 2-4 students (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. This project will be worth 15% of the final course grade. More instructions will be given out later.

Data Analysis Project:

This project will be completed in groups (**same group you formed for 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 at the end of the semester. This project will be worth 15% of the final course grade. More instructions will be given out later.

Project Peer Evaluation:

To encourage productive group collaborations on the projects, and deter free-riding, each group member will be asked to evaluate the other members in their group. You will evaluate each member in your group on a scale from 0 (poor) to 5 (excellent) based on their contribution to the projects, timeliness in completing their tasks, and interaction with other group members. The average peer evaluation for each student will be calculated and will count towards 5% of the total course grade.

IRB Certification:

Given the importance of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for all research involving human subjects, as is the case in research using survey and experimental methods, you are highly encouraged to learn about UF IRB, register for an IRB account, and complete necessary IRB training. Information about the role of IRB, and structure of UF IRB, will be covered in the first module of this course. I will award a 1% bonus credit to students who successfully register for a UF IRB account and complete the basic IRB training module (IRB803) before the last day of classes. Students will need to turn in their training certifications for proof before receiving the bonus credit.

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 data analysis project. However, students will be allowed to make up missed assignments and/or exams only if they present a valid excused absence 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.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. In general, you are expected to be in class each day and submit all work on time on e-Learning.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: *"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."* It is assumed that you will complete

all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Plagiarism: The Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code states that:

"A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
- Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
- Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author."

UNIVERSITY HONESTY POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. **Click here to read the Conduct Code.** If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

COVID-19 UNIVERSITY POLICY

As Gators, we are characterized by our resilience as well as our commitment to caring for one another. In that vein, the university welcomes – but does not require – people to wear masks on campus. Further, in alignment with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as UF Health, we continue to encourage everyone to vaccinate to minimize their risk of COVID-19. To learn more about COVID-19 vaccines, testing and related topics, visit coronavirus.ufhealth.org.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

IN-CLASS RECORDING

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled.

The only allowable purposes are: (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered

published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

SOFTWARE USE

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

STUDENT PRIVACY

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please **click here** to see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights.

PRIVACY AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES

It is extremely important that students protect their data and privacy when using tools in an online learning environment. Please follow this link for information on best practices for protecting your information <https://security.ufl.edu/resources/for-students/>. The privacy statements for the main online tools used in this course are provided below:

- Instructure (Canvas): <https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy>
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/privacy>

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umat-ter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit the **U Matter, We Care website** to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the **Counseling and Wellness Center website** or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the **Student Health Care Center website**.

University Police Department: Visit the **UF Police Department website** or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the **UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website**.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

E-learning technical support: Contact the **UF Computing Help Desk** at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the **Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage** for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the **Distance Learning Student Complaint Process**.

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

Date	Day	Class	Suggested Reading
August 23	F	Syllabus/Course Overview	
August 26	M	Survey Practice	Ch 1 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
August 28	W	Survey Practice	Ch 1 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
August 30	F	Survey Error	Ch 2 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 2	M	Holiday	Labor Day
September 4	W	Survey Error	Ch 2 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 6	F	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 9	M	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 11	W	Planning a Survey	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 13	F	Planning a Survey HW 1 (Due 11:59PM)	Ch 3 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 16	M	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 18	W	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 20	F	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 23	M	Data Collection Methods	Ch 4 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 25	W	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 27	F	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
September 30	M	Sampling HW 2 (Due 11:59PM)	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 2	W	Sampling	Ch 5 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 4	F	Midterm Exam	
October 7	M	Questionnaire Development I	Ch 8 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 9	W	Questionnaire Development I	Ch 8 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 11	F	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 14	M	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
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Date	Day	Class	Suggested Reading
October 16	W	Questionnaire Development II	Ch 9 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
October 18	F	Holiday	Homecoming
October 21	M	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
October 23	W	Introduction to Experiments HW 3 (Due 11:59PM)	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
October 25	F	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
October 28	M	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
October 30	W	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
November 1	F	Introduction to Experiments	Ch 1,2,3,4,5,6 Friedman and Sunders
November 4	M	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
November 6	W	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
November 8	F	Primer on Data Analysis	Ch 7,8 Friedman and Sunders Ch 16 Singleton and Straits
November 11	M	Holiday	Veterans Day
November 13	W	Sample Size	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
November 15	F	Sample Size	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
November 18	M	Sample Size HW 4 (Due 11:59PM)	Ch 7 Blair, Czaja, & Blair
November 20	W	Presentations	
November 22	F	Presentations	
November 25	M	Holiday	Thanksgiving
November 27	W	Holiday	Thanksgiving
November 29	F	Holiday	Thanksgiving
December 2	M	Presentations	
December 4	W	Presentations	
December 12	T	Final Exam (12:30PM-2:30PM)	MAEB0238

