# **Questionnaire Design**

University of Michigan Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques, 2012, video-linked to Joint Program in Survey Methods at the University of Maryland

**Course:** Survey Methodology 630

**Time:** 4 - 29 June, 10.30-12:30 daily (Monday to Friday)

(No class on 4 June due to Summer Institute orientation)

**Location:** Room 368 (basement) ISR at UMich /

Room 1208 LeFrak Hall at UMD

**Instructors:** 

**Emilia Pevtcheva** (Week 1)

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Pamela Campanelli (Weeks 2 to 4)

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**GSI: Chris Antoun** (Weeks 1 to 4)

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# **Course Description:**

This course focuses on the design of questions and questionnaires used in survey research. The course will explore the theoretical and experimental literature related to question and questionnaire design as well as focusing on practical issues in the design, critique, and interpretation of survey questions that are often not taught in formal courses. There will be exercises both in and outside of class to reinforce theory and practice, including the construction and testing of a class questionnaire.

Discussion will focus on the measurement of both factual and non-factual material. Topics include general principles of writing questions to ensure respondent understanding; techniques for measuring the occurrence of past behaviors and events; the effects of question wording, response formats, and question sequence on responses; an introduction to the psychometric perspectives in multi-item scale design; combining individual questions into a meaningful questionnaire; special guidelines for self-completion surveys (including web surveys) versus interview surveys; strategies for obtaining sensitive or personal information; and an introduction to techniques for testing survey questions.

The expectation is that readings are completed prior to attending the class for which they are assigned, so that the readings can be discussed in class.

#### **Evaluation:**

57% of the final grade for the course will be based on 7 practical problem-solving exercises related to questionnaire design and given as homework assignments (worth 10, 6, 6,12, 2, 15, and 6 points, respectively). Points will be subtracted for late assignments.

40% of the final grade for the course will be from the final exam on the last day of class. This will assess participants' mastery and critical appraisal of the required readings (textbooks and assigned articles).

3% of the final grade will be based on class participation including attendance and asking and answering questions in class.

## **Prerequisite:**

An introductory course in survey research methods or equivalent experience.

### **Office Hours:**

By appointment.

### **Required Texts:**

- 1. Fowler, F.J. Jr., (1995), *Improving Survey Questions: Design and Evaluation*, Applied Social Research Methods Series Volume 38, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- 2. Tourangeau, R., Rips, L.J., and Rasinski, K. (2000), *The Psychology of Survey Response*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 3. DeVellis, R.F. (2012), Scale Development: Theory and Applications, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 4. Articles on website (see section about **Course Website** below)

#### **Course Website:**

The course website (<a href="https://ctools.umich.edu/portal">https://ctools.umich.edu/portal</a>) is at the University of Michigan and is maintained by Jodi Holbrook (<a href="https://biparch.edu">https://ctools.umich.edu/portal</a>), Emilia Peytcheva (<a href="mailto:emilia@umich.edu">emilia@umich.edu</a>), and Pamela Campanelli (<a href="mailto:dr.pamela.campanelli@thesurveycoach.com">dr.pamela.campanelli@thesurveycoach.com</a>) and Chris Antoun.(<a href="mailto:antoun@isr.umich.edu">antoun@isr.umich.edu</a>)

UMD students (and UMich students who wish to use a non-UMich e-mail) will need to get a UMich Friend Account, a special kind of computer account that is used to give non-University of Michigan members access to the general University of Michigan web environment. You can use any e-mail address you want for your Friend Account, but this same e-mail address has to be entered into the CTools system in order for you to access the course materials.

### Steps:

- 1. Tell one of the 4 people above your preferred e-mail address, so it can be put in CTools
- 2. When you receive a reply that it is in, go to <a href="https://friend.weblogin.umich.edu/friend/">https://friend.weblogin.umich.edu/friend/</a> and do what it says to create a Friend Account just a few simple steps.
- 3. You can then go to the CTools site <a href="https://ctools.umich.edu/portal">https://ctools.umich.edu/portal</a>, click on "login in" in the upper right-hand corner, and use your Friend Account login and password.
- 4. This will then show you a tab for Survey Methodology 630 (and any other classes where that e-mail has been entered in CTools)
- 5. On the site under "Assignments", you will also find the actual homework assignments.
- 6. On the site under "Resources", you will find copies of the instructor's powerpoint slides and the required and optional articles to read. Note that some of the readings are password protected. The **password** 'surv630cam' is needed.
- 7. Be sure to contact one of the four people above if you have any problems.

