



Survey Research and Methodology

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The SRAM degree programs prepare students for professional positions and leadership in survey research disciplines within the nation and around the world. The skills and knowledge SRAM students acquire enable them in their professional life to collect, interpret, and present empirical data in cogent and powerful ways.

The Survey Research and Methodology (SRAM) Program offers both Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees. The curricula are interdisciplinary and combine theory with practical application. Students receive a thorough grounding in all aspects of survey methodology from study design through data collection to data analysis.

The M.S. program is a two-year non-thesis program designed to train students to fill the expanding need in the public and private sectors for people who are able to design, execute and analyze survey research. Graduates can expect to find challenging, creative, and well-paid positions in the private and non-profit sectors; in media, research, government, and business. The program requires 45 credits; 27 in the core and elective areas, 9 in a minor area of specialization and 9 in an internship and a related practicum. Core areas studied include general survey methodology, applied sampling, intermediate and advanced statistics, cognitive aspects of survey design, and cross-cultural and cross-national methodology. Minor areas of specialization in the M.S. degree can include Business, Educational Psychology, Marketing, Political Science, Psychology, Public Administration, Sociology or Statistics.

The Ph.D. program is a four-year program that requires a dissertation of original work that advances knowledge in the field of survey methodology. In addition to advanced opportunities in government, business, and non-profit sectors, Ph.D. graduates are expected to have opportunities in academic settings. The Ph.D. requires completion of the M.S. program in Survey Research and Methodology or a comparable qualification. The Ph.D. program requires a minimum of 90 credits. Students will have a choice of emphasis (study tracks) in either statistics or design and implementation more generally. Elective courses may be taken from numerous fields. The completion of the Ph.D. requires a dissertation of original research advancing knowledge in the field of survey methodology.

The underlying philosophy common to both M.S. and Ph.D. programs in Survey Research and Methodology is reflected in their interdisciplinary curricula and the combination of theory and practice in instruction.

Research Opportunities. Students in the graduate program in Survey Research and Methodology will have access to research opportunities through assistantships, on-going faculty research, conference participation, as well as internships and practica.

Opportunities Abroad. The Survey Research and Methodology Program currently has two exchange programs with European universities. One is a one-semester exchange program with the post-graduate program in Quantitative Analysis at the Catholic University in Brussels, Belgium, the other is an exchange program with the Social Research Methodology graduate program at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, a program which focuses on topics related to instrument design and data collection.

Applications to SRAM. Students seeking admission must apply through the UNL Office of the Graduate Studies. The application can be found at:

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/prospective/app-degree.shtml>

Applications are due by March 1 of each year.

Graduate Studies also requires applicants to submit test scores from all sections of the Graduate Records Examinations (GRE) or from the GMAT (for students seeking to minor in Marketing); two official copies of transcripts from all colleges/universities attended. Where relevant, students from abroad are also required to submit TOEFL results. These items should be mailed to:

Graduate Admissions Office

1100 Seaton Hall

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lincoln NE 68588-0619

All applicants must submit a personal statement explaining their interest in pursuing a degree in survey research and methodology and include three letters of recommendation. The personal statement and letters of recommendation are to be sent to:

SRAM Program Admissions

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

200 North 11th Street

Lincoln, NE 68588-0241

SRAM Funding Opportunities: The Gallup Organization funds a number of scholarships for the SRAM M.S. degree program. SRAM applicants interested in applying for one of these scholarships are asked to take the Clifton StrengthsFinder®. Students accepted into the PhD degree program normally receive SRAM graduate assistantships. For more information on these funding opportunities, please contact the SRAM office.

All UNL programs have possibilities to fund exceptional out-of-state and minority students.

Master of Science Program Description

The curriculum constitutes a total of 45 credit hours of study, divided between 27 credit hours in the core and elective research areas, 9 credit hours in the student's minor area of specialization, and 9 credit hours in the student's internship and practicum.

Master of Science Curriculum

An introductory (undergraduate) statistics course is a program prerequisite. New students lacking this prerequisite will be expected to fulfill this requirement *without program credit* in their first semester of study.

Major Requirements (27 credits)

Core Areas:

One course (or equivalent) from each of the 8 areas listed below (24 credits) and one elective (3 credits) is required.

1. Survey Design: Introductory questionnaire design; mail, telephone, personal interviews; response rates; sampling strategies; and logic of survey analysis.

SRAM 865

2. Research Design: Experimental design; quasi-experimental design; panel designs; and quantitative v. qualitative data collection and analysis.

SRAM 898

STAT 802

3. Measurement: Reliability, validity, bias; measurement models; and scale analysis.

EDPS 870

SRAM/EDPS 970

4. Sampling: Sampling design; variance estimation and adjustment; and response rates and bias.

SRAM 950C

STAT 804

5. Cognitive Aspects of Survey Design: Questionnaire design; cognitive and communicative processes in answering survey questions; question- and response- order effects; attitude measurement; measurement of facts and behaviors.

