

# CJ 302: Criminal Justice Research Methods

Section 201

Spring 2014

Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-10:45  
Smith Hall 416

Criminal Justice & Criminology Program  
Marshall University

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:30; 2:00-3:30

*(Note: There may be times when I am called away for meetings during my office hours, so it would be a good idea to call before making an unnecessary trip to campus; however, if you are already on campus, feel free to stop by)*

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## **REQUIRED TEXT**

Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E.R. (2012). *Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage. ISBN # 978-1-111-34691-1

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Logic of social research methods, survey research, methods of evaluation, sampling, and the contrast between qualitative and quantitative criminal justice research (Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog).

*"The beginning of knowledge is the discovery of something we do not understand."*  
- Frank Herbert

## **CREDIT HOURS & PREREQUISITES**

3 credits; CJ 200

*(Note: Junior standing is recommended for this course)*

## **COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS**

A student 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, you must set your Marshall email account to forward to your other account. Furthermore, a Blackboard shell will be used to a limited extent for this class. There, I have posted a copy of your syllabus on the course's homepage (in case you misplace the one I provide in class), and periodically, I may leave important messages on the announcement board. However, I will not be using many of the other tools that you may be familiar with if you have ever taken an online course and used Blackboard, such as the mail

function. Blackboard will be used to primarily post handouts and assignments provided in class. Moreover, I will be using the Blackboard gradebook function, so you can keep track of your progress through the "My Grades" tab.

- You can access Blackboard through MUOnline at: <http://www.marshall.edu/muonline/>
- If you need technical help with Blackboard please contact Marshall's Help Desk at 877-689-8638 (toll free) or Charleston area 746-1969 or Huntington area 696-3200. The help desk can also be reached by email at [helpdesk@marshall.edu](mailto:helpdesk@marshall.edu)

*"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing."*

-Albert Einstein

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

<b>Course Learning Outcome</b> <i>At the completion of this course, students will be able to:</i>	<b>How Each Outcome is Practiced in this Course</b>	<b>How Each Outcome is Evaluated in this Course</b>
explain the fundamentals of social scientific inquiry, the importance of theory in the research process, and the potential policy implications of the findings;	In-class lectures and activities, readings, and discussions	Quizzes, assignments, and exams
compare and contrast the different approaches to research design, including survey methods, experimental and quasi-experimental design, case studies, field research, content analysis, and secondary data analysis;	In-class lectures and activities, readings, and discussions	Quizzes, assignments, and exams
apply basic statistical techniques used in criminal justice research to interpret data;	In-class lectures and activities, readings, and discussions	Quizzes, assignments, and exams
articulate their future roles as both producers and consumers of research;	In-class lectures and activities, readings, and discussions	Quizzes, assignments, and exams
develop methodological and critical thinking skills by conducting research and utilizing the research library databases; and	Library research activities	Research exercises
select a criminological issue and produce a research design using professional language while adhering to the APA guidelines for citation/referencing.	In-class lectures and activities, readings, and discussions	Research exercises

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- **Examinations:** There are 2 regular exams and a final exam in this course. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer, essay or any combination of the aforementioned formats. The final exam is ***not*** comprehensive. The dates for these exams are as follows:

Exam 1 – Thursday, February 20  
Exam 2 – Thursday, April 3  
Final Exam – Tuesday, May 6 (8:00-10:00)

- **Research Exercises:** Students will be required to submit approximately 8 research exercises worth 20% of the final grade. Detailed directions for these exercises will be provided accordingly.
- **Quizzes & Assignments:** Quizzes and assignments will be given periodically to strengthen your understanding of the topics covered in class. Quizzes will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and/or completion questions. In most cases the quizzes will be unannounced; therefore, it is crucial that students keep up with the reading assignments and review class notes prior to attending class. The assignments may be both in-class and out-of-class (there are no make-ups for in-class assignments). Quizzes & Assignments are worth 10% of the final grade.
- **Class Participation/Attendance:** This class will be conducted as a seminar, which means that everyone is expected to come fully prepared to discuss the readings. We will, as a group, discuss the various readings and related issues. It is absolutely imperative that each person become actively involved in the discussions, as this is the best way for all of us to get an education. As discussion is such an integral and important part of this class, 10% of the final grade will be assigned for class participation/attendance. To earn these points is actually quite simple; come to each class having read the assignments, having given some thought to the issues, and prepared to share your thoughts, opinions, etc. Class participation involves not only asking/answering questions and participation in discussions but attentiveness, not being chronically late for class, and most importantly attendance (you can't participate if you're not here!).

