

CJ 655: Research Methods in Criminal Justice

Sec. 101

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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 8:30-10:00 & 2:00-3:30 (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the elements of scientific research, the interaction between research and theory, and the use of data processing resources.

- Prerequisites: Undergraduate research methods course, undergraduate statistics course, and permission
- CJ 655 convenes on Wednesdays from 4:00-6:20 in SH 418 and will be taught as a blended course. A blended course is where 50% of the content is delivered in the classroom and 50% of the content is delivered online. This course will include interactive, web-based activities, a student-centered learning approach, and frequent feedback loops to enhance learning.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE CJ PROGRAM

Upon completion of the Master of Science degree in criminal justice, and in part emphasized and reinforced through this course, graduate students will be able to:

Exhibit specialized knowledge in the criminal justice and criminology field by

1. demonstrating advanced knowledge of the terms, laws, theories, processes, research methods, statistics, and key principles and (CLO A, B, C)
2. analyzing and critiquing concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and trends. (CLO D)

Demonstrate oral, written, and analytic abilities by

3. evaluating contemporary criminal justice issues using analytical reasoning, problem solving, and effective communication skills; (CLO E)

4. preparing and delivering a presentation using effective oral communication skills that contains sustained, coherent arguments or explanations; and/or (CLO E)
5. interpreting descriptive and inferential statistical data.

Integrate and apply advanced knowledge of the criminal justice and criminology field by:

6. designing and producing an applied, investigative, paper or project with real-world implications that draws on scientific literacy, theoretical criminology, and research methods; (F)
7. supporting a paper or project with appropriate information from the scholarly literature and using citations in APA format; and (CLO F)
8. assessing and articulating the relevant public policy implications of that project. (CLO A, F)

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES MATRIX

Course Learning Objectives	How Practiced in this Course	How Evaluated in this Course
A. Students will <i>describe</i> the fundamentals of social scientific inquiry, the link between theory and research, and policy.	Assigned readings, in-class and online discussions, and activities	Quizzes, mid-term exam, assignments, research proposal and presentation
B. Students will <i>demonstrate</i> the elements of a research design, specifically conceptualization, operationalization, measurement, and research ethics as well as the issues of reliability and validity.	Assigned readings, in-class and online discussions, and activities	Quizzes, mid-term exam, assignments, research proposal and presentation
C. Students will <i>examine</i> the different approaches to research design, which includes experiments, quasi-experimental design, survey research, case studies, field research, content analysis, and secondary data analysis.	Assigned readings, in-class and online discussions	Quizzes, mid-term exam, assignments, research proposal and presentation
D. Students will <i>identify</i> the limitations, weaknesses, and strengths of a design.	Assigned readings, in-class and online discussions	Quizzes, mid-term exam, assignments, research proposal and presentation
E. Students will <i>create</i> and deliver a professional presentation.	In-class discussions	Presentation
F. Students will <i>produce</i> a research proposal using scholarly sources and proper APA citations.	Assignments	Research proposal

REQUIRED TEXTS

American Psychological Association [APA] (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC.

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2014). *The practice of research in criminology and criminal justice* (5th ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [ISBN #:978-1-4522-5819-5]

*The text also has a student study site that we will use at <http://www.sagepub.com/bachmanprccj5e/> but no pass code is required.

Additional readings will be available online.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

Students must have a computer or access to one, as well as access to the Internet to send and receive email messages. If you are using an email account other than your Marshall email account, (i.e., hotmail, yahoo, aol, etc.) you must set your Marshall email account to forward to your other account. Also, students are responsible for knowing the University Computing Services' Acceptable Use Policy.

In addition, because this is a blended course, students will be required to have access to MU Online in order to complete the necessary discussions, quizzes, exams, and assignments. Make certain that you use a computer that is compatible for completing any online course requirements (I recommend an Internet connection that is fast and secure. Do not use iPads or laptop computers).

COURSE OUTLINE AND FORMAT

Overall, the course content is divided into three parts. Each part is explained in more detail below.

Part I "The Big Picture" (65%)

The first part of the course is based largely on "The Big Picture." In other words, this is where we will discuss theoretical and conceptual issues as they relate to research methods, the importance of why we utilize research methods and scientific inquiry, as well as how to develop a research proposal.

Part II "The Tools of Research Methods" (30%)

This part of the course will provide each student with the information that is needed to develop his/her own research project. Each student will learn the nuts and bolts of the research process and existing research designs.

Part III

"Statistics" (5%)

The final section of the class will be devoted to an overview of basic statistics. Students are typically frightened when they hear the word "statistics;" however, you will find that we use statistics daily and do not even realize it!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DETERMINATION OF GRADES

To evaluate your progress in reaching the aforementioned course learning objectives, you will be assessed in the following ways:

Criteria	Weight	Scale
Mid-Term Exam	25 %	90-100 % = A
Final Exam	25 %	80-89 % = B
Research Proposal & Presentation	25 %	70-79 % = C
Assignments, Discussions, & Quizzes	15 %	60-69 % = D
Active Participation & Attendance	10 %	Below 60 % = F
TOTAL	100 %	

Please note that course grades are calculated using weighted percentages as shown above. Also, grades are updated regularly and can be viewed in our Blackboard course via MU Online.

MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAM (50%)

There will be two exams, a mid-term and a final (each is worth 25%). Exams will be taken online and without the use of notes or the textbook. Cheating at the graduate level is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. Exams may be comprised of multiple choice, true/false, listing, short answer, essay, matching, fill-in and/or any combination of the above listed formats. Examinations must be taken during the periods designated in the syllabus. Deviations from this policy can be made if the student makes provisions with the instructor before the test date. It is the student's responsibility to notify me if he/she is unable to take an examination.

Exam Schedule:

Mid-Term Exam: October 21 (Online)

Final Exam: December 9 (Online)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL & PRESENTATION (25%)

Each student will be expected to complete a 15 page research proposal and/or research project (that is, 15 pages of body) on a crime-related topic. Nonetheless, each student will be guided through the research process to develop this proposal in full. The specific requirements will be discussed at a later date. Additionally, each student will present their proposed project to the class at the end of the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS, DISCUSSIONS, AND QUIZZES (15%)

During the online class sessions (and during some in-class sessions), a variety of assignments will be given. You may be asked to complete a mini research assignment, complete a quiz, or

engage in an online discussion based on the topic that is covered that week. A 5 point deduction per day will be taken for each assignment that is turned in late.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE (10%)

At the graduate level, students are expected to participate in class discussions on a regular basis, as it is at best, one of the most valuable avenues for learning in the classroom. Thus, students are expected to make a significant contribution by asking pertinent questions, making insightful observations, and sharing information. In order to participate, you must be present in class.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Class Absences:

I understand that there are circumstances that may arise throughout the semester that prevent a student from attending class. Verified excused absences include those resulting from death or illness of a family member, pre-approved university sponsored activity, or religious holiday (see MU Graduate Catalog). In the case of an unexcused absence in which an assignment is due, you will be expected to get that material to me somehow on the assigned date. For each class day missed without a legitimate excuse and documentation from the Dean of Student Affairs, 12.5 points will be deducted from your participation/attendance grade.

Deadlines and Penalties for Online Assignments, Discussions, and Exams:

You must adhere to the dates listed for completion of quizzes, exams, discussions, and assignments. Once a due date has expired, the item will no longer be accessible and you will receive a zero for that particular item. While there is some flexibility in completing some of the online activities, it is imperative that you complete everything by the due date. Most of the discussions, quizzes, and assignments will become **UNAVAILABLE** after midnight on the due date. While you can take an assessment before the due date (as soon as it is made available), please make sure you are thoroughly prepared to complete it successfully, as you only have one attempt. At the same time, do not wait until the last available minute on the due date to complete an assignment or exam because you never know when a technological glitch can occur (which I cannot be responsible for). You should plan to complete all activities at least one day prior to the scheduled due date to be on the safe side. This way, if there is a technical problem, you can contact me and I can try to remedy the situation. If you contact me on the day an activity is due, I cannot do anything about it!

Emails and Teacher-Student Correspondence:

If you have any questions about the course material, exams, or assignments you may email me, visit me during my office hours or schedule an appointment. Under most circumstances, I will get back to you within 24 hours (normally between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM EST Monday through Friday). However, there may be times when my response is delayed when I am out of town at an academic conference, for example.

Feedback Loop:

Because some of the course material will be administered online, I will respond to any submitted materials that requires me to do so within 24 hours after it was due. Please keep in mind that

lengthier documents (i.e., papers) may not be returned to you as quickly. Nonetheless, as part of the feedback loop, many online assignments will provide you with an immediate response so that you can assess and gauge how well you are acquiring the course material.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication and falsification of data or information, plagiarism, bribes/favors/threats, and complicity (i.e., helping or attempting someone commit an act of dishonesty). If a student violates this policy, discretion will be used by the instructor; the possible sanctions to be applied will be a failing grade for the assignment, exam, or paper. For those of you who need a reminder about the policy, please refer to the MU Graduate Catalog.

Plagiarism:

For students (major or non-majors; undergraduates and graduates) who plagiarize a paper that is less than 10 pages in length, a letter grade of zero will be issued for that assignment. When a student plagiarizes a major research paper, report, legal paper, etc., that is 10 pages or more in length, a failing grade will be issued to the student for the course. It should be noted that students are entitled to an appeals process.

University Policies:

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies: Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ and Sexual Harassment.

Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or, you can access the policies directly by going to http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802.

