

MA SOCIOLOGY (PGCF-NEP)

Courses Required under Structure III of the PGCF NEP Based Program*

Course Type	Course Title	Semester*	Credits
DSC-11	Specialising in Sociological Research	III	4 (L3+T1)
DSC-12	Advanced Research Methodology in Sociology	III	2 (L1+T1)
SBC-7**	Tools of Research in Sociology	III	4 (L3+T1)

**The already approved SBC-3: Academic Writing Course will be offered Structure III requirement of a course on Techniques of Research Writing.*

***This course can also be opted for by students in “Coursework only” and “Coursework+Research” Tracks*

DSC-11: Specialising in Sociological Research

Course Title and Code	Credits	Credit Distribution for the Course			Eligibility Criteria	Pre-requisite of the course if any
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/Practice		
DSC-11: Specialising in Sociological Research	4	3	1	0	Bachelor's Degree	This course is compulsory for those opting for research track in MA Sociology

Course Objectives:

This course aims to:

1. Provide a structured research scaffold for the chosen area of sociological inquiry.
2. Enable the scholar to situate their research within the broader disciplinary traditions, debates and theoretical frameworks of sociology.
3. Equip the scholar to select and justify a research design, methodology and data collection strategy appropriate to their chosen research topic.
4. Develop the scholar's capacity to generate, organise and analyse data derived from their area of inquiry.
5. Cultivate habits of critical reflexivity, ethical sensitivity and scholarly writing

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to

- i. *Locate their chosen research area within relevant sociological traditions, key debates and theoretical frameworks.*
- ii. *Critically review existing literature in the area and identify a researchable gap.*
- iii. *Design a research study — including selection of paradigm, methods and sampling strategy — suited to the area and research question.*
- iv. *Collect and manage data using instruments appropriate to the research, while maintaining ethical standards.*
- v. *Analyse and interpret data drawn from the area and situate findings within existing scholarship.*

Syllabus of the Course:

Unit I: Situating the Research Area — Concepts, Debates and Key Questions (12 Hours)

This unit grounds the scholar in the intellectual landscape of their chosen research area. Working from their identified research focus, the scholar will trace the emergence of the area within sociology, map its key concepts and theoretical traditions, review the existing empirical literature, and arrive at a clearly formulated research problem.

(The content of each session will be specific to the scholar's research).e

- a. Historical emergence and disciplinary location of the area within sociology
- b. Key concepts and theoretical frameworks in the area
- c. Major empirical debates and scholarly positions
- d. Formulating a research problem, research questions and objectives specific to the area

Unit II: Designing the Study — Research Approaches and Methods (12 Hours)

This unit addresses the design of the scholar's study. Drawing on the problem and questions formulated in Unit I, the scholar will select and justify a research paradigm, design, and set of methods. Attention is given to the methodological traditions dominant in the chosen area, the specific ethical challenges it raises, and the practical dimensions of site, sample and access.

- a. Dominant research traditions and methodological debates in the chosen area
- b. Selecting and justifying a research paradigm and design
- c. Site, sample, access and ethical considerations specific to the area
- d. Writing and peer-review of the full research proposal

Unit III: Entering the Field — Data Generation in the Chosen Area (11 Hours)

This unit moves from design to practice. The scholar conducts initial data collection and reflects on the field experience. Problems of access, positionality and reflexivity will be examined in the context of the scholar's specific area, site and population.

- a. Piloting and refining the data collection instrument
- b. Conducting primary data collection using methods appropriate to the area

- c. Secondary, archival and digital sources relevant to the area
- d. Field notes, positionality, reflexivity and data organisation

Unit IV: Making Knowledge — Analysis, Writing and Dissemination (10 Hours)

The final unit turns collected data into sociological knowledge. The scholar applies an analytical strategy suited to the area, interprets findings in relation to existing literature, and produces a draft research chapter or article.

- a. Applying an analytical strategy appropriate to the area and research design
- b. Interpreting findings in relation to existing literature on the area
- c. Drafting and revising a research chapter or article

Examination Scheme:

Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.