## **Assignment Submission:**

All assignments are to be submitted on Ctools.

- 1. Go to <a href="https://ctools.umich.edu/portal">https://ctools.umich.edu/portal</a> and open the SURVMETH 630 site.
- 2. Then click **Assignments** in the left-hand menubar and click on the name of the assignment to open it.
- 3. Next, click the **Attachments** button.
- 4. Browse for your assignment, select it, and click **Attach**.
- 5. Then click **Save** in the attachments window that appears.
- 6. To submit an assignment when you have finished, click the **Submit** button at the bottom of the screen.

7. Before you submit your assignment, you have the option to Preview it to see how it will look to the instructor, or save it as a Draft and return to it at a later time.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The assignment tool sends out an email notification once your assignment has been submitted successfully. If you do not receive that email notification, it is probably a good idea to re-submit the assignment again.

**Detailed Course Summary:** 

Date	Topic	Required Readings	Date HW Assigned	Date HW Due	Date HW Returned
Tue 6/5	Introduction, Measurement Error, Standardization, and Operationalizing Constructs  • What is measurement error?  • What does standardization mean?  • How do we go from a concept to a question?	<ul> <li>Fowler (1995)-Chapters 1and 4, pages 78-92, 102-103</li> <li>Beatty (1995)</li> <li>Sudman, S., Bradburn, N., and Schwarz, N. (1996). Chapter 3</li> </ul>	Practical exercise 1		
		Optional:  • Fowler, F. and Mangione, T. (1990)			
Wed 6/6	Cognitive Processes Related to Answering Questions  • How does knowing about the response process affect questions we write?  • Strategies for writing good survey questions	<ul> <li>Schaeffer and Presser (2003)</li> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinksi (2000), Chapters 1&amp;2</li> <li>Schwarz, Hippler, and Noelle- Nuemann (1994)</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Krosnick, J. A. (1991)</li> <li>Converse and Presser (1986), pages 9-51</li> </ul>			
Thu 6/7	<ul> <li>Writing Factual and Behavioral Questions</li> <li>Knowledge Questions</li> <li>Measuring behaviors and events</li> <li>Memory and recall</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Belson (1981)</li> <li>Fowler, Chapter 2, pages 8 – 28 only</li> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapter 4</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Loftus, E. and Marburger W. (1983).</li> </ul>			
Fri 6/8	Writing Factual and Behavioral Questions (continued)  • Questions about dates and duration  • Memory issues  • Quasi-facts	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapters 3</li> <li>Belli, R.F. (1998).</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Rips, Conrad, Fricker (2003)</li> <li>Smith (1984)</li> </ul>		Practical exercise 1 10.30 am	

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Date	Topic	Required Readings	Date HW Assigned	Date HW Due	Date HW Returned
Mon 6/11	<ul> <li>In Class Exercise in writing factual questions</li> <li>Constructing Attitude and other Non-Factual Questions</li> <li>Traditional and alternative views on attitudes</li> <li>Belief sampling model</li> <li>What is an attitude, belief, value, behavioral intention?</li> <li>Field coding</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski, K. (2000), Chapter6.</li> <li>Fowler (1995), Chapter 3 and Appendix C</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Converse (1963), pages 1-15.</li> <li>Corsini (1994), pages 114-116.</li> </ul>	Practical exercise 2		Practical exercise 1
Tue 6/12	Constructing Attitude and other Non-Factual Questions (continued)  Problems with agree/disagree format / acquiescence bias  Middle alternatives  No opinion options  How many scale points?  Adjectives vs. numbers vs. other types of scales	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapter 8 Kalton and Schuman (1982)</li> <li>Converse and Presser (1986), pages 35-39.</li> </ul>			
Wed 6/13	Constructing Attitude and other Non-Factual Questions (continued)  Ranking vs. Rating Hypothetical questions Reason why questions Satisfaction questions In Class Exercise in writing non-factual Questions Issues in reporting non-factual data  Multi-Item Scales Why use multi-item scales	<ul> <li>Krosnick and Fabrigar (1997), Chapter 6 in SMPQ</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Thomas and Sturgis (1998)</li> <li>Krosnick (1989)</li> <li>DeVellis (2012), Preface and</li> </ul>	Practical exercise 3	Practical exercise 2 8.30 am	
Thu 6/14	Multi-Item Scales  Psychometric theory Reliability and Validity Construction of scales In-class exercise in multi-item attitude scales In-class exercise (continued)	Chapters 1-5, 8  • Fowler (1995), Chapter 6  Optional: • Heath and Martin (1997)	Practical exercise 4	Practical	Practical exercise 2
6/15	Mode differences  Some differences by mode of data collection Issues for interview surveys  Questionnaire as whole Order of questions Length of questionnaire Covers (for paper questionnaires) Other necessary parts of a questionnaire that aren't respondent questions  Etc.	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinksi (2000), Chapter 10</li> <li>Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009), pages 151-218 from Chapter 6</li> <li>Fowler (1995), Chapter 4, pages 92-102 only</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Czaja and Blair (1996), pages 75-106.</li> </ul>	exercise 5	exercise 3 8.30 am	

