1. **ERMA 8200 Survey Research Methods**  
3 credit hours

2. **Semester Summer 2012**  
   Instructor: Joni M. Lakin  
   4032 Haley Center  
   (334) 844-4930  
   joni.lakin@auburn.edu  
   Office Hours: By appointment

3. **Resources**
   Required:

   Other resources (on reserve at RBD Library when possible):

4. **Course Description:** Overview of survey research, sampling issues, selection and construction of survey instruments, scaling techniques, response effects, issues influencing response rate, reliability and validity of survey data, and analysis of data.

5. **Course Objectives**
   Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:
   - recognize and discuss the uses of survey research
   - recognize and apply the appropriate estimates of reliability and validity
   - prepare an IRB application and cover letter
   - discuss the advantages and limitations of different sampling procedures
   - compare and contrast different modes (paper, electronic, personal interview, etc.) of survey administration
   - describe procedures used to increase response rate in survey research
   - construct a measurement instrument in accordance with guidelines discussed in class and the research literature
   - pilot test a measurement instrument developed in class
   - determine the appropriate data analysis procedure(s) given a specific set of research questions
   - prepare a report detailing instrument development, pilot study, sampling and procedures used to implement the measurement instrument.

**Note:** We will be using the new learning management system, Canvas, for this course. Check the Canvas site frequently for announcements and handouts for class.
### 6. Tentative Course Content and Schedule

| Meeting 1  
6/26 | Survey design basics  
Research questions and purpose | Assignments due at start of class |
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<td><strong>Start A1: Research purpose</strong></td>
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| Meeting 2  
6/28 | Survey design basics cont’d  
Andres Ch. 1 and 2 (intro) | A2 [in class]: Survey critique  
*Bring a survey and related research study from the literature* |
| Meeting 3  
7/3 | Survey blueprints  
Andres Ch. 3 (concepts) | A1: Research purpose (1-2pp) |
| Meeting 4  
7/5 | No class—work on blueprint, start writing items | |
| Meeting 5  
7/10 | Item development  
Andres Ch. 4 and 5 (formats)  
Dillman et al. Ch. 4  
Schwarz (1999)  
Sapsford Ch. 11  
Other resources on Canvas | A3: Survey blueprint |
| Meeting 6  
7/12 | Validity and reliability data collection techniques  
Item analysis  
Andres Ch. 7 (val and rel)  
*Anastasi & Urbina Ch 4* | A4: Bring draft of survey to class (2-3 copies) |
| Meeting 7  
7/17 | Peer review | A5: Reliability and validity plan (including pilot testing) (1p)  
A6: Turn in a copy of peer reviews (1p) |
| Meeting 8  
7/19 | Sampling approaches, response rate  
Andres Ch. 6 and 8 (sampling)  
Fink *Survey Handbook* Ch 2 | A7: Sampling plan (1p) |
| Meeting 9  
7/24 | Analytical methods  
Andres Ch. 9 and 10 | A8: Pilot testing report (1-2pp), due July 31, midnight  
*Final project due July 31, midnight* |
| Meeting 10  
7/26 | IRB and recruitment | |
| Finals week  
7/29-8/1 | | |
7. Assignments

All of the assignments are intended to help you think about your survey and design plans. These are details that you will need in your dissertation or (more succinctly written) in a journal article. Most assignments can be turned in through Canvas or on paper. Either format is fine, but all assignments are due at the start of class unless otherwise noted.

A1: Research purpose (2-3pp)

1. Describe your research topic. What are the research questions you want to answer? Why is this topic important? Support this using pertinent research (citations). Attach an annotated bibliography consisting of a minimum of three research studies.

2. What are the variables/constructs to be measured? Identify the variables in terms of constructs in the above research questions to be measured using a survey. Explain why a survey would be most appropriate. You will likely have to specify factors that define a construct (e.g., motivation is not a unitary construct directly measured, you have to use a theory of motivation to identify the factors that comprise motivation).

A2: Survey critique (2-3pp)

1. Find a survey (and a related research study) that pertains to your research interests.

2. Review the study and survey: What was the purpose of the study (research questions)? What variables were intended to be measured using the survey? What evidence is provided (or should be provided) to support survey instrument (e.g. reliability, validity, etc…)? What were the study details in terms of who was sampled, how the survey was administered and what findings emerged, etc.?

3. Critique the survey/study. What were the greatest strengths and what were the limitations?

4. Describe how this study and instrument can be used to help you design your research project.

A3: Survey blueprint

1. Prepare a survey blueprint that summarizes the major components/sections of the survey. Define each component carefully and estimate the number of items per component.