Tutorial Activities:

Tutorial sessions are structured as research workshops. In Unit I, the scholar presents an annotated review of five key texts from their area for peer discussion. In Unit II, the scholar's research proposal is subjected to a structured peer critique focusing on problem clarity, design fitness, and ethical completeness. In Unit III, the scholar pilots their data collection instrument before the seminar group. In Unit IV, the scholar shares a draft section of their research write-up for guided peer feedback.

Additional tutorial activities will be decided by the course teacher each year and may include presentations and discussions of key texts in the scholar's area; reviews of relevant films, documentaries or oral history archives; problem-solving exercises and writing tasks. Students will be evaluated on the basis of assigned tasks.

Unit-Wise Reading List:

Note: This reading list will be specific to the scholar's research. For each unit, the scholar will identify 6–10 sources — books, journal articles, and other scholarly materials — relevant to their chosen area of inquiry. Sources should be listed in a consistent citation style (APA or Chicago). The list is submitted as part of the Unit I output (Annotated Bibliography) and updated at each subsequent stage.

Unit I: Situating the Research Area

A foundational text 1 in the area — author, year, title, publisher, relevant chapters

A foundational text 2 — a key theoretical work that anchors the area

A key empirical study in the area, ideally with an Indian context

A major review article or handbook chapter that maps debates in the area]

A text that introduces the area in relation to a global South / Indian sociological tradition

Unit II: Designing the Study

A methodological text that discusses how the area is studied: e.g. an ethnographic study, a survey methodology paper, a mixed methods exemplar

A research design text or chapter specifically applicable to the area

An ethics guideline or paper relevant to the area's population or method

A reflexivity or positionality paper relevant to the area

Additional methodological sources as needed

Unit III: Entering the Field

A fieldwork account from the area — memoir, field report or reflexive methodological essay

A key secondary or archival sources used in data collection for this area

A text on data management or coding practices in the area

Additional field-related sources

Unit IV: Making Knowledge

A text that exemplifies the analytical approach used in this area

A writing guide or style manual relevant to sociological writing

A recent journal article from a key journal in the area: to study its structure and argument
Additional sources as needed for analysis and interpretation

Suggested Readings:

Additional texts recommended for broader context: works adjacent to the area, interdisciplinary sources, or foundational sociological texts that illuminate the area from unexpected angles.

MA SOCIOLOGY (PGCF-NEP)

DSC-12: Advanced Research Methodology in Sociology

Course Title and Code	Credits	Credit Distribution for the Course			Eligibility Criteria	Pre-requisite of the course if any
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/Practice		
DSC-12: Advanced Research Methodology in Sociology	2	1	1	0	Bachelor's Degree	This course is compulsory for those opting for research track IN MA Sociology

Course Objectives:

This course aims to:

1. Deepen the scholar's understanding of the epistemological and ontological foundations that underpin different traditions of sociological inquiry.
2. Introduce advanced qualitative methods — including ethnography, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative and visual methods — and develop the scholar's capacity to deploy them rigorously.
3. Familiarise the scholar with advanced quantitative and mixed methods approaches, including multivariate analysis, survey design and mixed methods integration strategies.
4. Equip the scholar to critically evaluate published research for its methodological choices, assumptions and limitations.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to

- i. *Articulate and defend a coherent epistemological position for their own research.*
- ii. *Select and apply advanced qualitative or quantitative methods appropriate to their research question.*
- iii. *Critically evaluate the methodological design and analytical strategies of published sociological studies.*

- iv. *Produce a rigorous and ethically grounded research design for a study in their chosen area.*

Syllabus of the Course:

Unit I: Epistemological Foundations of Sociological Research (4 Hours)

This unit revisits the philosophical bases of social research at an advanced level. Rather than surveying paradigms, it asks the scholar to take and defend an epistemological position. It examines realism, interpretivism, critical theory and postcolonial critiques of knowledge, and explores how these positions shape every subsequent research decision — from question formulation to analysis.

