

Research Methods in Family and Consumer Studies

FCS 3200-090 Online

Fall 2007

Instructor: Zhou Yu, Ph.D.

<http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/yu/>



When and where: online

What: This four-unit course exposes undergraduate students to the basic research methods employed in social science, particularly those in the field of Family and Consumer Studies. Students will gain experience in reading, analyzing, and utilizing research.

Why: Social science research is a pillar of our modern society. The knowledge gained from science influences all of our lives. With modern technology, access to research is no longer a major hurdle. In the era of overwhelming choice, however, students will have to become a discerning consumer to make most effective use of research. A basic understanding of the strength and the limitation of social science research is a key component of the educational endeavor.

Major topics: 1. basic research designs; 2. ethics in social science research; 3. analysis of quantitative and qualitative data; 4. measurement techniques; 5. methods of data collection; 6. critique of research findings; and 7. using library resources to conduct research.

Class participation is a critical component of the learning experience. Students are required to: 1. actively contribute to the course by checking the course website site at least three days per week; 2. participate in online course discussions (electronic bulletin board) and share with other class members their personal experiences on social science research (post at least one question and one comment per discussion topic); 3. engage in at least one small group online exercise; and 4. use library resources (both online and offline) to conduct research and to develop self-learning skills.

How: There will be three distinct learning modules, which are the introduction to social science theory and research, research design, and specific research methods. Each module will have one assignment, three true/false quizzes, and one exam.

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