Learning objective of this course:
This course is designed to familiarize students with the fundamental principles of survey construction and validation. With respect to survey construction topics covered will include format (online, phone, face-to-face, mail, and mixed method), sampling, question wording, cultural tailoring, response option format, order, and avoiding acquiescence bias and breakoffs. In addition students will learn how to pilot and statistically validate scales.

Required Texts:
ISBN: 978-0470465462

ISBN: 9781118456149

ISBN: 9781412980449

Recommended but not required:

Academic Integrity Policy:
The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University’s Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School for Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student’s expulsion from the Communication major or minor, or from the graduate program.
ADA Compliance Statement
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Course Requirements:
1. Attendance --- As we only meet once a week, and much of the material from lecture does not overlap with that of the text, attendance is crucial. If you are absent more than once you must make an appointment to see me or risk losing credit for the course.

2. Reading assignments — The lectures presume you have done the assigned reading prior to coming to class. The lectures will make much more sense if you have done the background reading ahead of time.

3. Weekly assignments. — Ten assignments each focusing on one aspect of survey construction or validation will be due at the beginning of the following class. Each will be worth 3% of your overall grade for a total of 30%.

4. Midterm — A 10-12 page (not counting references and appendices which will contain your survey instrument) research proposal will constitute 30% of your overall grade. This should include a literature review and method section (and a draft of your proposed survey instrument in the appendix). The topic is up to you but must be cleared with me beforehand.

5. Final paper — Students will administer their proposed survey on a small number of individuals from their target population. At least one original scale must be analyzed for validity. These preliminary results will be added to your revised research paper (in the results section). In the traditional discussion section please discuss limitations and future directions you might take with your survey. The entire survey instrument should be included in an appendix. This final research paper should roughly follow the format of an APA research article (intro, methods, results, a discussion section interpreting your findings) and be approximately 15 -20 pages in length (excluding references and appendices) and is worth 30% of your final grade.

6. In class presentation — Students will prepare and present a 10 minute Powerpoint summary of their survey results and the validation of their original scale. This presentation will account for the final 10% of your grade in the course.

Assignments:
Please note that all assignments are to be typed (double-spaced) in 12-point Times Roman font, with 1 inch margins. Be sure to proofread your paper carefully to ensure that it is free of grammatical and spelling errors. If a paper contains 10 or more grammar or spelling errors it will receive a grade of F. (If you are not a native English speaker it is recommended that you have a native English speaker look over your paper for grammar. The content of the paper, however, must be yours alone.) There will also be substantial penalties for assignments turned in after the deadline. An “incomplete” will be given only in an emergency.
Cheating and plagiarism:
Any individual found to have copied the work or ideas of others without appropriate citation will receive an F in this course and will be recommended for expulsion from the University.

Schedule of classes:

1/15 Week 1: Reliability and Validity: Determining what you need to know and how to find out.
This week’s lecture will be dedicated to conveying the importance of having a clearly defined goal guiding your research. Issues of internal, external, face, construct, concurrent, predictive and convergent validity will be discussed.

Required reading:
Chapter 1 & 2 of Survey Methodology (p.1-65)
Chapter 1 in Dillman et. al.

Recommended but not required:
Chapter 1 Schuman and Presser (p.1-14)

1/22 Week 2: Measurement:
The purpose of this lecture is to introduce students to the relative benefits of open versus close-ended response options as well as the advantages of various levels of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio). Finally, we will discuss the issue of nonattitudes and whether the use of response time measurement in surveys is a reliable indicator of attitude strength

Required reading for Measurement:
Chapters 6 Survey Methodology (p.183-211).
Chapters 1, 2, 4 of Dillman et. al.

Other recommended reading:
Chapters 6-7 Schuman and Presser (p.161-199).
Ch. 2 Converse & Presser (p.23-74)

1/29 Week 3: Question wording

Required reading:
Chapter 7 Survey Methodology (p. 217-255)
Chapters 5, 6 and 7 Dillman et. al.

Recommended:
Chapters 3-5 & 11 Schuman and Presser (p. 79-158, p. 275-294)
Chapter 1 Converse & Presser (p.1-14)

2/5: Week 4: Potential biases: Order effects, acquiescence bias, social desirability, and interviewer effects in attitude measurement
This week will introduce students to possible biases that can invalidate survey responses and possible ways to counteract them.

