

SCST 5396 02
Research Methods in Homeland Security Studies
Fall 2017

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CLASS HOURS: Online
CLASSROOM: Online
OFFICE HOURS: Online, and in virtual office discussion board

Textbook(s)

1. Bachman, Ronet. and Schutt, Russell.K. (2015). *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice, 5ed.* (SAGE Publications)

Course Description

Research Methods is a course that examines how research is conducted in homeland security. The course is designed to highlight the research process, ethical issues, different types of quantitative and qualitative research designs, data analysis, and the reporting of research results.

Additional Online Material

The textbook comes with additional material online. It is available at:

<http://www.sagepub.com/bachmanfrccj3e/> The only online material that is assigned for this class are the online appendices (as described below). Other material online is not assigned for the class and it is not required that you sign up to use it. However, you may find some of it useful. The online materials include:

- Mobile-friendly **eFlashcards** reinforce understanding of key terms and concepts that have been outlined in the chapters.
- Mobile-friendly **web quizzes** allow for independent assessment of progress made in learning course material.
- EXCLUSIVE! Access to certain full-text **SAGE journal articles** that have been carefully selected for each chapter. Each article supports and expands on the concepts presented in the chapter. This feature also provides questions to focus and guide student interpretation. Combine cutting-edge academic journal scholarship with the topics in your course for a robust classroom experience.
- Carefully selected, web-based **video resources** feature relevant interviews, lectures, personal stories, inquiries, and other content for use in independent or classroom-based explorations of key topics.
- Links to podcasts and **audio resources** cover important topics and are designed to supplement key points within the text.
- **Web exercises** direct you to useful and current web resources, along with creative activities to extend and reinforce learning or allow for further research on important chapter topics.

Course Requirements

Weekly modules, exams, weekly homework, weekly discussions, and writing assignments.

Grading

Grades will be based on exams, weekly discussion, weekly quizzes, and one writing assignment that will be posted on Blackboard.

- Three exams will be administered through Blackboard. These essay exams will also include short-answer and fill in the blank questions. Students will have one week to complete the exam. The exam will have a time limit so once it is begun it must be finished in a certain length of time (as will be described in Blackboard).
- Weekly homework quizzes will be administered through Blackboard. These quizzes are to ensure you are keeping up with the reading and to identify areas where you need to “study smarter” for exams. They will become available at 12:01 am every Monday. Quizzes will cover topics from the text. Weekly Quizzes must then be completed before 11:59 pm the following Sunday. Students will have from 12:01 AM on Sunday until 11:59 PM the following Sunday to complete the assignment. There will be 13 quizzes throughout the semester.
- The class will also have discussions weekly. These allow students to engage in consideration of how the concepts apply to homeland security in more depth. Students will be typically asked to identify homeland security related articles that involve the relevant concepts discussed that week (these articles can be good examples of the issues in question, bad examples, or something in-between) and explore how they are relevant. Students should not only engage with the papers in a critical way but should also enter into constructive discussion with other students. Students will have from 12:00 AM on Sunday until 11:59 PM the following Sunday to complete the assignment.
- The final writing assignment will be a two page narrative connecting the ideas from the semester with your area of interest. More detail on this assignment will be distributed later in the semester.

Event	Points of Final Grade	Date
Exam 1	10%	Sunday, October 1 by 11:59 PM
Exam 2	10%	Sunday, November 5 by 11:59 PM
Exam 3	10%	Thursday, December 7 by 11:59 PM
Weekly Homework	25%	Every Sunday by 11:59 PM
Weekly Discussions	25%	Every Sunday by 11:59 PM
Writing Assignment	20%	Thursday, December 7 by 11:59 PM

Percent of Points	Grade
89.5%-100%	A
79.5%-89.4%	B
69.5%-79.4%	C
59.5%-69.4%	D
59.4% and below	F

Class Rules

Office Hours

Given the online, asynchronous nature of this class, the professor has no particular office hours. However, the professor will attempt to be available for reasonable requests for synchronous meetings (either Skype or other media) and will attempt to respond to any emails within 24 hours. Professors get into teaching because they are interested in having their students succeed and I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or interesting ideas that you have during the course of the class.