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	Topic	Required Readings	Date HW Assigned	Date HW Due	Date HW Returned
Mon 6/18	Questionnaire as a whole (continued)  Special features of the layout of self-completion questionnaires to improve response rates and data quality  Exploring the work of Dillman and colleagues  Visual design suggestions	<ul> <li>Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009), pages 89-106 from Chapter 4</li> <li>Christian and Dillman (2004)</li> </ul>		Practical exercise 5 5.00 pm	Practical exercise 3
Tue 6/19	Special features of self-completion (continued)  • Visual design suggestions  • In-class exercise in visual design  In-class exercise deciding the order of the items in our class questionnaire	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Couper, and Conrad (2004)</li> <li>Stitch and Knauper (2003)</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Smyth, Dillman, Christian, and Stern (2004)</li> </ul>	Practical exercise 6	Practical exercise 4 8.30 am	No feedback given on 5, receive 2 points for submitting Receive set of all survey questions for
	1				ordering exercise
Wed 6/20	Special features of self-completion (continued)  • Examples  • Web surveys	<ul> <li>Couper, Traugott, Lamias (2001)</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Dillman (2007), Chapter 11</li> <li>Peytchev, et al (2006)</li> </ul>			
	Testing Survey Questions  Traditional methods  Overview of alternatives  Expert review  Systematic forms appraisal  Respondent debriefing & vignettes	<ul> <li>Fowler (1995), Chapter 5</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Fowler and Cannell (1996)</li> <li>DeMaio and Rothgeb (1996)</li> <li>Kinsey and Jewell (1998)</li> </ul>			
Thu 6/21	Testing Survey Questions (continued)  Respondent debriefing & vignettes  Focus groups  Behavior coding  Cognitive laboratory methods	<ul> <li>Presser and Blair (1994)</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Willis (2004)</li> <li>Forsyth, Rothgeb, and Willis (2004)</li> </ul>			
Fri 6/22	Testing Survey Questions (continued)  Comparing and combining methods  Additional issues for factual and non-factual questions  Vignettes for measuring decision making  Magnitude estimation  Loaded questions and question balance  Context effects  Other issues for factual questions	<ul> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapter 7</li> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapters 5</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Alexander and Becker (1978)</li> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapter 5</li> </ul>	Practical exercise 7	Practical exercise 6 10.30 am	Practical exercise 4  Receive final class q'naire for use in exercise 7  Receive Exam Questions

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Date	Topic	Required Readings	Date HW Assigned	Date HW	Date HW Returned
			Assigned	Due	Returneu
Mon 6/25	Additional issues for factual and non-factual questions  Other topics (continued)  Cross-Cultural Surveys and Translations Designing questionnaires for cross-cultural implementation Approaches to translating questionnaires Assessing translation quality	<ul><li>Harkness (2003), pages 35-56</li><li>Carrasco (2003)</li></ul>		Practical exercise 7 Data 6.30 pm	Practical exercise 6  No feedback given for exercise 7. Receive 6 points for submitting all parts
Tue 6/26	Asking Sensitive Questions  Why should respondents distort their answers? Issues in measuring distortion  Mode of data collection differences  Solutions:  At the data collection level  At the questionnaire level  At the question level  Unusual techniques  Issues around randomised response  Item count technique  Bogus Pipeline	<ul> <li>Fowler (1995), Chapter 2, pages 28-44 only</li> <li>Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000), Chapter 9</li> <li>Marquis, Duan, Marquis, and Polich (1981), pages 2-8 only</li> <li>Groves (1989), pages 299-304</li> <li>Optional:</li> <li>Biemer, Jordan, Hubbard &amp; Wright (2005)</li> </ul>		Practical exercise 7 Comments 8.30 am	
Wed 6/27	Evaluation of multi-item scales  Questions about the exam	DeVellis (2012)-Preface and Chapters 6-7			
Thu 6/28	Pretest discussion  Discussion of multi-item scales from class questionnaire  Any remaining questions about the exam  Final Exam				Receive, collated comments, final dataset, & multi-item scale results