Required Reading for Biases:
Chapters 7 and 9 in Survey Methodology (p. 291-325)
Chapter 2 and 7 in Dillman et. al.

Other recommended reading:
Chapter 8 & Appendix D of Schuman and Presser (p. 203-228 and 341-342)

Issues of memory, self-report and indirect measures.
We review how knowledge about our own behavior is represented in memory and how the structure of autobiographical memory influences what we can recall and how well we can date events in our lives. We also discuss the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) that avoids recall problems altogether by collecting concurrent reports at random moments in time but is expensive and places considerable burden on researchers as well as respondents and the Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) which provides a “cheaper” approximation to ESM. Finally, we discuss the pros and cons of “proxy” reporting where a single household member reports on the behavior of all members.

Required reading:
Chapter 7 in Survey Methodology. (p.217-255)

Other recommended but not required reading:
Chapters 7 to 9 of Sudman, Bradburn, & Schwarz (p.163-197)
2/12 Week 5: Survey Sampling and Design
This week will cover distinctions between various probability and nonprobability sampling techniques (simple random, stratified random and quota, snowball, and convenience) as well as design (cross-sectional, longitudinal and experimental).

Required reading:
- Chapters 3 & 4 Survey Methodology (p.69 -139)
- Chapter 3 in Dillman et al.

2/19 Week 6: Survey Modes followed by one-on-one meetings
Students will be introduced to the relative strengths and weaknesses of face-to-face interviews, phone, online and mail surveys.

Required reading:
- Chapter 5 in Survey Methodology (p.150-179)
- Chapters 8-11 in Dillman et. al.


Recommended reading:

2/26 Week 7: One-on-one meetings (sign up)
Please send Research Questions and Hypotheses ahead of time (and if possible how each construct will be measured).

3/5 Week 8: Tailoring surveys for a multicultural audience.
Culture and ethnicity play a major role in our lives. This lecture will incorporate a summary of the empirical evidence on ethnic differences in survey research.

Required reading:
Chapter 12 in Dillman et. al.
In J. Harkness, F. van de Vijver, & P. Ph. Mohler (Eds.), Cross-cultural survey methods New York: Wiley. (p. 93-100).

Other recommended reading:
Gudykunst and Kim, Chapters 3-5 and 7-14.
In J. Harkness, F. van de Vijver, & P. Ph. Mohler (Eds.), Cross-cultural survey methods (pp.195-204). New York: Wiley.

3/12 Week 9: Midterms Due A literature review and method section (and a draft of your proposed survey instrument in the appendix).

3/19 Week 10: SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

3/26 Week 11: Piloting your instrument
We will discuss piloting techniques such as “talk alouds” or "cognitive interviewing." We describe the process and discuss the legitimacy of these techniques. Timing and trimming are also discussed.

Required Reading:
Chapter 8 of Survey Methodology (p.259-288)
Other recommended reading:
Ch. 3 Converse & Presser (p.79-107)
Chapter 10 of Sudman, Bradburn, & Schwarz

4/1 Week 12: NO CLASS Midterms returned and “pilot” other students surveys

4/9 Week 13: In class review of each other’s surveys.
PRIOR TO CLASS PILOT YOUR CLASSMATE’S SURVEYS ON 2 PEOPLE (preferably with no more than a high school education or less) and be prepared to discuss results and give written comments to both professor and classmates

4/16 Week 14: Validation
Issues of scale and measurement validation will be discussed and demonstrated in class.
Required reading:

Following week hand in:
1. Updated survey instrument.
2. Factor analyses validating all scales in your survey

4/23 Week 15: Guest lecture
Hand in:
1. Updated survey instrument.
2. PLEASE NOTE THAT IN ORDER TO VALIDATE YOUR SCALES YOU WILL NEED TO PILOT YOUR SURVEY TO AT LEAST 10 PEOPLE (at least two with a high school education or less).
3. A write up of your observations and the implications for both your survey and your classmates.

4/30 Week 16: In class presentations and final paper due
In class presentation of final survey and statistical validation of your measures. Include a discussion of changes that would be needed if you ran your survey in another culture.

Other General References:

Below are some useful general reference volumes pertaining to cognitive and communicative aspects of survey measurement:


