**CJ 681: Thesis (3 cr.)**

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Spring 2015

Dr. Kimberly DeTardo-Bora

Criminal Justice & Criminology Program

Department of Integrated Science & Technology

Office: Smith Hall 736

Office Phone: 304.696.3084

Fax: 304.696.3085

Email: detardobora@marshall.edu

Web: <http://www.marshall.edu/isat/cjc/>

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-4:00 (or by appointment); *The student and thesis advisor/chair will meet as needed.*

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] *(*plus a statistics book)

*Additional scholarly resources and materials will be used to complete the thesis.*

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CRIMINOLOGY 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
2. analyzing and critiquing concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and trends.

Demonstrate oral, written, and analytic abilities by

1. evaluating contemporary criminal justice issues using analytical reasoning, problem solving, and effective communication skills;
2. preparing and delivering a presentation using effective oral communication skills that contains sustained, coherent arguments or explanations; and/or
3. interpreting descriptive and inferential statistical data.

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

1. designing and producing an applied, investigative, paper or project with real-world implications that draws on scientific literacy, theoretical criminology, and research methods
2. supporting the paper or project with appropriate information from the scholarly literature and using citations in APA format; and
3. assessing and articulating the relevant public policy implications of that project.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES MATRIX**

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| **Course Objectives** | **How *Practiced* in this Course** | **How *Evaluated* in this Course** |
| 1. The student will *integrate* knowledge and *summarize* key issues as they relate to the topic under study.
 | Researching, writing, and revising Chapters 1 and 2 | Final thesis  |
| 1. The student will *demonstrate* proficient use of research methodology and statistical techniques.
 | Data entry and clean up, statistical analysis, and writing and revising of Chapters 3 and 4  | Final thesis |
| 1. The student will *formulate* accurate conclusions from the data and *develop* sound and meaningful policy implications.
 | Researching, writing and revising Chapter 5 | Final thesis |
| 1. The student will *demonstrate* professional/scholarly writing skills and the correct and appropriate use of APA.
 | Writing, revising, reference and APA checks | Final thesis |
| 1. The student will *compose* and *deliver* a professional presentation.
 | Draft presentation  | Thesis presentation  |
| 1. The student will *produce* a study of value to the profession and field of criminal justice and criminology.
 | Drafts of thesis  | Final thesis |

**THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DETERMINATION OF GRADES**

To evaluate your progress in reaching the aforementioned course and program outcomes, you will be assessed by your committee. Specifically, you must present the thesis and give a satisfactory defense. After the defense, the advisor/chair in tandem with the committee, will assign a grade, which applies, to all hours earned for the thesis.

Final thesis and presentation 100% Grading Scale:

100%-90% = A 69%-60% = D

89%-80% = B Below 60% = F

79%-70% = C

# **THESIS AND PRESENTATION**

The thesis must follow the *Guide for Preparation and Submission of Electronic Theses and*

*Dissertations* provided by the Graduate College. It can be found at

<http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/files/Graduate-College-Style-Guide-2014-15.pdf>

Overall, the following components must be completed: Title page, Copyright page (optional), Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, Abstract, Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Literature Review, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Results, Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications, References, Appendices (survey instruments, letter of participation, and IRB letter of approval), and a resume.

You are expected to communicate the following in a 30-35 minute PowerPoint presentation:

* Present the title of your research and rationale (be sure to introduce yourself) (one slide)
* Literature Review: Explain in brief form (bullets), the relevant literature and theoretical connections (no more than two slides)
* Research Methods: Present your research question(s)/research hypotheses (and state whether your study is descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, or applied) (one slide)
	+ Explain the research method(s) and techniques you employed (i.e., research setting, participants, conceptual definitions (variables), sampling design, procedure, etc.) (one-two slides)
	+ Display or describe your data collection instrument/coding sheet/survey and describe how you used it (operational definitions); if handouts work better, you may provide a copy of your instrument to the class (one slide)
	+ Review the relevant human subject protection issues and how these issues were dealt with during your study (one slide)
* Analysis and Results: Present the results and the statistical analyses you employed as they relate to your main research question(s) and hypotheses. Additional findings may be presented or mentioned if time allows (four-five slides with charts or graphs displaying findings)
* Briefly describe the research limitations such as reliability/validity concerns (one slide)
* Summarize your research and describe the implications of your study (one slide)

# **GRADATE COLLEGE THESIS POLICIES:**

The following guidelines serve as a reminder and were taken from the *Graduate Catalog*, page 73.