## **Required Articles:**

- 1. Beatty, P. (1995), Understanding the Standardized/Non-Standardized Interviewing Controversy, *Journal of Official Statistics*, 11(2), 147-160.
- 2. Sudman, S., Bradburn, N.M., and Schwarz, N. (1996), *Thinking About Answers: The Application of Cognitive Processes to Survey Methodology*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Chapter 3, pages 55-79.
- 3. Schaeffer, N.C., and Presser, S. (2003), The Science of Asking Questions, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29: 65-88.
- 4. Schwarz, N., Hippler, H.J., and Noelle-Nuemann, E. (1994), Retrospective Reports: The Impact of Response Formats in N. Schwarz and S. Sudman (Eds.), *Autobiographical Memory and the Validity of Retrospective Reports*, New York: Springer-Verlag. Pages 187-199.
- 5. Belli, R.F. (1998), The Structure of Autobiographical Memory and the Event History Calendar: Potential Improvements in the Quality of Retrospective Reports in Surveys, *Memory*, 6, 383 406.
- 6. Kalton, G. and Schuman, H. (1982), The Effect of the Question on Survey Responses: A Review, *The Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Series A (General), 145(1), 42-57.
- 7. Converse, J. and Presser, S. (1986), Survey Questions: Handcrafting the Standardised Questionnaire, Sage, pages 35-39.
- 8. Krosnick, J.A., and Fabrigar, L.R. (1997), Designing Rating Scales for Effective Measurement in Surveys, in L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. de Leeuw, C. Dippo, N Schwarz, and D. Trewin (eds), *Survey Measurement and Process Quality*, New York: Wiley. Chapter 6, pages 141-164.
- 9. Dillman, D., Smyth, J., and Christian, L.M., (2009), Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method, 3rd edition, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, pages 151-218
- 10. Dillman, D., Smyth, J., and Christian, L.M., (2009), Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method, 3rd edition, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, pages 89-106.
- 11. Christian, L.M. and Dillman, D.A. (2004), The Influence of Graphical and Symbolic Language Manipulations on Responses to Self-Administered Questions, Public Opinion Quarterly, 68(1): 57-80.
- 12. Tourangeau, R., Couper, M., and Conrad, F. (2004), Spacing, Position, and Order: Interpretive Heuristics for Visual Features of Survey Questions, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 68(3): 368-393.
- 13. Stitch, C. and Knauper, B. (2003), Measuring Rare Events, in B. Radcliff and S. Best (eds), Polling America: An Encyclopedia of Public Opinion, Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing.
- 14. Couper, M.P., Traugott, M.W., Lamias, M.J., (2001), Web Survey Design and Administration, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 65, 230-253.
- 15. Presser, S., and Blair, J. (1994), Survey Pretesting: Do Different Methods Produce Different Results?, *Sociological Methodology*, 24, 73-104.
- 16. Harkness, J., (2003), Questionnaire Translation in Comparative Research, in Harkness, et al, (eds), *Cross-Cultural Survey Methods*, New York: Wiley. Pages 35 56.

- 17. Carrasco, L. (2003), Collecting Quality Census Data from Linguistic Minorities, paper presented at the Meetings of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, Arlington, VA.
- 18. Marquis, K.H., Duan, N., Marquis, M.S., and Polich, J.M. (1981), Response Errors in Sensitive Topic Surveys, CA: The Rand Corporation. Pages 2-8 only.
- 19. Groves, R. (1989), Survey Errors and Survey Costs, Wiley Pages 299-304 only.