SRAM/PSYC 946

SRAM/PSYC 947

6. Cross Cultural Survey Research: Study design; study specifications; study management; instrument design; instrument adaptation and translation; instrument testing; data collection.

SRAM 8##

SRAM 9##

7. Intermediate Statistics: Multivariate analysis; ordinary least squares and logit regression; and analysis of interaction effects.

EDPS 969
 SRAM/SOCI 863
 SRAM/EDPS 941
 SRAM/EDPS 942
 STAT 870
 STAT 880

8. Advanced Statistics: Structural equation modeling; modeling categorical data; discriminant analysis; general linear models; and conjoint analysis.

SRAM/MRKT 824
 SRAM 898
 SRAM/SOCI 902
 SRAM/EDPS 971
 SRAM/EDPS 972
 STAT 873
 STAT 875
 STAT 882
 STAT 883
 STAT 885
 STAT 970

Please Note: One course each (or equivalent) from the intermediate and advanced statistics areas, or two courses from the advanced statistics area (6 credits), are required. Courses in the Core Areas may NOT be taken as Pass/No Pass. SRAM students are required to earn a grade of B or better in each Core Area course.

Research Electives (3 credits)

With the major adviser's approval, students choose one additional course to broaden one's training in survey research and methodology. A course used to fill one of the required content areas may not also be used as an elective, but with the adviser's approval, a student can take a *second* course from a required topic area and have this count as an elective. Electives may include courses in research methods, analysis, the theory of public opinion, program evaluation, qualitative methods, philosophy of science, market research, consulting, data reporting or other areas, at the adviser's discretion.

Minor Requirements (9 credit hours)

Students in Survey Research and Methodology choose a minor area of specialization from a wide variety of fields. Minor areas of specialization may include concentrations in sociology, political science, psychology, educational psychology, marketing, statistics, journalism, public administration, or education. This allows students to hone their skills and knowledge for particular future career environments, Students will select a minor area adviser in their selected area of specialization who will assist in the selection of courses in this area. Some minor specializations require 12

credit hours. In such cases, students may elect to use one course as both a research elective and as a minor requirement.

Internship and Practicum (9 credit hours total). Students in the Survey Research and Methodology MS program are required to complete an internship (6 credits) and practicum (3 credits). Internship opportunities will be arranged with one of several commercial survey and market firms, media groups, governmental agencies, academic research establishments and nonprofit associations. These internships normally take place between the students' first and second years of residence.

Internship (6 credits)

The internship is a crucial component of student training in the SRAM program and reflects our philosophy of combining survey practice with theory. As part of their participation in actual research settings, students may be required to attend seminars covering ethics, contribute to grant writing, and work with statistical packages (e.g., SPSS, SAS, LIMDEP, GAUSS, S-PLUS, Stata) or data collection systems (e.g., CAPI, CASI, CATI).

Practicum (3 credits)

Students complete a written practicum that is based on elements of their internship. .

More information on the internship/practicum can be found at:

http://sram.unl.edu/programs/courses_ms.htm

Advising. All students are assigned a major adviser. M.S. students will select a minor areas adviser.

Comprehensive Final Examination. M.S. student must pass a written comprehensive examination covering the core areas of survey research and methodology at the M.S. level.

Doctor of Philosophy Program Description

The Ph.D. program builds on the kind of skills and knowledge acquired in the SRAM M.S. program in Survey Research and Methodology. To be admitted into the Ph.D. program, applicants must usually have completed a Master's degree or its equivalent in Survey Research and Methodology, or a related field accepted by the Graduate Committee. Anyone accepted into the program may be required to complete courses that demonstrate that their credentials match the skills and knowledge that students acquire from earning an M.S. in Survey Research and Methodology. These required courses must be completed in order to become eligible to have a Supervisory Committee appointed. Decisions about which courses are required will rest with the Graduate Committee.

The Ph.D. program consists of a minimum of 90 credit hours. These may include transfer credits for students who have earned degrees outside of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; 45 credit hours must be earned after the appointment of the Ph.D. student's

Supervisory Committee. No courses may be taken on a Pass / No Pass basis and all Ph.D. students are required to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

The Ph.D. program is designed to train students both in the issues that govern sound survey research practice and in the theoretical frameworks of those disciplines that contribute to Survey Research and Methodology. Students will opt for either statistical or design and implementation tracks, each of which have their own sets of requirements. The Ph.D. dissertation must consist of an original research contribution that advances knowledge in the field of Survey Research and Methodology and demonstrates the candidate's expertise in both practice and theory.

Doctor of Philosophy Curriculum

Language and Research Tool Requirement

Prior to admission to candidacy students must demonstrate proficiency in technical and scientific writing. The student's supervisory committee may require course work as part of the language and research tool requirement.