* The committee should have the same composition as the examining committee for the comprehensive assessment.
* The thesis advisor reports a mark of PR (progress) for satisfactory work at the end of each term or semester for which the student is registered with the total amount of credit to be allowed.
* The thesis must be prepared according to the instructions provided at the Graduate College website, *www.marshall.edu*/*graduate/current-students/edt,* or according to the guidelines (available in the department), which have been approved by the Graduate Dean.
* When the thesis is completed, it is submitted to the advisor and thesis committee for tentative approval. The candidate must then give a presentation open to the academic community based upon the results of the thesis and give a satisfactory defense of the thesis before his/her thesis committee. Upon successful defense of the thesis, the advisor with the concurrence of the committee assigns a grade which applies to all hours earned for the thesis.
* The advisor may report a final grade of *F* at the end of any semester or term when in his/her opinion, because of irregular reports or unsatisfactory progress, the student should not be permitted to continue to register for research.
* The mark of PR (progress) may be used to indicates progress on a thesis, dissertation, or in select research courses.
* A thesis or dissertation approved by a student’s committee must be submitted electronically. Full instructions for electronic theses and dissertations (ETD’s) are located at: [*www.marshall.edu*/*graduate/current-students/edt*](http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/current-students/edt)*.*
* Submission of the thesis must occur by the dates printed in the academic calendar of the term in which the student intends to graduate. If the student fails to meet these dates, the Graduate Dean may postpone the student’s graduation until the end of the following term.
* The Graduate Dean will review the submitted thesis for style and format; students may be required to make modifications prior to final approval by the Graduate Dean. (*Graduate Catalog*, 2014-15, p. 73)

Emails and Teacher-Student Correspondence:

If you have any questions about the course or research products you may email me, visit me during my office hours, or schedule an appointment. If you email me, under most circumstances, I will get back to you within 24 hours. However, there may be times when I am out of the office (for meetings, class, or conferences), hence, delaying my response.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend class and participate regularly. I understand that there are circumstances that may arise throughout the semester that prevent a student from attending class. Documentation of an excused absence can be obtained from the Dean of Student Affairs, MSC 2W38. Excused absences include: death or illness of an immediate family member, pre-approved university sponsored activity, athletics, academic activities, short-term military obligation, jury duty/court appointment, and/or religious holiday (see MU Graduate Catalog). Nonetheless, if you miss class it is your responsibility as a student to obtain any lecture notes or assignments that you missed on that day.

University Policies:

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies which include: Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Graduate Students/ 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/ Sexual Harassment. The full text of each policy can be found by going to [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs](http://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>.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

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| Week | Research Assignments/Products | Items Due  |
| 1/12-1/16 | Review final thesis requirements and due dates | Clean and finalize SPSS dataset |
| 1/19-1/23 | Data analysis |  |
| 1/26-1/30 | Data analysis and preliminary results |  |
| 2/2-2/6 | Write preliminary results chapter | Submit draft of Chapter 4 |
| 2/9-2/13 | Revise Chapters 1-3 | Submit draft of Chapters 1-3 |
| 2/16-2/20 | Write Chapter 5 | Submit draft of Chapter 5 |
| 2/23-2/27 | Revise thesis chapters as needed  |  |
| 3/2-3/6 | Revise thesis (ACJS week) |  |
| 3/9-3/13 | Revise thesis, check APA, references, proofread, etc. | Submit entire thesis to chair |
| 3/16-3/20 | SPRING BREAK |  |
| 3/23-3/27 | Prepare thesis presentation | Entire thesis due to committee |
| 3/30-4/3 | Prepare thesis presentation |  |
| 4/6-4/10 | Prepare thesis presentation and thesis forms | Public presentation and thesis defense |
| 4/13-4/17 | Revise thesis as needed |  |
| 4/20-4/24 | Revise thesis as needed | Submit revised work to committee |
| 4/27-5/1 | Revise and complete any outstanding paperwork | Prepare ETD submission |

\*The *Guide for Preparation and Submission of Electronic Theses and Dissertations* can be found on the Graduate College website.