## **Optional Reading:**

- 1. Fowler, F. and Mangione, T. (1990), *Standardized Survey Interviewing: Minimizing Interviewer-Related Error*, Newbury Park: Sage. Chapter 5, pages 77 95.
- 2. Krosnick, J. A. (1991), "Response strategies for coping with the cognitive demands of attitude measures in surveys." *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 5: 213-236.
- 3. Converse, J., and Presser, S. (1986), *Survey Questions: Handcrafting the Standardized Questionnaire*, Sage Series No 63, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 9-51.
- 4. Belson, W. (1981), *The Design and Understanding of Survey Questions*, Aldershot, Hants: Gower. Pages 350-397.
- 5. Loftus, E. and Marburger W. (1983), Since the Eruption of Mt. St. Helens, Has Anyone Beaten You Up? Improving the Accuracy of Retrospective Reports with Landmark Events, *Memory and Cognition*, 11, 114 120.
- 6. Rips, L.J., Conrad, F.G., and Fricker, S.S. (2003), Seam Effects in Panel Surveys, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 47(4), 522-554.
- 7. Smith, T. (1984), The Subjectivity of Ethnicity, in C.F. Turner and E. Martin, Surveying Subjective Phenomena, Volume 2, New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Pages 117-128.
- 8. Converse, P. (1963), Attitudes and Non-Attitudes: Continuation of a Dialogue, Paper presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Psychology in Washington, DC, August, 1963, Pages 1-15 only
- 9. Corsini, R.J. (Ed.) (1994), Attitudes, In *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, New York: Wiley. Pages 114-116.
- 10. Thomas, R. and Sturgis, P. (1998), Measuring Customer Satisfaction, London: National Centre for Social Research, Project Report 1449.
- 11. Krosnick, J.A. (1989), THE POLLS A Review: Question Wording and Reports of Survey Results: The Case of Louis Harris and Associates and Aetna Life and Casualty, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 53:107-113.
- 12. Heath, A. and Martin, J. (1997), Why Are There so Few Formal Measuring Instruments in Social and Political Research? in L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. de Leeuw, C. Dippo, N Schwarz, and D. Trewin (eds), *Survey Measurement and Process Quality*, New York: Wiley. Chapter 3, pages 71-86.
- 13. Czaja, R. and Blair, J. (2005), Questionnaire Design: Organizing the Questions, in *Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures*, Thousand Oaks California: Pine Forge Press. Chapter 5.
- 14. Smyth, J.D., Dillman, D.A., Christian, L.M. and Stern, M.J. (2004), Effects of Using Visual Design Principles to Group: Response Options in Web Surveys, revision of paper presented at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Phoenix, AZ, May 13, 2004.
- 15. Peytchev, A., Couper, M.P., McCabe, S.E., Crawford, S.D. (2006), Web Survey Design: Paging Versus Scrolling, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 70(4), 596-607

- 16. Fowler, F. Jr., and Cannell, C.F. (1996), Using Behavioral Coding to Identify Cognitive Problems with Survey Questions, in: N. Schwarz and S. Sudman, S.(eds), *Answering Questions: Methodology for Determining Cognitive and Communicative Processes in Survey Research*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Pages 15-36.
- 17. DeMaio, T.J. and Rothgeb, J.M.. (1996), Cognitive Interviewing Techniques in the Lab and in the Field, Chapter 8 in: N. Schwarz and S. Sudman, S.(eds), *Answering Questions: Methodology for Determining Cognitive and Communicative Processes in Survey Research*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Pages 177-195.
- 18. Kinsey, S. and Jewell, D. (1998), A Systematic Approach to Instrument Development in CAI, in Couper, M., Baker, R., Bethlehem, J., Clark, C., Martin, J., Nicholls, W., and O'Reilly, J. (eds), *Computer Assisted Survey Information Collection*, New York: Wiley, Chapter 6, pages 105 -123.
- 19. Willis, G. (2004), *Cognitive Interviewing Revisited: A Useful Technique, in Theory?*, in Presser et al (eds), Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- 20. Forsyth, B., Rothgeb, J., Willis, G. (2004), *Does question pretesting make a difference? An empirical test*, in Presser et al (eds), Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- 21. Alexander, C. and Becker, H. (1978), The Use of Vignettes in Survey Research, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 42: 93-104.
- 22. Biemer, P., Jordan, B. K., Hubbard, M. and Wright, D. (2005), A Test of the Item Count Methodology for Estimating Cocaine Use Prevalence, in J. Kennet and J. Gfroerer (eds), *Evaluating and Improving Methods Used in the National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, Office of Applied Studies.