*All research exercises and out-of-class assignments must be typed and double-spaced, unless stated otherwise on the individual directions. One inch margins and standard fonts should be used. There is no exception for using any font larger than Times New Roman 12 point. Remember to number your pages, and staple the assignment if it exceeds more than 1 page! A one letter grade deduction per day will be taken for each assignment that is turned in late and will no longer be accepted after two days.*

## **READING ASSIGNMENTS**

Reading assignments can be found on the tentative course schedule at the end of this syllabus. These readings are meant to reinforce the class lectures/discussions, and it is expected that the readings be completed prior to class. Quizzes on the readings will be given, so you will be responsible for all readings assigned- no excuses!

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance will be recorded daily. Poor attendance will have an adverse effect on your class participation because ***you can't participate if you're not here!*** For classes that meet twice per week 7.5 points are taken off for each unexcused absence. These points are deducted from a total possible 100 points. Unexcused absences are those that do not fall into the list of excused categories identified in the university catalog: (1) university sponsored activities; (2) absences as a result of personal illness or a death in the family; and (3) absences resulting from major religious holidays. For a more detailed explanation of these categories, please see the undergraduate catalog under the heading of "Class Attendance." All excused absences must be presented to the professor with proper documentation. ***No excuses will be accepted after the class period immediately following the class that was missed.***

If you miss an exam with no legitimate documented excuse, a zero will be given for that test with no make-up test. If you are ill or know in advance that you will miss an exam for a legitimate excuse, you (or your representative) must notify me **BEFORE** the scheduled exam time (if I am not notified before the exam, you will be given a zero regardless of the excuse). For those students who do contact me and have a legitimate excuse (as defined in the preceding paragraph), an alternative time to take the exam will be determined. The format of the make-up exams will be left to my discretion. In addition, students who are late on exam day will not be permitted to take the exam if another student(s) has already completed the exam and has left the classroom; the exam in this case has been compromised. In other words, you will **NOT** be able to take the exam or take a make-up exam.

There are **no make-ups for pop quizzes or in-class assignments** with or without an excuse; however, if a valid documented excuse is presented [and accepted by the professor] the score will be waived, but it is the student's responsibility to notify the professor regarding a missed quiz (i.e., "I will not hunt you down"). Also, as stated previously, no excuses will be accepted after the class period immediately following the class that was missed.

### **GRADING CRITERIA**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Scale</u>
Exam 1	20 %	90-100% = A
Exam 2	20 %	80-89% = B
Final Exam	20 %	70-79% = C
Research Exercises	20 %	60-69% = D
Assignments & Quizzes	10 %	Below 60% = F
Class Participation/Attendance	10 %	
TOTAL	100 %	

### **BORA'S "TEN COMMANDMENTS"**

1. As a general rule, I don't allow my lectures to be tape-recorded. Exceptions are made for students with disabilities; however, prior permission must be obtained from me.
2. All cell phones must be turned off and put away (out of view) at the commencement of class, with the exception of emergency service personnel. Cell phones are disruptive not only to me, but your fellow students, so please be courteous. You will receive only one warning if your cell phone goes off in class, or if I catch you playing with it during class (e.g., **texting**). Your grade will be penalized after the first warning.
3. You may NOT eat during class. This means food of any kind (chips, sandwiches, candy, etc.). However, drinks are permitted (non-alcoholic of course). Also, you should not be working on anything not related to this class once class commences (this includes reading, copying other's notes, knitting, playing games on your cell phone, etc.).
4. Do NOT leave the classroom once class has started, unless it is an absolute emergency or you have notified me before class that you will be leaving. You should use the restroom, get a drink of water, make a phone call, etc. before class starts.