- a. Ontology and epistemology: realism, constructivism and critical realism in sociology
- b. Positivism and its critiques: interpretivism, standpoint theory and reflexive sociology
- c. Feminist and postcolonial epistemologies: situated knowledge and the politics of research
- d. Epistemology in practice: how philosophical commitments shape design, method and analysis

Unit II: Advanced Qualitative Methods (4 Hours)

This unit moves beyond introductory qualitative methods to engage with more specialised and theoretically demanding approaches. It covers multi-sited ethnography, constructivist grounded theory, narrative and oral history methods, and discourse and visual methods. For each approach, both its theoretical basis and its practical application are examined through methodological readings and exemplary studies.

- a. Ethnography: multi-sited, institutional and online variants
- b. Grounded theory: constructivist and situational analysis approaches
- c. Narrative, oral history and life history methods
- d. Discourse and visual methods

Unit III: Advanced Quantitative and Mixed Methods (4 Hours)

This unit addresses quantitative and mixed methods approaches at a level appropriate for postgraduate research. It covers the logic and practice of survey design, multivariate analysis, and the principles of integrating qualitative and quantitative data. It also introduces scholars to the possibilities and limitations of computational and digital methods for sociological inquiry.

- a. Survey design and scale construction: validity, reliability and measurement in sociological research
- b. Multivariate analysis: logic of regression, cross-tabulation and analysis of variance; reading and interpreting statistical output
- c. Mixed methods designs: integration strategies, triangulation and the qualitative-quantitative divide
- d. Computational and digital methods: big data, text analysis and their sociological applications and limits

Unit IV: Research Ethics, Critique and Scholarly Communication (3 Hours)

This unit addresses research ethics at an advanced level — moving from procedural compliance to substantive ethical reasoning — and develops the scholar's capacity to critically evaluate published research and communicate their own work to scholarly audiences. It culminates in a seminar presentation in which each scholar defends a research design of their choice.

- a. Research ethics beyond consent: reciprocity, representation, harm and the politics of knowledge production
- b. Critical evaluation of published research: assessing epistemological consistency, design fitness and analytical rigour
- c. Writing for publication: argument structure, peer review and journal selection
- d. Research design defence: scholar presents and defends a full research design before the seminar group

Examination Scheme:

Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.

Tutorial Activities:

Tutorial sessions will be structured as methods seminars and critique workshops. In Unit I, students will present and defend their epistemological position to the seminar group. In Units II and III, students will bring a published study using the method under discussion and lead a structured methodological critique. In Unit IV, students will present their research design and receive structured feedback from peers and the course teacher.

Additional tutorial activities will be decided by the course teacher each year and may include close reading of methodological appendices in monographs; workshop exercises in coding, transcription or data analysis; and peer review of written work. Students will be evaluated on the basis of assigned tasks.

Unit-Wise Reading List:

Unit I: Epistemological Foundations

Bhaskar, R. 1975. *A Realist Theory of Science*. Leeds Books.

Bourdieu, P. 2004. *Science of Science and Reflexivity*. Polity Press.

Harding, S. 1987. Introduction: Is There a Feminist Method? In S. Harding (ed.) *Feminism and Methodology*. Indiana University Press.

Smith, L.T. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books. (Chapters 1 & 2)

Sayer, A. 2000. *Realism and Social Science*. Sage Publications. (Chapter 1)

Unit II: Advanced Qualitative Methods

Marcus, G.E. 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117.

- Charmaz, K. 2014. *Constructing Grounded Theory*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1, 3 & 5)
- Portelli, A. 1981. The Peculiarities of Oral History. *History Workshop Journal* 12: 96-107.
- Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Polity Press. (Chapters 1 & 4)
- Pink, S. 2013. *Doing Visual Ethnography*. 3rd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapter 2)

Unit III: Advanced Quantitative and Mixed Methods

- Fowler, F.J. 2014. *Survey Research Methods*. 5th ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1, 2 & 4)
- Allison, P.D. 1999. *Multiple Regression: A Primer*. Pine Forge Press.
- Creswell, J.W. and V.L. Plano Clark. 2017. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. 3rd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1 & 3)
- Salganik, M.J. 2018. *Bit by Bit: Social Research in the Digital Age*. Princeton University Press. (Chapters 2 & 3)