Academic Honesty Policies

Students will be held to the highest standards of academic honesty. Students should review the academic honesty policies of Sam Houston State University available here http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/faculty-handbook/academic_dishonesty.html and should expect enforcement in accordance with the highest standards of those policies. Academic dishonesty includes not only direct copying of the text of others but many ways of excessively relying on the thoughts of others without adding thought of your own; see http://turnitin.com/assets/en_us/media/plagiarism_spectrum.php for different types of academic dishonesty. The instructor reserves the right to check papers against a national anti-plagiarism database. Academic dishonesty can result in punishment ranging from failing the assignment to failing the class to expulsion from the program.

Course Expectations: Netiquette

This section is based largely on Professor Magdalena Denham's netiquette requirements for the Foundations of Homeland Security course. Good netiquette is particularly important in an online course. Students are expected to actively post content in the virtual space. In text citations are where appropriate are necessary.

Opportunity for Course Feedback at Mid-point

The instructor will provide regular feedback to students via discussion boards, email, and office hours. The instructor also welcomes and appreciates feedback on the course design. Given this is the inaugural class in a new program, student feedback will be critical to the improvement of future iterations of the course. Students should feel free to email the instructor on any issue they think could be improved.

Religious Holidays

Accommodations will be made to students for religious holidays and the associated travel needed for them in accordance with Texas state law and the policies of Sam Houston State University. If students have any questions or concerns they should not hesitate to contact the instructor via email.

Disabilities

Any student seeking reasonable accommodation for a disability in accordance with federal, state, local law and policy of Sam Houston State University must contact Offices of Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/>

After contacting this office students should feel free and comfortable contacting the instructor about any disability issue so that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Class Hours

The class is presented on a standard weekly schedule, with one week of readings, lectures, and assignments per week. A week's content will begin on Sunday, with all lectures and materials posted early in the morning, and will end on Sunday at the end of day. This will allow students with full time employment a full week to consider the material, from weekend to weekend, with one day of overlap. All assignments, readings, and discussions must be completed by midnight Sunday of the week they are assigned.

Class	Date	Readings	Assignments
Wk 0	By 8/27	Familiarize yourself with the syllabus	Watch Introduction Videos Discussion: Introduce Yourself
Wk 1	By 9/3	Ch 1: Science, Society, and Criminological Research	Discussion: Find something opposing point of view Quiz: Ch 1
Wk 2	By 9/10	Ch 2: The Process and Problems of Criminological Research How to Read a Research Article (appendix) Proverbs Sources of Papers (on Blackboard)	Discussion: Look at sources, find one paper that interests you and describe the research question Quiz: Ch 2
Wk 3	By 9/17	Ch 3: Research Ethics and Philosophies	Discussion: CITI Training Quiz: Ch 3
Wk 4	By 9/24	Ch 4: Conceptualization and Measurement	Discussion: Identify a conceptualization or measurement issue Quiz: Ch 4
Wk 5	By 10/1	Writing a Literature Review	Discussion: Identify the counts of a formal literature review First Exam
Wk 6	By 10/8	Ch 5: Sampling Learning from Samples of One or Fewer	Discussion: Identify a sampling issue Quiz: Ch 5
Wk 7	By 10/15	Ch 6: Causation and Research Design	Discussion: Identify a causality issue Quiz: Ch 6
Wk 8	By 10/22	Ch 7: Survey Research	Discussion: Identify a survey Quiz: Ch 7
Wk 9	By 10/29	Ch 8: Qualitative Methods and Analysis	Discussion: Identify a qualitative analysis Quiz: Ch 8

Wk 10	By 11/5	How to Use a Data Spreadsheet [Appendix E] Quantitative Data Analysis [Appendix F]	Discussion: Statistical assignment Second exam
Wk 11	By 11/12	Ch 9: Analyzing Content	Discussion: Identify an analysis Quiz: Ch 9
Wk 12	By 11/19	Ch 10: Evaluation and Policy Analysis	Discussion: Logic map & Examine a performance measure Quiz: Ch 10
Wk 13	By 11/26	Ch 11: Mixing and Comparing Methods	Discussion: Quiz: Ch 11
Wk 14	By 12/3	Ch 12: Reporting Research Results Rookie Mistakes	Discussion: Quiz: Ch 12
Wk 15	By 12/7	Finals Week	Third exam Writing Assignment