

What can surveys tell us?

Department of Political Science and Government
Aarhus University

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1 Basic procedural details

2 First assignment

3 Course Overview

4 Introduction to Surveys

5 Preview of Next Week

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Basic procedural stuff

- Syllabus, slides, etc. are online:
<http://www.thomasleeper.com/surveycourse>
- When should we take breaks?

Basic procedural stuff

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<http://www.thomasleeper.com/surveycourse>
- When should we take breaks?
- Proposal: 11:15–12:00, 12:30–13:15, 13:20–14:00

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Introduce us to you

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- What do you plan to do after AU?

Form groups and discuss

- Share your assignment
- What things are common between your experiences?
- What lessons do you take away from your experience as a research participant?

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Course Objectives

- 1 Identify and analyze the usefulness of survey methods for conducting research and evaluating programs, policies, and outcomes
- 2 Identify sources of error and bias in surveys
- 3 Explain how sampling procedures enable estimation of population parameters and evaluate the implications of differences in sampling techniques
- 4 Demonstrate how to successfully manage large survey data collection efforts
- 5 Evaluate the quality of surveys in terms of sampling, interviewing procedures, and questionnaire content
- 6 Apply methodological and substantive knowledge from the course to the design and implementation of an original survey

Exam

- Home assignment
- 6,000 words
 - Longer if you work collaboratively
- Design and pilot test an original survey
- Present a draft during last two weeks of class

Weekly Activities

- Reading before class
- Short writing assignments due each class
- Mix of discussion, activities, and lecture

Outline

- Surveys, Populations, Sampling (3 weeks)
- Questionnaire design (4 weeks)
- Pilot testing (3 weeks)
- Data management (2 weeks)
- Presentations (1–2 weeks)

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What is a survey?

Why do we do surveys?

Research designs

- Prevalence
- Changes
- Causal Effects

“Think–Pair–Share” Activity

- Take handout
- Read each abstract
- Figure out: How does a survey help the authors answer their research question?

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Next week's agenda

- Populations and sampling frames
- Simple random sampling
- Convenience sampling
- Discuss your proposed research topics

Final activity

- Generate three possible research topics/questions

Final activity

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- Discuss in small groups

Final activity

- Generate three possible research topics/questions
- Discuss in small groups
- Homework: Write up one question in detail

