

**The Polytechnic of North London**  
**School of Applied Social Studies and Sociology**  
**Survey Research Unit**

**Course 2028 - Survey Research Practice** (Tuesdays 6pm – 9pm: Feb to June 1986)

**Course Tutor:** John Hall (Director, Survey Research Unit)

Tue 24th Feb Enrolment from 5.45 p.m.

Course tutor and students introduce themselves briefly by background, current activity and expectations. Introduction and overview of course.

24 Feb **What is a survey?** (Alan Marsh)

What makes it different from other kinds of research? Who does surveys? How did they develop, especially in U.K.?

3 March &  
10 March **Sampling** (Barry Hedges)

The lectures will concentrate on random ( or "probability") sampling, though other methods will be briefly discussed. The concepts of sampling error and bias will be explored, and sources of bias considered, especially for defective sample designs and non-response.

Other issues to be discussed include sample size, stratification, multi-stage sampling and clustering, the use of different sampling fractions for different parts of the sample, and weighting. The considerations that lead to choice of one design rather than another will be reviewed.

The qualities needed by a sampling frame will be stated, and three well-known frames - Electoral Register, Rating List and Postcode File - will be commented on.

Particular problems that arise in sampling small minority groups within the population will be considered.

17 March &  
24 March **Questionnaire Design** (Nick Moon)

The steps involved in designing a workable questionnaire, and the requirements of a good questionnaire. This will involve a practical demonstration of the problems of inadequate design and suggestions for improvements.

Designing 'factual' and behavioural questions is easy .... or is it? How to cope with problems of memory, precision, perception, motivation and sensitive topics. Also, ways in which the question can affect the answer; the impact of question wording and question form.

31 March **Classification** (Sharon Witherspoon)

The composition and use of widely used classificatory variables for describing: households, individuals, families, accommodation and area.

28 April **Qualitative Research** (Jane Ritchie)

Covering the applications and design considerations of undertaking unstructured exploratory research, leading group discussions, depth interviewing techniques and skills, analysis and reporting approaches and the theoretical underpinnings ( including a brief introduction to relevant attitude theories).

[Easter break]

