

University of North Texas at Dallas
Spring 2015
SYLLABUS

CJUS 4700D 030: CJ Research Methods 3 Credit Hours

Department of	Criminal Justice	Division of	Business & Public Leadership
Instructor Name:	<i>Melinda D. Schlager, Ph.D.</i>		
Office Location:	<i>DAL 2 #320</i>		
Phone:	<i>214-671-3737 (Caruth Police Institute)</i>		
Email Address:	<i>Melinda.Schlager@untdallas.edu</i>		
Office Hours:	By Appointment		
Virtual Office Hours:	<i>9-11AM Monday-Friday with almost immediate response; other times, response within 24 hours</i>		
Classroom Location:	NA		
Class Meeting Days & Times:	Online		
Course Catalog Description:	This course prepares students in the application of research methodology in criminal justice and other social science disciplines. Examples using real research data will be provided to facilitate understanding and application of various quantitative and qualitative processes.		
Prerequisites:	Minimum 18 Criminal Justice and 12 hours of Criminal Justice core completed		
Co-requisites:	None		
Required Text:	Bachman, R. and Schutt, R.K. (2015). <i>Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice</i>. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4833-3345-8.		
Recommended Text and References:	This is an intensive course. Students in this class are highly encouraged to acquire additional resources such as the APA handbook, scholarly literature, other textbooks and web notes for reference and assistance.		
Access to Learning Resources:	UNT Dallas Library: phone: (972) 780-3625; web: http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm UNT Dallas Bookstore: phone: (972) 780-3652; e-mail: 1012mgr@fheg.follett.com		
Course Goals or Overview:			
	The goal of this course is to introduce the scientific method and research design and how they are applied to our world.		
Learning Objectives/Outcomes: At the end of this course, the student will be able to:			
1	Explain the importance of the scientific method in the practice of social science research.		
2	Understand the role of ethics in social science research.		
3	Understand sampling, study design, and data sources used in social science research.		
4	Identify key aspects of quantitative and qualitative research processes.		
5	Demonstrate the ability to apply course material to various research situations.		
6	Critically evaluate academic scholarship.		
7	Improve overall writing capability.		

Course Outline

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by the instructor via email. Please note that this class will be on a Monday-Sunday weekly schedule (with the exception of the first day of class which is a Tuesday). Please note that **all** assignments are due by **11:30 PM CST** on the day that they are due. Please see below and in Blackboard for more detailed information on assignments.

Assigned Readings/Assignments	Due Date
Week #1: January 20- January 25	
Ch.1: Science, Society, and Criminological Research (pp.1-21)	
Appendix A (www.sagepub.com/bachmanfrccj3e)	
Appendix C (www.sagepub.com/bachmanfrccj3e)	
Introduction	1/21/15
Assignment #1	1/25/15
Week #2: January 26-February 1	
Ch. 2: The Process and Problems of Criminological Research (pp. 22-41)	
Discussion #1	1/28/15
Comments #1	1/30/15
Assignment #2	2/1/15
Week #3: February 2-February 8	
Ch. 3: Research Ethics and Philosophies (pp. 42-65)	
Video of the Stanford Prison Experiment (Blackboard)	
Discussion #2	2/4/15
Comments #2	2/6/15
EXAM #1	2/8/15
Week #4: February 9- February 15	
Ch. 4: Conceptualization and Measurement (pp. 66-86)	
Assignment #3	2/15/15
Week #5: February 16-22	
Ch. 4: Conceptualization and Measurement (pp. 66-86)	
Assignment #4	2/22/15
Week #6: February 23-March 1	
Ch. 5: Sampling (pp. 87-110)	
Discussion #3	2/25/15
Comments #3	2/27/15
Literature Review Due	3/1/15
Week #7: March 2-March 8	
Ch. 5: Sampling (PP. 87-110)	
Ch. 6: Causation and Research Design (pp. 111-140)	
Assignment #5	3/8/15
Week #8: March 9-March 15	
Ch. 6: Causation and Research Design (pp. 111-140)	
Assignment #6	3/15/15
EXAM #2	3/15/15
Week 9: March 16-March 22	
SPRING BREAK -NO CLASS	