Unit IV: Research Ethics, Critique and Scholarly Communication

- Hammersley, M. and A. Traianou. 2012. *Ethics in Qualitative Research: Controversies and Contexts*. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1 & 5)
- Burawoy, M. 2005. *For Public Sociology*. *American Sociological Review* 70(1): 4-28.
- Becker, H.S. 2008. *Writing for Social Scientists*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1 & 2)
- Silvia, P.J. 2019. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. 2nd ed. APA LifeTools.

Suggested Readings:

- Denzin, N.K. and Y.S. Lincoln (eds.) 2018. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 5th ed. Sage Publications.
- Mahoney, J. and D. Rueschemeyer (eds.) 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.
- Scott, J. 1990. *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research*. Polity Press.
- Ragin, C.C. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. University of California Press.

Desai, A. and E. Killick (eds.) 2010. *The Ways of Knowing: Anthropological Approaches to Crafting Experience and Knowledge*. Berghahn Books.

MA SOCIOLOGY (PGCF-NEP)

SBC-7: Tools of Research in Sociology

Course Title and Code	Credits	Credit Distribution for the Course			Eligibility Criteria	Pre-requisite of the course if any
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/Practice		
SBC-7: Tools of Research in Sociology	1	1	1	0	Bachelor's Degree	This course is compulsory for those opting for research track in MA Sociology

Course Objectives:

This course aims to:

1. Equip the scholar with practical command over the core tools used at each stage of the sociological research process: from initial literature search to the management and preliminary analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.
2. Develop proficiency in locating, evaluating and systematically organising scholarly literature using academic databases and bibliographic software.
3. Build hands-on competence in software tools for qualitative data management, transcription and computer-assisted coding.
4. Introduce the scholar to key secondary social science datasets available for India and to basic tools for quantitative data handling and visual presentation.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to

- i. Locate and evaluate scholarly literature using academic databases and apply systematic search strategies.
- ii. Build and maintain a personal research library using reference management software and generate correctly formatted citations.
- iii. Organise, transcribe and code qualitative data using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis tools.

- iv. Access major secondary social science datasets, produce basic descriptive outputs and present quantitative data in appropriate visual formats.

Syllabus of the Course:

Unit I: Searching the Literature (4 Hours)

This unit addresses the first practical challenge every researcher faces: finding and evaluating existing scholarship. It covers the landscape of academic databases available to social scientists, strategies for systematic and purposive literature searching, and the principles by which sources are assessed for quality and relevance.

- a. Academic databases for social science: Shodhganga, JSTOR, Google Scholar, Scopus and institutional repositories; navigating interfaces, setting filters and using Boolean operators
- b. Search strategy design: keyword selection, subject headings, citation chaining and snowball searching; documenting and reporting a search
- c. Evaluating sources: peer review, predatory journals, impact factor and h-index; distinguishing primary, secondary and grey literature; assessing relevance and credibility

Unit II: Organising Knowledge and Managing References (4 Hours)

This unit develops the scholar's capacity to organise and manage the literature they have gathered. It introduces reference management software as a tool for building a personal research library, annotating sources, generating citations in multiple styles, and maintaining academic integrity. The unit treats reference management not as a technical convenience but as a discipline of scholarly practice.

- a. Introduction to Zotero/Mendeley: installing the browser connector, importing references from databases and websites, attaching and annotating PDFs, organising into collections and sub-collections
- b. Generating citations and bibliographies: APA, Chicago and MLA styles; inserting citations into MS Word using the software plugin; managing citation errors and edge cases

- c. Academic integrity and plagiarism: understanding plagiarism in its forms — verbatim, mosaic and self-plagiarism; UGC regulations on academic integrity; using plagiarism detection tools
- d. Building and sharing an annotated bibliography: writing source annotations; exporting a Zotero library; collaborative reference management for group research

Unit III: Tools for Qualitative Data (4 Hours)

This unit builds practical competence in the tools used to manage, organise and begin analysing qualitative data. It covers transcription practices and software, the principles and practice of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis, and the use of packages such as NVivo or Atlas.ti for coding and retrieving data. The unit operationalises qualitative methodology rather than teaching it: the scholar learns to use the tools that implement the approaches covered in other courses.

