



RCJU304 – Criminal Justice Research Methods

Master Course Syllabus

Course Overview (QM Standards 1.2)

Course description: This is a writing intensive course that addresses quantitative and qualitative research design in social research, including surveys, sampling, data interpretation, and the methods of evaluation in sociological and criminal justice research.

Course Goals:

1. Differentiate between the key terms associated with the research process.
2. Identify and define key ethical concerns associated with current and past research.
3. Summarize the terms associated with conceptual development and measurement.
4. Summarize the components of experimental and quasi-experimental design.
5. Identify and define the different methods of data collection.
6. Distinguish between the key terms associated with data analysis
7. Construct a basic research proposal using a survey method (do not administer the survey).

Pre-Requisites (QM Standard 1.6)

There are no course prerequisites for this course other than being an RBA (Regents Bachelor of Arts) student.

Minimum Technical Requirements and Online Resources (QM Standards 1.5 & 1.7)

In addition to a web browser (preferable Firefox) that is Blackboard compatible, you will need the other WVROCKS supported technologies outlined in the student policies section.

Online Resources: This course makes use of many online resources. I have made every effort to make sure the links I have are up-to-date. However, due to the changing nature of the web, you may find that a resource is temporarily unavailable or has been removed. If this should happen, please send me an email and I will find an alternative resource or modify the assignment accordingly.

Instructor Information (QM Standards 1.8 & 5.3)

Individual instructors complete this information.

Virtual Office Hours

I am available in my virtual office by appointment only. Send me an email to set up an appointment.

Personal Commitment

My personal commitments to you as a participant include:

- I will reply to course mail messages within 24 hours;
- I will read all discussion postings and will reply where appropriate within 3 days
- I will acknowledge my receipt of every course mail message immediately upon reading it. If I am unable to respond to the request or concern at the time of initial reply, I will give you an estimated time for my next reply.
- If I am going to be away from the course space for more than a day or two, I will send a message to you indicating the length of my absence.
- I will regularly update information regarding due dates in the course announcements.

Optional/Required Course Materials (QM Standard 4.6)

You will find your required textbook information in the course catalog at <http://ilearn-wvrocks.wvnet.edu>. All other materials are found in the individual course modules.

Grading Policy (QM Standard 3.2)

Grading Inquiries

Student materials will be returned as soon as graded to the student. If the student has a question about a grade on an assignment, the student must bring the assignment to the professor. No grade inquiries about specific assignments will be explored without the questioned assignment. It is the students' responsibility to keep their materials. Final examinations and materials not picked up will be kept in my office for 30 days into the next semester. A student may pick up their final examination and other materials after grades are turned in for the semester until thirty days into the next semester. At that time, finals and all other material not claimed will be destroyed.

Assessments

Assignment	Points Each	Number	Total Points
Exams (no final)	100	2	200
Exercises	20	5	100
Quizzes	20	5	100

Final Paper	100	1	100
Total Points			500 Total Points

Grading Scale

A = 450 – 500

B = 400 – 449

C = 350 – 399

D = 300 – 349

F = 299 and below

Note: There are no such things as bonus points in life or in this class. Do not ask for extra credit or bonus points. Prepare for this course like you would prepare for any other major event in your life. There are no do overs.

Make-up Exams

If you miss an exam, a make-up exam will be scheduled one week after the original exam. You must take the make-up exam which will consist of all fill ins, essay, or both. If you are taking the make-up exam, you must notify the professor and make the arrangements with him. **IF YOU FAIL TO TAKE THE EXAM OR MAKE UP EXAM, YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO (0) FOR THAT EXAM.** No exceptions!!! My time is important and I am not on your schedule; you are on mine.

Exercises and Final Paper

Throughout the semester each student will write a research proposal but not actually submit the material for data collection because one must receive IRB approval before doing so. The goal is to slowly put together a research agenda. This is a senior level course and while I do not expect all of you to fully grasp the idea of research design, but by keeping these assignments in a packet you will easily understand the formation of a research project later in your collegiate career. You will write an Introduction, Literature Review, Human Subject Protection, Sampling, Discussion, Reference Page, IRB Request, Survey Design, and other formats associated with research design. It is your responsibility to keep these and turn them in as one paper at the end of the semester. Each assignment is worth a different amount of allotted points. The final project should be a minimum of 15 pages including a title page and reference page. **All materials must be completed in APA format. No exceptions. Please see the grading rubric for more detail.**

Quizzes

These will be given periodically throughout the semester. A student must take the quiz scheduled. They will generally be multiple choice, true false, or fill in and come from the week on the syllabus lecture or from previous weeks. You will not drop any quizzes. There are five total.

Assignment Requirements

All assignments must be completed in Times New Roman, 12pt font, double space, with a title page. Points will be deducted beginning with the first typed assignment if these guidelines are not followed. In each assignment, each writing error will count as 1 point deduction for the first 5. For the next 5 errors, the penalty will be 2 points. For the remainder of writing errors, 2 points will be deducted for each. If you have writing or typing issues, please seek assistance. Learn APA from day 1 and cite using it.

Various exercises will be assigned in each module. These include:

1. Ethics
2. Brainstorming
3. Literature Review
4. Survey
5. Statistics

Each exercise is worth 20 points and is due as indicated on the course schedule.

Module Objectives and Assessments (QM Standard 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 5.1)

Module 1: Research Basics

After you have complete the readings and content for this module you will be able to:

- Define key concepts: research, variables, theory, and reasoning. [M1S1, M1A1, M1A4]
- Identify the importance of causal reasoning and inference. [M1A1, M1A4]
- Define key concepts: deductive and inductive reasoning. [M1A3, M1A4]
- Compare and contrast research proposals for ethical concerns based on prior examples. [M1A3, M1A4]
- Compare and contrast confidentiality and anonymity. [M1A3, M1A4]
- Compare and contrast concepts, conceptualization and operationalization in terms of measurement. [M1A2, M1A4]
- Compare and contrast validity and reliability in terms of measurement. [M1A2, M1A4]
- Differentiate between the types of validity concerns associated with research. [M1A2, M1A4]

Module 2: Field Research

After you have complete the readings and content for this module you will be able to:

- Identify and describe the various quantitative and qualitative methodologies associated with experimental design.[M2S1, M2A1, M2A3, M2A6]
- Differentiate between the various forms of sampling used with experimental and quasi-experimental design. [M2A1, M2A3, M2A5, M2A6]
- Differentiate between open and close ended survey items. [M2A2, M2A5, M2A6]
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of field research and secondary data collection. [M2A2, M2A5, M2A6]
- Summarize the importance of using prior literature in creating an effective survey instrument. [M2A2, M2A4, M2A6]

Module 3: Data Analysis

After you have complete the readings and content for this module you will be able to:

- Define key concepts: bivariate analysis, distribution and level of significance [M3S1, M3A1]
- Compare and contrast the effectiveness of levels of central tendency [M3A1]
- Produce a course paper using the information associated with the prior learning tools. [M3A3]