2. Include supporting references that support the inclusion of each section/component.

2. Specify the types of items to be developed.

A4: Draft survey

1. Submit a full draft of your survey instrument (include your updated survey blueprint)

A5: Reliability and validity plan (1-2pp)

1. For your study, what type(s) of reliability are most appropriate and how will they be supported?

2. What type(s) of validity are most appropriate and how will they be supported? Specifically, what kind of data needs to be collected to provide each type of validity evidence?
**A6: Summarize main points of peer reviews (1p)**

1. Submit your review of a peer’s survey instrument (this can be written comments or a marked up copy of the survey). In this review, provide constructive feedback pertaining to:
   
   a. Overall layout/design and flow of survey
   
   b. Clarity of directions
   
   c. Survey item and response scales/formats – appropriateness, item order, validity, etc.

2. Give detailed comments to the survey author as soon as you can so that they can incorporate this feedback in their survey.

**A7: Sampling plan (1-2pp)**

1. Describe the target population as well as the accessible population. Who will be sampled?

2. Describe the sampling approach (random, stratified, purposeful, etc.) and explain why this is most appropriate. Describe the tradeoffs of the approach you choose.

3. How will the survey be administered? (mail, phone, electronic, mixed) and explain why this approach is most appropriate. Describe the tradeoffs (costs/benefits, pros/cons) of the method you choose.

4. What attempts/approaches will be used to maximize the response rate to this survey?

**A8: Pilot testing report (1-2pp)**

1. Identify an appropriate pilot testing plan (Can you collect enough data to do item analyses? Or should you do a think aloud with 2-3 people?)

2. Recruit an appropriate number of participants for your pilot test (remember their data will not contribute to your research sample)

3. Summarize your findings and how you plan to respond to the results of the pilot test

**Final project components:**

1. Purpose statement with research questions [refined since week 1] (1p)

2. Final version of survey with cover letter. Prepare a cover letter/email to be sent to potential respondents. Be sure to include the necessary IRB elements/guidelines in this cover letter. Also, make sure the letter is reasonably compelling to potential respondents.

3. Copy of IRB CITI training certificate showing that you completed the basic units.

4. Complete a draft of your IRB protocol. Forms and training can be accessed from the link below: [http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/](http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/)

**Bonus points**

An assignment for bonus points is available. It is described on Canvas under “Pages”. All bonus point assignments must be completed by July 31, midnight. **No additional bonus opportunities are available.**
8. Course Requirements and Evaluation

Learning Methods: Lectures, discussions, readings, class exercises and projects.

Student Assessment

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
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<td>Homework, In-class Activities</td>
<td>75%</td>
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You MUST be in class to earn in-class activity points.

Grading Scale: A: 90 – 100%  B: 80 – 89%  C: 70 – 79%  D: 60 – 69%  F: below 60%

9. Class Policy Statements

Attendance Policy
- Attendance is expected, but not required. If you miss class, you will need to get notes from another student.
- I will start class on time, so if you are late you will need to get notes from another student.

Late Assignments Policy
- Assignments turned in late will receive a 5% reduction in earned points per day. The only exception will be in the case of emergency.
- Except for in-class work, all work must be typed or it will not be graded. Late penalty will be applied to work completed in writing and then turned in late in typed format for a grade.

Incompletes and Withdrawals
Grades associated with incomplete course work or withdrawal from class will be assigned in strict conformity to University policy (see Auburn University Bulletin). If you wish to drop this course you may do so by the 10th class day with no grade assignment. From the 10th class day to mid-semester a W (withdrawn-passing) grade will be recorded in your transcripts. After this period withdrawal from the course will only be granted under unusual circumstances and must be approved by the Dean of the College of Education.

Note that the incomplete grade (IN) policy is in effect. The new policy requires that students complete a form requesting that an IN grade be assigned. If this form in not completed and given to the instructor of the class, a grade will be assigned with a score of zero (0) for work that has not been completed and turned in by the time the instructor reports grades.

Academic Misconduct
The Department of EFLT recognizes university policy regarding academic misconduct. Violations include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance during examinations, submitting another’s work product as your own, using another’s words as your own without appropriate citation, sharing unauthorized materials with another that contain questions or answers to examinations, altering or attempting to alter assigned grades. In accordance with University policy regarding academic misconduct, students may be subject to several sanctions upon violations of the Student Academic Honesty Code. See the Tiger Cub publication for the current year for specifics regarding academic misconduct as well as student’s rights and responsibilities associated with the Code.

Disability Accommodations
Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the PSD office, but need accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).