- a. Transcription: conventions, tools and ethics; using transcription software; managing and archiving audio, video and textual data
- b. Introduction to CAQDAS: what computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software can and cannot do; overview of software such as NVivo and Atlas.ti; importing and organising project data
- c. Coding in data analysis software: creating and applying codes, open and focused coding, querying coded segments, visualising coding patterns and producing a codebook
- d. Analytic memos as a research tool: purpose and conventions of memo writing; linking memos to codes and data; organising field notes and documents within a CAQDAS project

Unit IV: Tools for Quantitative Data (3 Hours)

This unit introduces the scholar to major repositories of secondary social science data available for India and builds basic competence in handling and presenting quantitative data.

- a. Secondary data sources for Indian social science: Census of India, NFHS, NSSO/PLFS and NCRB; accessing microdata and reading codebooks
- b. Data handling using packages such as SPSS or Stata: opening datasets, understanding variable and value labels, running frequency tables and cross-tabulations, exporting output

- c. Data visualisation: constructing tables, bar charts and pie charts in software such as Excel or SPSS; principles of clear and honest data display for sociological research reports

Examination Scheme:

Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.

Tutorial Activities:

All sessions in this course are conducted as hands-on lab workshops. In Unit I, students conduct a live database search on their research area, document their search trail and evaluate five sources for relevance and quality. In Unit II, students build a library on their research area using software such as Zotero/ Mendeley, demonstrate correct import, annotation and citation generation, and share their library with a peer for review. In Unit III, students bring a short transcript or document and code it using packages such as NVivo/Atlas.ti, sharing and comparing coding decisions with the seminar group. In Unit IV, students access a specified secondary dataset, run a frequency table and cross-tabulation, and present their output with a brief interpretive note.

Unit-Wise Reading List:

Unit I: Searching the Literature

Fink, A. 2019. *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper*. 5th ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1-3)

Booth, A., A. Sutton and D. Papaioannou. 2016. *Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapter 4)

Unit II: Organising Knowledge and Managing References

Zotero Documentation. 2024. Zotero Quick Start Guide. Available at:
https://www.zotero.org/support/quick_start_guide

University Grants Commission. 2018. UGC Notification on Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions. New Delhi: UGC.

Becker, H.S. 2008. *Writing for Social Scientists*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 3: One Right Way)

Unit III: Tools for Qualitative Data

Silver, C. and A. Lewins. 2014. *Using Software in Qualitative Research: A Step-by-Step Guide*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1, 4 & 6)

Saldana, J. 2021. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. 4th ed. Sage Publications. (Chapter 1)

Bazeley, P. and K. Jackson. 2013. *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1 & 3)

Unit IV: Tools for Quantitative Data

Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India. 2011. Documents related to *Census of India 2011*: Government of India. [Available at censusindia.gov.in]

Fielding, J. and N. Gilbert. 2006. *Understanding Social Statistics*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications. (Chapters 1-3)

Tufte, E.R. 2001. *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*. 2nd ed. Graphics Press. (Chapter 1)

Suggested Readings:

Booth, W.C., G.G. Colomb, J.M. Williams, J. Bizup and W.T. Fitzgerald. 2016. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed. University of Chicago Press.

Luker, K. 2008. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut*. Harvard University Press. (Chapter 5)

Gibbs, G.R. 2007. *Analysing Qualitative Data*. Sage Publications. (Chapter 3)

International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS). 2021. National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), 2019-21: India Fact Sheet. Mumbai: IIPS.

Pautasso, M. 2013. Ten Simple Rules for Writing a Literature Review. *PLOS Computational Biology* 9(7): e1003149.