**Student’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Committee member’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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|  | **Trait** | **Mastery (4)** | **Proficient (3)** | **Novice (2)** | **Limited (1)** | **Insufficient (0)** |
| **Application of Scientific Literacy and Knowledge** | **Analysis of Empirical Research-(PO #2)** | ***Analyzes*** empirical findings /results(i.e., critiques concepts, reliability, usefulness, timeliness, purpose, etc.) | ***Analyzes*** most empirical findings /results(i.e., critiques concepts, reliability, usefulness, timeliness, purpose, etc.) | ***Analyzes*** some empirical findings /results (i.e., critiques concepts, reliability, usefulness, timeliness, purpose, etc.). | ***Analyzes*** a few key of the empirical findings /results (i.e., critiques concepts, reliability, usefulness, timeliness, purpose, etc.). | ***Analyzes*** very little empirical findings /results (i.e., critiques concepts, reliability, usefulness, timeliness, purpose, etc.) |
| **Scientific Literacy-Design & Data Collection-(PO #6)**  | Student ***proposes*** an appropriate design/method, ***evaluates*** how components of the project fit in the design, and thoroughly assesses the limitations (i.e., reliability and threats to validity). ***Demonstrates*** appropriate techniques and tools for data collection.  | Student ***proposes*** an appropriate design/method, ***contrasts*** this design with others, ***determines*** how components of the project fit in the design, and ***examines*** limitations (i.e., reliability and threats to validity).***Chooses*** appropriate techniques and tools for data collection.  | Student ***articulates*** an appropriate design/method, ***explains*** how this design is most appropriate, ***illustrates*** how components of the project fit in the design, and ***describes*** limitations (i.e., reliability and threats to validity).***Describes*** appropriate techniques and tools for data collection.  | Student ***outlines*** a design, ***describes*** how this design/method is appropriate, ***states*** how components of the project fit in the design, and ***lists*** at least one limitation (i.e., reliability concern and/or threat to validity).***Lists*** techniques and tools for data collection.  | Student either neglects to mention a specific design/method or is not able to ***identify*** any components of the design or how it could be used to address the problem.Student fails to ***identify*** a data collection method or has inaccurately identifies the method; inaccurately identifies any techniques and tools used for data collection. |
| **Explanation of Appropriate Statistical Test(s)-(PO #3)** | Accurately ***explains*** the statistical test(s) and communicates a complete understanding of why the test(s) was/were used. | Accurately ***explains*** most of the statistical test(s) and communicates a nearly complete understanding of why the test(s) was/were used. | ***Explains*** some of the statistical test(s) and communicates a fairly complete understanding of why the test(s) was/were used. | ***Explains*** the statistical test(s) inadequately and does not communicate an understanding of why the test(s) was/were used. | Does not ***explain/ communicate*** the statistical test(s).  |
| **Interpretation of Value(s)-(PO #5)** | ***Interprets*** the statistical test(s) results fully and ***demonstrates*** a completeunderstanding of the implications (i.e., makes appropriate inferences based on the Information).  | ***Interprets*** most of the statistical test(s) results and ***demonstrates*** a mostly completeunderstanding of the implications.  | ***Interprets*** some of the statistical test(s) and ***demonstrates*** a fair understanding of the implications.  | ***Interprets*** the statistical test(s) results inadequately and ***demonstrates*** a limited or weakunderstanding of the implications.  | Does not ***interpret*** the statistical test(s) results or ***demonstrate*** the implications. |
| **Development and articulation of criminal justice policy-(PO #8)** | ***Identifies and formulates*** the policy(ies) or policy implications that best addresses the agency problem, program, or crime/ criminal behavior.  | ***Identifies and formulates*** the policy(ies) or policy implications that best addresses the agency problem, program, or crime/ criminal behavior.  | ***Outlines and illustrates*** how some policy(ies) or policy implications best addresses the agency problem, program, or crime/ criminal behavior.  | ***Describes and selects*** in limited ways howthe policy(ies) or policy implications addresses the agency problem, program, or crime/ criminal behavior.  | ***Identifies and formulates*** no tangible policy or policy implications to fit the agency problem, program, or crime/ criminal behavior. |
|  | **Trait** | **Mastery (4)** | **Proficient (3)** | **Novice (2)** | **Limited (1)** | **Insufficient (0)** |
| **Sources and Citations** | **Selection of the Appropriate Types of Sources-(PO #7)** | ***Uses*** all high quality sources of high quality from highly respected scholarly outlets and are directly relevant to the topic. High quality sources include journal articles from higher-tier journals, research monographs, and research reports from governmental agencies.   | ***Uses*** most sources of a high quality from respected outlets and are directly relevant to the topic.  High quality sources include journal articles from higher-tier journals, research monographs, and research reports from governmental agencies. | ***Uses*** sources of good quality from respected outlets and most are relevant to the topic.  Good quality sources include journal articles from lower tier journals, books, and authored and dated reports on web sites of research entities (e.g., Urban Institute, Vera Institute).   | ***Uses*** some sources of good quality but most are from unacceptable outlets. Unacceptable outlets include newspapers, trade publications, magazines, and undated, unauthored web pages or blogs.   | ***Uses*** all sources from unacceptable outlets and/or irrelevant to the topic. Unacceptable outlets include newspapers, trade publications, magazines, and undated, unauthored web pages or blogs.   |
| **Citing & Referencing in APA Format-(PO #7)** | ***Cites*** and references all sources in proper APA format with no errors. | ***Cites*** and references nearly all sources in proper APA format with few minor errors. Typical minor errors include missing or improper use of punctuation, parentheses, or fonts. | ***Cites*** and references most sources in proper APA format with several minor errors.  Typical minor errors include missing or improper use of punctuation, parentheses, or fonts. | ***Cites*** and references some sources in proper APA format with many minor and/or major errors. Typical minor errors include missing or improper use of punctuation, parentheses, or fonts. Typical major errors include neglecting to include an in-text citation, failure to include a reference, failure to match in-text citations to references, neglecting to include required information in an in-text citation or reference, and improper style of reference.  | Does not properly use APA format to ***cite*** or reference sources.    |