Week 10: March 23-March 29	
Ch. 7: Survey Research (pp. 142-169)	
Discussion #4	3/25/15
Comments #4	3/27/15
Assignment #7	3/29/15
Week #11: March 30-April 5	
Ch. 8: Qualitative Methods and Data Analysis (pp. 170-206)	
Discussion #5	4/1/15
Comments #5	4/3/15
Assignment #8	4/5/15
Week #12: April 6-April 12	
Ch. 9: Analyzing Content: Crime Mapping and Historical, Secondary, and Content Analysis (pp. 207-224)	
Discussion #6	4/8/15
Comments #6	4/10/15
Exam #3	4/12/15
Week #13: April 13-April 19	
Ch. 10: Evaluation and Policy Analysis (pp. 226-249)	
Discussion #7	4/15/15
Comments #7	4/17/15
Week #14: April 20-April 26	
Ch. 11: Mixing and Comparing Methods (pp. 250-266)	
Discussion #8	
Comments #8	4/22/15
Assignment #9	4/24/15
	4/26/15
Week #15: April 27-May 3	
Ch. 12: Reporting Research Results (pp. 267-279)	
Discussion #9	4/29/15
Comments #9	5/1/15
Assignment #10	5/3/15
Week #16: May 4-May 7	
Exam #4	5/7/15
Research Proposal Due	5/7/15

Course Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

Introduction/Discussion Posts:

The **Introduction** is a chance for you to 'meet' your colleagues in the class and an opportunity to introduce yourself to your professor. You will also be required to answer a course-related question. Specific instructions on what to post are available when you click on Introduction in Week #1. The Introductory post is due on **Wednesday of Week #1** of the course.

The **Discussions** are directly related to the assigned readings. Upon completion of the assigned readings, you are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for **quality** and a **detailed analysis** of the topic in question. APA citation format.

These posts should be **the equivalent of a half-page in length or a minimum of 125 words**. The specific discussion assignment is located in each unit Week by clicking on the Discussion link. Posts are due by 11:30PM CST on **Wednesdays**.

Comment Posts:

Comment posts are responses you make to the discussion posts that you and your classmates post each week. You are **required** to make a minimum of **five** comments each week. I would strongly encourage you to engage your colleagues well past the five-comment minimum in order to maximize your opportunity for meaningful discussion and learning.

Comment posts should be meaningful. Merely agreeing or disagreeing with a classmate will not be looked upon favorably and will result in a loss of points. A meaningful post is one that moves the discussion forward in some substantive way through providing one's perspective, additional information through research, or reframing the discussion in some new way. You are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your comments will be graded for **quality**, and **relevance**. Your comments will also be graded based on your ability to engage in critical thinking. **NO LATE COMMENTS ARE ACCEPTED**. All comment posts are due by 11:30PM CST on **Fridays**.

Assignments:

Assignments vary from week-to-week. However, students should take these very seriously. Each assignment requires you to work on a specific task that when combined with the other assignments comprises the bulk of your research proposal. If you make the effort and do the work contained in the assignments on a weekly basis, composition of your final research proposal will be relatively easy. Assignments are due by 11:30PM CST on **Sundays**.

Exams

You will take four exams in this course. They will include short answer and essay questions. Exams will be available beginning at midnight on Wednesday of the week in which the exam is assigned and close at 11:30PM on Sunday of the week in which the exam is assigned. Students will have only one opportunity to take the exam and the exam will be timed.

Exam #1 (covers chapters 1-3 of the text) Week #3

Exam #2 (covers chapters 4-6 of the text) Week #8

Exam #3 (covers chapters 7-9 of the text) Week #12

Exam #4 (covers chapters 10-12 of the text) Week #16 (exam will open Monday and close on Thursday at 11:30PM CST).