Extra Credit:

Students may receive extra credit in this course by presenting this or another graduate-level research paper (which could have been written for another graduate level course) at the WV Criminal Justice Educators' Association conference. The conference is on Friday, November 13 at WVU-Parkersburg. Please note that students who attend the conference are eligible to submit a graduate paper for the paper competition as well. Abstracts for presentations and papers for the state competition are due Friday, October 30. By presenting a paper or submitting a graduate paper for the competition, students may receive up to 10 additional points, which will be added to their overall course grade. Graduate students who attend the conference (and who do not present) will receive 10 points to be added to their mid-term exam grade or final exam.

Classroom Civility:

1. All students are expected to be in class on time (including exam days).
2. All pagers, cell phones, and electronic devices such as iPods or MP3 players must be turned off Before you enter the classroom. Please no text messaging or tweeting during class or during exams.
3. One-on-one or personal conversations during lecture or class discussions are not permitted.
4. Respect different opinions and keep an open mind. Support your fellow classmates and reward each other with positive remarks/comments.
5. All students are expected to abide by the academic dishonesty policy-this means no cheating or plagiarizing!
6. Students are expected to speak one at a time. Do not be disruptive.
7. Working on other materials during class time is considered disruptive not only to the instructor but to other classmates as well.
8. Do not use class time to catch up on your ZZZZZ's.
9. No food or alcoholic beverages are permitted (non-alcoholic beverages are acceptable).
10. Students are prohibited from leaving the classroom once the lecture or discussion has started. Only in the case of an emergency can a student leave the room. If you need to leave class early for some reason, notify the instructor in advance.

The DeTardo-Bora Policy:

As students have a code of conduct to follow, I believe the instructor should follow one as well. Throughout this course, I will make an effort to see that the following responsibilities are carried out (these responsibilities were adapted from McKeachie, 1999).

1. I will encourage the free pursuit of learning.
2. I will demonstrate respect for students.
3. I will respect confidentiality.
4. I will model the best scholarly and ethical standards.
5. I will foster honest academic conduct and ensure fair evaluation.
6. I will avoid exploitation, harassment, or discrimination.

CJ 655: TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

8/26	Week 1
	Introduction; Scientific Inquiry Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 1
9/2	Week 2-Online
	The Link Between Theory & Research Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 2, Read Research Article ¹ (link available online) Quizzes and Assignment
9/9	Week 3
	Conceptualization, Operationalization, & Measurement; Indexes & Scales Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 4 & Appendix A Review Research Proposal Assignment
9/16	Week 4 –Online (<i>ACJS Abstracts Due Sept. 19</i>)
	Research Ethics and Philosophies Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 3 Ethics Training Assignment
9/23	Week 5
	Data Collection and Sampling Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 5
9/30	Week 6
	Causation and Research Design Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 6
10/7	Week 7 –Online
	Research Lab and Reviewing Key Concepts Read Bachman and Schutt Ch. 14 and Appendix A Quizzes and Assignments
10/14	Week 8
	Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 7 Read Research Article ² (link available online)
10/21	Week 9 –Online
	Online Mid-Term Exam [due by midnight] (Bachman & Schutt, Chapters 1-6)
10/28	Week 10 (<i>WVCJEA Abstracts Due Oct. 30</i>)
	Survey Research Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 8 Read Research Article ³ (link available online)
11/4	Week 11 –Online
	Qualitative Methods and Analysis Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 9 Read Research Article ⁴ (link available online) Quizzes and Assignments

11/11	Week 12 (WVCJEA Conference-Nov. 12 & 13)
	Historical, Secondary Data and Content Analysis Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 10 *Research Article ⁵ (link available online)
11/18	Week 13 –Online (Research Proposals Due)
	Program Evaluation & Policy Analysis Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 11 *Research Article ⁶ (link available online) Quizzes and Assignments
11/25	Week 14
	Thanksgiving Break - No Class
12/2	Week 15
	Mini-Presentations Quantitative Data Analysis & Reporting Research Results Read Bachman & Schutt Ch. 13
12/9	Week 16-Online
	Online Final Exam [due by 6:00 pm] (Bachman & Schutt, Chapters 7-12)

RESEARCH ARTICLES

¹Fox, K. A., Nobles, M. R., & Akers, R. L. (2011). Is stalking a learned phenomenon? An empirical test of social learning theory. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 39, 39-47.

²Sherman, L., & Berk, R. (1984). The specific deterrent effects of arrest for domestic assault. *American Sociological Review*, 49(2), 261-272.

³Swatt, M. L., Gibson, C. L., & Piquero, N. L. (2007). Exploring the utility of general strain theory in explaining problematic alcohol consumption by police officers. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 35, 596-611.

⁴Kapp, S. A. (2000, September). Pathways to prison: Life histories of former clients of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare Criminal Justice Education*, 27(3), 63-74.

⁵Morris, R. G., & Longmire, D. R. (2008). Media constructions of identity theft. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 15(1), 76-93.

⁶Clayton, R. R., Catterello, A. M., & Johnstone, B. M. (1996). The effectiveness of drug abuse resistance education (Project DARE): 5-Year follow-up results. *Preventive Medicine*, 25(3), 307- 318.