

Introduction to Methods of Research

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

CRIJ 3378.03

Fall 2017

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Class days and times: Tues and Thurs 8:00-9:20am

Classroom: CJC C210

Office hours: Tues and Thurs 9:30-11:30am (or by appointment)

Required Textbook

Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie. (2016) *Basics of research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 978-1305261105

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the concepts and methods used to conduct scientific research in criminal justice. Attention will be focused on numerous aspects of research design including ethics, sampling, and measurement and analysis in both quantitative and qualitative research. Because this is a writing-enhanced course, there will also be an additional focus on writing research effectively. Through this course students will become capable of developing a research question, analyzing pertinent literature, and developing an appropriate research design. This course will allow students to become both producers and consumers of criminal justice research.

Course Objectives

1. Discuss basic concepts and terminology in research methods
2. Explain the research process, research designs, and methods used in criminal justice

3. Critically analyze the research design and methodology of academic journal articles
4. Apply learned knowledge to real-world situations
5. Acquire the skills necessary to write a research proposal

Course Requirements & Grading

This is a “W” course which means that at least 50 percent of your final course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. Students will be required to complete a variety of activities throughout the course culminating in a final research proposal. The proposal will include an introduction, literature review, methods section, and conclusion. Sections of the paper will be due throughout the semester as designated in the schedule, each accounting for 5% of the class grade. The final draft, incorporating feedback from the professor and peer review, will be due 11/30/2017 and will be worth 20% of the final class grade. The final draft of your paper should be: 1. submitted through Turnitin 2. turned in as a hard copy at the beginning of class the day that it is due. If both formats are not received, the assignment will be counted as late. Late assignments will be accepted but the grade will be deducted by 10% per day including weekend days.

There will also be one article review in which students will critically assess an academic journal article assigned by the professor. This will be worth 10% of the overall grade. A handout with specific instructions will be given in class.

Three tests will cover the information provided in class and in the chapters specified. Tests will be worth 45% of the final grade (15% each) and will be multiple choice and short answer. For the multiple choice portion of the test, please be sure to bring a scantron. (Hint: Student Legal services give these out for free in the LSC!). If you know you will miss a test due to an excused absence, contact me prior to the test date to make arrangements. There will be no makeup exams given to the students that fail to contact me before missing a test.

Participation will account for 5% of the grade. To achieve maximum participation points, students should attend class, come having read the material and being prepared, and be on time. If you know you will be missing class contact me prior to that date if possible. Further, students should also be prepared to contribute to in-class discussions in a thoughtful way. Not only is participation important to achieve maximum points but is necessary to be successful in this course.

Extra credit will be available for students who attend a criminal justice research lecture and type up a one-page response piece. Students will be notified about these opportunities ahead of time and more specific instructions will be given at that time. A student can attend a

maximum of two events worth a maximum of 10 additional points added to a test grade (5 points per lecture).

Grading

<u>Grade Breakdown</u>	<u>End of Semester Grading Scale</u>
Research Assignments- 20%	90-100% A
Final Research Paper- 20%	80-89% B
Article Critique- 10%	70-79% C
Tests- 45%	60-69% D
Participation- 5%	0-59% F

Make-up Assignments and Exams

If you are going to miss an exam for an excused absence, contact me prior to test day and an accommodation will be made. Late assignments will be accepted but the grade will be deducted by 10% per day.

Email Policy

If you have any questions about the course material or administrative questions about deadlines, assignments, etc., please let me know as soon as possible either during office hours or via e-mail. I will attempt to respond with an answer within 24 hours.

Student Academic Policies

Attendance Policy: Class attendance requirements will be followed in accordance with Academic Policy Statement 800401.

http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academicaffairs/documents/aps/students/800401_001.pdf.

Student Academic Policies: Students are encouraged to review the statements presented in the Sam Houston State University's Guidelines available at: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Use of Telephones and Text Messages in Academic Classrooms and Facilities:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-curriculum.html>

Tentative Class Schedule*

Date	Topics	Readings/ Due Dates
8/24	Syllabus and class overview	
8/29	Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry	Chapter 1
8/31	Library lecture	Chapter 1
9/5	Ethics and Criminal Justice Research	Chapter 2 Research Topic due
9/7	Ethics continued	Chapter 2
9/12	Special discussion: Reading and writing research	
9/14	General Issues in Research Design	Chapter 3
9/19	Issues continued	Introduction due Chapter 3
9/21	Exam 1(Chapters 1-3)	
9/26	Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	Chapter 4
9/28	Concepts continued	Chapter 4
10/3	Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	Chapter 5
10/5	Experimental Designs continued	Literature Review Due Chapter 5
10/10	Sampling	Chapter 6
10/12	Sampling continued	Chapter 6
10/17	Exam 2(Chapter 4-6)	
10/19	Exam 2 Review	
10/24	Survey Research	Chapter 7
10/26	Survey Research continued	Methods Section due Chapter 7
10/31	Qualitative Interviewing	Chapter 8
11/2	Qualitative Interviewing continued	Chapter 8
11/7	Special Discussion: In-depth qualitative research	Article Critique due
11/9	Field Observation	Chapter 9
11/14	Field Observation continued	Conclusion due Chapter 9
11/16	Proposal work day	
11/21	Proposal peer review	Bring your printed out proposal to class
11/23	NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING BREAK	

11/28	Wrap up	
11/30	Final Review	Final Proposal due
12/05/17 8:00 am	Final Exam(Chapters 7-9)	

* Schedule is subject to change if necessary