

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CRIMINOLOGY
COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
COURSE SYLLABUS
CRIJ 3378-10
INTRODUCTION TO METHODS OF RESEARCH
SPRING 2018

Instructor: Ling Ren, Ph.D.
Class Hours: T&TH 8am-9:20am
Phone: 936-294-4793
Office: C211

Credit Hours: 3
Classroom: C104
E-mail: Lren@shsu.edu
Office Hours: T&TH 9:30am-11:30am, or
by appointment

Course Description

Social research has a tremendous effect on our understanding of criminal behavior and criminal justice policies. This course is thus designed to familiarize students with the basic techniques and fundamentals of empirical social research. To this end, the course will be split into two parts. First, the foundation of social research must be established. This is done by examining the role of theory, ethics, and measurement in research methods. Second, the course will cover different methods of research, including sampling, experimental designs, survey research, and field research.

Course Objectives

1. To establish the importance of social research in affecting criminal justice policies.
2. To familiarize the students with fundamental principles and various research designs.
3. To apply course material to improve research design and problem solving.
4. To learn how to find and use resources for answering the questions in real world research.

Required Textbook

Maxfield, Michael G. & Babbie, Earl R. (2015). *Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*. (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
ISBN-10: 1305261100
ISBN-13: 978-1305261105

* Handouts will be provided in class to supplement the textbook. Additional supplemental reading material may be placed at Blackboard. Lecture outlines will be made available to students under “**Course Documents**” at Blackboard. You are strongly encouraged to print out the lecture outlines before coming to class for the purpose of effective note-taking.

Grading

Six items will comprise your grade for this class:

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
In-class group quizzes & projects	80 points
Term paper	150 points
<u>Class attendance</u>	<u>30 points</u>
Total	560 points

Final grades are determined by the number of **POINTS** that are earned throughout the semester.

A= 504-560 points

B= 448-503 points

C= 392-447 points

D= 336-391 points

F= 0-335 points

This is a “**W**” course which means that at least 50 percent of your course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives.

There will be three in-class exams that will cover all assigned text readings, class lectures, videos, guest lecture, and assigned supplemental readings. The exams will take the form of multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions. A study guide will be provided before each exam.

In-class group quizzes will be given over the course of the semester. They are designed to measure your ability to apply the course material to the real-world research activities. The in-class group quizzes are open-book and open-notes. You are free to pick your own group member and each group will have no more than **two** members. It is important that both members will make equal contribution to the completion of the quizzes.

Term paper will take the form of a research proposal. More detailed instructions will be provided at a later point.

Attendance in class is mandatory. Irregular attendance will affect your overall grade.

Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. Each student is allowed (but not encouraged) to take a maximum of two absences. For each additional unexcused absence, the student will lose 10 points from attendance credits. Once you miss three classes, you have lost all attendance points. Some absences may possibly be excused with appropriate documentation (e.g., University-related event, doctor’s note, notice of job interview). **To be an excused absence, students must inform the instructor in writing prior to the start of the class.** The student is responsible for all material and assignments distributed during the absence. Class handouts will not be provided to students who miss the class without prior notice.

Make-up Work

Exams and term paper must be completed and turned in on the due dates (or the amended due dates if later clarified by the instructor). If an unavoidable conflict with one of the dates exists, please see me **before** the test or term paper is administered or becomes due. Failure to turn in a term paper or take an exam on the scheduled date, without making **prior** arrangements, will result in a **zero** on that particular exercise. Giving a make-up exam is at instructor's discretion with **valid** excuse provided by students. The excuse must be written and appropriately documented. **All make-up exams consist of essay questions.**

Reading Assignments

You are expected to have completed the reading assignments before each class session. Reading the assignments before each class session will enhance your understanding of daily lectures.

Sam Houston Writing Center

If you need some help with your term paper, Sam Houston Writing Center will provide qualified writing tutors who support the academic mission of the SHSU. Writing tutors will work with you one-on-one at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, generating a draft, organizing a draft, or revising a draft) for any written assignment. For additional information, please call **936-294-3680**, or browse their website at <http://www.shsu.edu/centers/academic-success-center/writing/>

Attendance Policy

In accordance with *Academic Policy Statement 800401 (2015)*

1.01 Regular and punctual class attendance is expected of each student at Sam Houston State University.

More information can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Cell Phone Policy

Engaging in voice communication using a cell phone or similar communication devices during class is prohibited. Leaving the classroom to receive a phone call is prohibited, except with prior approval of the instructor for urgent communications. Device sound alerts should be turned off or silenced during class. Engaging in text communication during class is prohibited. With instructor approval, students may take notes via laptop computer, provided that it does not disturb other students in the process. Any use of cell phones or other electronic devices during a test period is prohibited. Even the visible presence of a cell phone or other device during the test period may result in a zero for that test. Use of a cell phone during a test could result in a charge of academic dishonesty. During the test these instruments should be left at home or stored securely in such a way that they cannot be seen or used by the student.

More information can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-curriculum.html>

Academic Honesty

In accordance with *Academic Policy Statement 810213*

5.3 Academic Honesty. The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.

5.31 The University and its official representatives, acting in accordance with Subsection 5.32, may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Disabled Students Policy

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individuals shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic program or activity.

Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. Students are also encouraged to discuss any concerns with the instructor.

More information can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Services for Disabled Students

Accommodations are provided for students who are registered with the Counseling Center. Information on a variety of services available to disabled students can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Student Absences on Religious Holy Day Policy

In accordance with *Academic Policy Statement 861001*

Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be

allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

Any student desiring to be absent in order to observe a religious holy days(s) should meet with the instructor in the first two weeks of the course to discuss appropriate times to make up any work to be missed.

Please refer to the website <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html> for more information on this subject.

Withdrawals

Students wishing to withdraw are cautioned to follow formal procedures outlined by the University. Consult the Sam Houston State University Undergraduate Catalog, 2017-2018 for official policies under “tuition and fees refund policy” and “dropping courses.”

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic& Reading Assignments</u>
1	1/18	Class Introduction & Overview of Syllabus
2	1/23 & 1/25	Chapter 1 Criminal Justice & Scientific Inquiry
3	1/30 & 2/1	Chapter 2 Theory & Ethics in Criminal Justice Research
4	2/6 & 2/8	Chapter 2 Theory & Ethics in Criminal Justice Research Chapter 3 General Issues in Research Design
5	2/13	Chapter 3 Cont.
5	2/15	The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) annual conference (No Class)
6	2/20	Library Lecture (Location TBA)
6	2/22	Exam Preparation
7	2/27 & 3/1	Exam 1 (2/27, Tuesday) Review Exam
8	3/6 & 3/8	Special Topic: Literature Review Chapter 4 Concepts, Operationalization, & Measurement
9	3/13 & 3/15	Spring Break (No class)

10	3/20 & 3/22	Chapter 4 Cont.
11	3/27 & 3/29	Chapter 5 Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs
12	4/3 & 4/5	Chapter 5 Cont. Exam Preparation
13	4/10 & 4/12	Exam 2 (4/10, Tuesday) Review Exam
14	4/17 & 4/19	Chapter 6 Sampling
15	4/24 & 4/26	Chapter 7 Survey Research
16	5/1 & 5/3	Chapter 8 Field Research Term Paper Due on 5/3
17	5/8	Final Exam (8am-10am, 5/8, Tuesday)

*** Schedule is subject to change as necessary. It is the responsibility of the students to remain informed of any changes.**