5. Don't cheat or plagiarize! Academic dishonesty is something I take very seriously and will not tolerate. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will automatically receive a failing grade for the course and will be referred to the dean for appropriate disciplinary action. Plagiarism from the internet has become a very serious problem and professors now have access to various software programs to identify this behavior, so at this point in your academic career, don't risk it! For a detailed explanation of academic dishonesty, please see the undergraduate catalog.
6. Don't hesitate to ask questions, the dumbest question is the one not asked! If you ask a question I can't answer, I'll find out the answer and get back to you. Please remember that as a teacher, I am merely your guide through the field, I am not the field itself!
7. During discussions please respect different viewpoints; there is always more than one side. Treat others' views as you would want your own to be treated, with an open mind. Personal attacks on others will not be tolerated!
8. I like to run my classes as an open forum where we can all learn from each other, so I encourage intelligent discussions, questions, and comments, but at the same time we have to remember that we are at a university setting and must act accordingly.
9. I encourage all my students to make use of my office hours, they are there for you. If you can't make it at the scheduled times, let me know and we can arrange to meet at another time. However, this invitation is only for those students who come to class on a regular basis and put forth a genuine effort to learn. Also, please keep in mind that I have a life too and while my office hours are mandatory, my other time is not, so my flexibility can only extend so far.
10. Enjoy! Have fun! Learn! Some students feel that each of these endeavors are independent of each other, they are not. You can enjoy and have fun while learning. I hope to make it as comfortable as I can for you, but it will take some work on your part as well.

*"After all, the ultimate goal of all research is not objectivity, but truth."*

-Helene Deutsch

### **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Week 1</b>	Jan 14 & 16
Introduction; Scientific Inquiry (Read Chapter 1)	
<i>Jan 13-17 Late Registration and Add/Drop (Schedule Adjustment)</i>	
<b>Week 2</b>	Jan 21 & 23
Theory & Research; Research Ethics (Read Chapter 2)	
<i>Jan 21-Mar 28 "W" Withdrawal Period</i>	
<b>Week 3</b>	Jan 28 & 30
Research Design (Read Chapter 3)	

<b>Week 4</b>	Feb 4 & 6
The Research Process- Concepts, Operationalization, & Measurement (Read Chapter 4)	
<b>Week 5</b>	Feb 11 & 13
Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Design (Read Chapter 5)	
<b>Week 6</b>	Feb 18 & 20
Exam Review; <i>Exam 1 (Feb 20)</i>	
<b>Week 7</b>	Feb 25 & 27
Data Collection & Sampling (Read Chapter 6)	
<b>Week 8</b>	Mar 4 & 6
Survey Research (Read Chapter 7)	
<b>Week 9</b>	Mar 11 & 13
Observation & Field Research (Read Chapter 8)	
<b>Week 10</b>	Mar 18 & 20
<i>Spring Break- Classes Dismissed</i>	
<b>Week 11</b>	Mar 25 & 27
Secondary Data & Content Analysis (Read Chapter 9)	
<i>Mar 28 Last Day to Drop a Full Semester Individual Course</i>	
<b>Week 12</b>	Apr 1 & 3
Exam Review; <i>Exam 2 (Apr 3)</i>	
<i>Mar 31-May 2 Complete Withdrawals Only</i>	
<b>Week 13</b>	Apr 8 & 10
Program Evaluation & Policy Analysis (Read Chapter 10)	
<b>Week 14</b>	Apr 15 & 17
Data Analysis and Statistics (Read Chapter 11)	
<b>Week 15</b>	Apr 22 & 24
Data Analysis and Statistics (cont.)	

<b>Week 16</b>	<b>Apr 29 &amp; May 1</b>
Data Analysis and Statistics (cont.); Exam Review	
<b>Week 17</b>	<b>May 6</b>
<b>Final Exam (Tuesday, May 6, 8:00-10:00)</b>	

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs) and clicking on “Marshall 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*
- *Sexual Harassment*

*\*Because this class meets at 9:30am, if there is a 2-hour delay due to inclement weather, it will commence at 10:00 and end at the normally scheduled time of 10:45. Normal schedule resumes starting at 11:00 for all remaining classes.*

*“The first step towards knowledge is to know that we are ignorant.”*

-Richard Cecil