**Student’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Member’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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|  | **Trait** | **Mastery (4)** | **Proficient (3)** | **Novice (2)** | **Limited (1)** | **Insufficient (0)** |
| **Oral Communication and Advanced Knowledge** | **Demonstration of Advanced Knowledge-(PO #1)** | ***Articulates*** material that reflects extensive research, including new or little-known information about the topic, accurately defines all important terms, explains all relevant processes and principles, and easily and accurately fields all audience questions. | ***Articulates*** material that reflects thorough research and provides a general current overview of the topic, accurately defines most terms, explains most relevant processes and principles, and easily and accurately fields most audience questions. | ***Articulates*** material that reflects a basic level of research and provides a basic overview of the topic (material may be outdated or not directly relevant), accurately defines some terms, explains some relevant processes and principles, and attempts to answer most audience questions. | ***Articulates*** material that reflects little research (material is outdated and/or irrelevant), attempts to define a few terms and to explains a few relevant processes and principles. Struggles to answer any audience questions. | ***Articulates*** material that reflects no research and fails to define any terms or to explain any processes or principles. Student fails to answer any audience questions. |
| **Organization and Argument-(PO #4)** | ***Produces*** a highly structured presentation around a well-defined central theme with a clear organizational pattern (introduction, body, transitions, conclusion) that enhances and coalesces the presentation.  | ***Produces*** a well-structured presentation around a central theme with a clear organizational pattern (introduction, body, transitions, conclusion).  | ***Produces*** a presentation around a central theme, but the organizational pattern (introduction, body, transitions, conclusion) may be inconsistent or somewhat disorganized. | ***Produces*** a presentation that has a vaguely recognizable central theme, but the organizational pattern (introduction, body, transitions, conclusion) is not recognizable. | ***Produces*** a presentation that has no central theme and no organizational pattern.  |
| **Delivery-(PO #4)** | ***Demonstrates*** delivery techniques (appearance, posture, gesture, eye contact, vocal characteristics) that enhance the presentation, make it compelling, and provide the impression of a polished and confident speaker. | ***Demonstrates*** delivery techniques that make the presentation interesting and provide the impression of a fairly comfortable speaker. | ***Demonstrates*** delivery techniques that make the presentation understandable, although a few characteristics detract from the presentation (fidgeting, lack of eye contact, etc.). Speaker appears tentative. | ***Demonstrates*** delivery techniques that significantly interfere with the presentation (fidgeting, lack of eye contact, etc.). Speaker appears uncomfortable. | Unable to ***demonstrate*** delivery techniques, plus abruptly stops before finishing. Speaker is obviously petrified. |