

CRJ 301 Research Methods

Wintermester 2018

Number of Credits

3

Instructor

Monica Miller

Catalog Description

Techniques commonly utilized in criminal justice research, emphasis on research design, methods of data collection, measurement of variables, and validity and reliability. Open to criminal justice majors only.

Required Textbooks/Materials

The following texts are required material in this course:

Maxfield and Babbie. *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*

Note that you may choose from any of the following versions of the above textbook:

- 7th edition/2015, hardcover (ISBN: 978128506784)
- 8th edition, loose-leaf version MindTap® Criminal Justice Bundle
- Either of these options in electronic form (e.g. laptop, Kindle, etc.)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- identify an appropriate criminal justice issue applying knowledge from prior courses and develop hypotheses that can be tested through a research proposal design project;
- apply knowledge on research methodologies and individual research to design a quality research proposal appropriate to test a selected hypothesis;
- apply knowledge on research methodology including stages of conduction research and threats to reliability and validity to various class discussions and assignments;
- recognize ethical issues in criminal justice research and potential sources of ethical violations when conducting research; and
- apply an appropriate methodology in a research proposal to sufficiently and ethically answer a research question.

Course Description

Warning: This is a very rigorous upper-level course. It is just as rigorous as it is during the fall and spring semesters. Additionally, many students find it difficult to learn about conducting research studies independently through an online course at such a brisk pace. The course is an “applied” course that requires much more than simply memorizing information. It develops students’ abilities to produce research studies and critique research methodology. Taking this course is not recommended if you are working full time or have many other obligations. Every *day* of this class is approximately the equivalent to *five days* of a normal semester, without a break. Thus, this class is a full time obligation. Please be prepared to make the commitment to do 15 weeks of work in 19 days. Students should be self-motivated and disciplined enough for a self-paced online course.

Readings: Readings will be assigned from the text and occasionally other assignments will be posted within WebCampus.

Class Time: Class will be entirely on WebCampus. There are due dates for each assignment, however a student can go at his or her own pace, as long as each quiz, exam, and paper is submitted to the professor by the due date. For example, a student could complete the entire course as fast as he or she wants, as long as he or she completes each assignment by the due date (and each assignment has to be done in order).

Exams and Quizzes: Exams and quizzes can be found under the Assignments link in WebCampus. There will be two exams, a Midterm and Final, and each is worth 100 points. The exams will combine multiple choice and short answer formats. The Midterm will cover *all* material covered up to that point. The Final will cover *all* material following the Midterm. There will be also be two quizzes, each worth 50 points. Each quiz will contain multiple choice questions. Exams and quizzes will be posted on WebCampus. Students can use their text, personal notes, and the PowerPoint slides posted on WebCampus; however, students cannot consult any other person (except for the professor). Consulting other sources or persons will be considered academic dishonesty. Students can only take each quiz and exam once.

Research Critique Paper: Students will complete one critique of a research article that they choose. Research articles can be accessed on databases such as “criminal justice abstracts” or “PsycINFO” which can be accessed on the Knowledge Center’s website. There also is a link to the website on WebCampus by clicking the Library Guide link from the course menu. More information and instructions will be posted on WebCampus. Students should follow those instructions very carefully.

Research Participation Credit: Students are required to participate in research-type activities. Specifically, students will earn four “credits,” which should take a total of approximately two to four hours. The options for research participation are listed in Modules within Webcampus, and the deadline is in the course calendar. If you complete the assignment, 8 points will be added to your grade as extra credit. If you fail to complete the assignment, 8 points will be deducted from your grade.

Optional IRB Training Activity: An announcement will be made when the University makes more information to us.

Grade Breakdown

The point distribution for the course is:

| Assignment | Points |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Critique Paper | 400 |
| Exams (two worth 200 points each) | 400 |
| Quizzes (two worth 100 points each) | 200 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>1000</i> |

The percentage distribution for the course is:

| Letter | Percentage |
|---------------|-------------------|
| A | 93–100 |
| A- | 90–92 |
| B+ | 87–89 |
| B | 83–86 |
| B- | 80–82 |
| C+ | 77–79 |
| C | 73–76 |
| C- | 70–72 |
| D+ | 67–69 |
| D | 63–66 |
| D- | 60–63 |
| F | below 60 |