Core Requirements (21 credit hours)

Core requirements are designed to ensure that students acquire the methodological and theoretical skills necessary to design sound Survey Research and Methodological studies. The following courses (or equivalents) are required:

SRAM 947

SRAM 8## or SRAM 9##

STAT 880

Three special topics courses are required (SRAM 998D). These courses are in Data Collection Methods, Survey Management, and Advanced Sampling, respectively.

One of the following courses is also required:

SRAM/EDPS 970

EDPS 980

Comprehensive Examination

In order to advance to candidacy (to be able to submit a dissertation), the student must pass a written comprehensive examination demonstrating mastery of the core areas of Survey Research and Methodology.

Statistical or Design and Implementation Tracks (minimum of 15 credit hours)

Each student's supervisory committee will tailor a program of study that best matches the student's interests and strengths. Students will decide either to follow a statistical track or to follow a design and implementation track in their course of studies. Within either track, their studies will concentrate on essential aspects that contribute to Survey Research and Methodology.

Within the statistical track, students will be required to complete course work and seminars dealing with statistical, probability and sampling theory. For example, courses on the general linear model, mixed and hierarchical linear models, issues in advanced

sampling, finite mixture models, analysis of data from complex sample designs, missing data imputation and related topics will be included in this track.

Within the design and implementation track, students complete course work in their areas of interest such as cognitive and social psychology, health and educational research, cross-cultural comparative research, or in any social science discipline that is dependent on survey data to draw scientific inferences.

Dissertation Research (minimum of 12 credit hours). As an original contribution to the knowledge base of Survey Research and Methodology, the dissertation must consist of an empirical study that includes analysis of primary or secondary data sources, or both. For completion of degree requirements, in addition to a written dissertation, students must pass an oral dissertation defense as required by the Graduate School.

Courses of Instruction (SRAM)

824. Advanced Quantitative Analysis in Marketing

(MRKT 824) (3 credits) Prerequisite: Permission.

For course description, see MRKT 824.

863. Advanced Methods of Social Research II (SOC 863) (3 credits)

For course description, see SOC 863.

865. Survey Design and Analysis (SOC 865) (3 credits)

Basic issues related to the design and analysis of sample surveys. Basics of questionnaire construction, sampling, data collection, analysis, and data presentation.

895. Internship (3-6 credits) Prerequisite: Permission.

Experience applying concepts and methods of survey research in preparation for a professional career.

896. Practicum in Survey Research and Methodology (3 credits) Prerequisite:

Permission.

Application of theory and research gained during internship.

898. Special Topics (3 credits, max. 24 credits)

Topic varies.

899. Master's Thesis (6-10 credits) Prerequisite: Admission to Master's degree program and permission of major advisor.

902. Seminar in Research Methods (SOC 902) (3 credits, max 9 credits) Prerequisite:

Permission.

For course description, see SOC 902.

941. Intermediate Statistics: Experimental Methods (EDPS 941) (3 credits)

Prerequisite: EDPS 859.

For course description, see EDPS 941.

942. Intermediate Statistics: Correlational Methods (EDPS 942) (3 credits)

Prerequisite: EDPS 859 or equivalent.

For course description, see EDPS 942.

946. Psychology of Survey Response (PSYC 946) (3 credits)

Current theories in cognitive and social psychology that affect language comprehension and memory will be related to the dynamics of survey interviewing, and to principles of effective survey design. Specific topics will include effects of question wording on comprehension, the impact of response alternatives on respondents' answers, effects of question order and context on attitude measurement, and the communicative and retrieval processes that affect the validity of retrospective behavioral reports.

947. Questionnaire Design (PSYC 947) (3 credits)

This course focuses on the design of questionnaires used in survey research and the theoretical and practical issues that arise in their development, application, and interpretation. The major emphasis is on the selection of appropriate measurement techniques for assessing opinions, past behaviors and events, factual material, and self-assessments using survey questions. Topics include: semi-structured vs. structured interviews, the effects of question wording, response formats, and question sequence on responses, techniques for measuring the occurrence of past behaviors and events, and strategies for obtaining sensitive or personal information.

970. Theory and Methods of Educational Measurement (EDPS 970) (3 credits)

Prerequisite: EDPS 859 and 870; SRAM/EDPS 941; or equivalent.

For course description, see EDPS 970.

971. Structural Equation Modeling (EDPS 971) (3 credits)

Prerequisite: SRAM/EDPS 942 and 970; or equivalent.

For course description, see EDPS 971.

972. Multivariate Analysis (EDPS 972) (3 credits)

Prerequisite: SRAM/EDPS 941 and 942.

For course description, see EDPS 972.

998D. Seminar in Special Topics (MRKT 998D) (3 credits)

Prerequisite. Permission

999. Doctoral Dissertation (1-24 credits) Prerequisite: Admission to doctoral degree program and permission of supervisory committee chair.