Literature Review:

Assignment #2 will assist you with selecting a topic for your research proposal. This topic will be the subject of your literature review that will in turn form the foundation of your research proposal (see below for more on that). Students will also want to consult Appendix A available on the student study site: www.sagepub.com/bachmanfrccj3e.

A literature review aims to highlight the current state of knowledge regarding a particular topic under study (think about any journal article you have read). Literature reviews generally include substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. Literature reviews are comprised of secondary sources and as such do not report any new or original experimental work. The main purpose of a literature review is to situate the work you are doing within the body of literature and to provide context for the reader.

For this assignment, you will need to find, read, and analyze **five** articles that are related to the research question you pose in **Assignment #2**. A literature review is not a summary, but a synthesis. The idea is to take the sources you find and organize them in some way that informs the study you wish to conduct/paper you wish to write. This requires that you pull your sources together in a way that explains to the reader why the issue/topic/problem you have identified is worth studying (i.e., not covered in current literature, no consensus in existing literature, augmenting existing literature, etc.)

The literature review is due by 11:30PM CST on **Sunday of Week #6** of the course. Your literature review must be **3-5 pages** in length (does not include references), maximum 12-point font, 1-inch margins, include your name on the paper, and utilize proper APA citation format. If you do not know APA citation format, you will want to learn. Keep in mind that your literature review will be included in the final research proposal you turn in at the end of the semester. You will likely wish to make adjustments to this after I have returned comments to you.

Research Proposal:

The final research proposal you turn in for this class is a composite of the work you have completed in the assignments and literature review as well as some additional material you will need to provide. You will want to review the comments I made on your work and make any changes/modifications as necessary. Be advised that you do not want to just copy and paste your assignments together. Your final proposal will be graded on your ability to provide a fluid document that includes:

- Abstract
- Literature review
- Research question
- Methodology to include:
 - Sampling
 - Study design
 - Conceptualization, operationalization, measurement for **5** variables
 - Data source (e.g., survey, secondary data, content analysis, etc.)

You will want to consult research articles you have read as models for your paper. Your paper is due by 11:30PM CST on **May 7, 2015**. Your research proposal must be a minimum of **10 pages** in length (does not include references), maximum 12-point font, 1-inch margins, include your name on the paper, and utilize proper APA citation format.

Assignment Type	Value (points)	Total
Discussions	9 discussions at 30 points each	270
Comments	5 comments/discussion at 5 points each	225
Written Assignments	10 assignments at 50 points	500
Exams	4 exams at 100 points each	400
Literature Review	1 assignment at 75 points	75
Research Proposal	1 assignment at 150 points	150
Total:		1620

Grade Determination:

- A = 1620 – 1458 pts; i.e. 90% or better
- B = 1457 – 1296 pts; i.e. 80 – 89 %
- C = 1295 – 1134 pts; i.e. 70 – 79 %
- D = 1133 – 972 pts; i.e. 60 – 69 %
- F = 971 pts or below; i.e. less than 60%

University Policies and Procedures

Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance):

The University of North Texas Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students' with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed as accommodations are not retroactive. For more information, you may visit the Student Life Office, Suite 200, Building 2 or call Laura Smith at 972-780-3632.

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness Policy:

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of Academic Integrity policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Academic Integrity at http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/policies/Chapter%2007%20Student%20Affairs,%20Education,%20and%20Funding/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.pdf for complete provisions of this code.

In addition, all academic work submitted for this class, including exams, papers, and written assignments should include the following statement:

On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance that violates the UNTD Academic Integrity Policy.

Bad Weather Policy:

On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website www.unt.edu/dallas. Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

Diversity/Tolerance Policy:

Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses, will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Life as the instructor deems appropriate. This course is designed to be a safe open forum. Thus, please adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.