**Department of Criminal Justice**

**Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice**

**CRIJ 3300 – 002**  
**CRN 31585**  
**Summer 2023 Online**  
**3 Credit Hours**

**Professor:** Chris Guerra  
**Office:** Education Building #111-L  
**Office Telephone:** 915-747-6345  
**Email:** cguerra7@utep.edu [best way to contact me]  
**Class Modality:** Online  
**Office Availability:** By appointment only, Zoom or in person

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**Textbook(s)/Readings:**

*Seventh edition is required.*

**Course Description:**

Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice is designed to introduce students to the research methods involved in criminal justice and criminology research. Major topics in this course will include research ethics, correlation and causation, quantitative vs. qualitative methods, sampling and techniques, data collection, reliability and validity, and survey design. Overall, this course is intended to help you learn how to analyze, interpret, and critique quantitative and qualitative
evidence surrounding the examination of criminal behavior. In doing so, this class will help you become more intelligent consumers of research.

**Learning Objectives:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able:

1. Examine the purposes and issues of conducting scientific research in criminal justice and criminology.
2. Understand and evaluate forms of measurement, data, data collection, and sampling techniques and methods used in criminal justice and criminology.
3. Identify and think critically about issues surrounding ethics, research design, including criteria of causality, validity and reliability, units of analysis, types of research design, and stages in the research process.
4. Develop research and writing skills in order to satisfactorily answer research questions and clearly and concisely convey criminal justice and criminology research using academic resources.
5. Consider and integrate diverse perspectives in criminal justice and criminology research.

**Course Grading and Required Assignment Information:**

Your final grade will be determined based on your performance on quizzes, class participation through discussion boards, and an article review. There are a total of 1000 points that can be earned in this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Review</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1000</td>
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Grading Scale:

900-1000 = A  
800-899 = B  
700-799 = C  
600-699 = D  
599 or fewer points = F

**Quizzes:** To assess understanding of course materials, 11 quizzes will be administered—one for every chapter in the book we cover. Each quiz is worth 50 points and your lowest scoring quiz will be dropped. This means there are a total of 10 quizzes that count towards your final grade. (50 pts x 10 quizzes = 500 pts) All quizzes will be due the Sunday of the week they are assigned by 11:59PM. Each quiz will be allowed 4 attempts where I will take the highest of the four possible attempts; however, once the quiz timeframe closes, it is closed for good. So make sure you complete quizzes on time.
**Discussion Boards:** Students should expect to engage in an online discussion weekly. There are 3 total discussion boards assignments throughout the semester (see schedule below). The first discussion board will also include an introductory component. The questions posed during these blackboard discussions will relate to the readings and topics discussed during class. They may also include interactive content including online videos, articles, PowerPoints, etc. Online discussions are designed for students to engage in critical thinking, thoughtful and respectful interactions with fellow students, reflect on material from class, and application of key concepts.

Each blackboard discussion assignment will be worth 100 points. Students are expected to post their own response to the question or topic presented (worth 60 pts) and respond to two other student posts (each individual response is worth 20 points each → 2 responses x 20 = 40 pts). With a total of 3 discussion boards, this portion of the grade is worth 300 points. There are no make-up opportunities for these exercises. All discussion boards will also be due the Sunday of the week they are assigned by 11:59PM.

**Article Review:** While this class does not have a traditional final exam, a final assignment will be required. For this assignment, students will complete an article review of an article that I will designate. Information will be provided regarding the assignment details on Blackboard.

**Technology Requirements:**
Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, and possibly a webcam and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP’s Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

**IMPORTANT:** If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

**Course Communication:**

Because this is an online class, we will not see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are several ways we can keep the communication channels open:
- **Office Hours:** See availability above.
• **Email:** UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.

• **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

**Netiquette and Email Policy:**

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It’s possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other’s ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, **address the ideas, not the person**. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

If you have questions regarding course material, assignments, exams, or administrative questions, please notify me via email or in-person during office hours. Before you do so, please review the syllabus to see if it answers your question(s). I will answer emails during business hours (8:00AM-5:00PM) Monday through Friday. Emails sent during the weekend will be replied to the following Monday. Please format your email in a professional manner. I highly recommend, “Hi Professor Guerra” followed by a comma as a way to begin the email message. Here is an example introduction:

“Hi Professor Guerra,

My name is (fill your name in here) and I am a student in your Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice this semester. My question is…”

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance and Participation**

Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by completion of the following activities:

- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements
- Participating in engaging discussion with your peers on the discussion boards
- Quizzes/ Papers

Because these activities are designed to contribute to your learning each week, they cannot be made up after their due date has passed.

**Excused Absences and/or Course Drop Policy**
According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

**OR**

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

**Deadlines, Late Work, and Absence Policy**
Every assignment due in this class will be due on the designated Sunday night by 11:59PM. Here is more information:

**Quiz and Discussion Assignments**
- All quizzes and discussion board assignments will be due on their respective Sunday night by 11:59 PM. No late work will be accepted if the reason is not considered excusable.

**Article Review**
- The article review will be due on its respective Sunday night by 11:59 PM. No late work will be accepted if the reason is not considered excusable.

**Make-up Assignments**
Late writing assignments will not typically be accepted. If an assignment submission is missed for an acceptable reason (as determined by myself or the university), students will be allowed to make up the assignment no later than one week after the original due date or a due date specifically assigned by the professor.

**Alternative Means of Submitting Work in Case of Technical Issues**
I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, and papers) in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will
not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

Incomplete Grade Policy
Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

Accommodations Policy
The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

COVID-19 accommodations
If you are sick with COVID-19 or are showing symptoms, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations. Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

Scholastic Integrity
Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

Plagiarism Detecting Software
Some of your course work and assessments may be submitted to Turnitin and/or SafeAssign, which are plagiarism detecting software. These are used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

Copyright Statement For Course Materials
All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

Mandatory Reporting for Title IX:
As a professor at UTEP, I am under federal obligation to relay information regarding victimization disclosure to our University’s Title IX Coordinator for the purpose of ensuring appropriate services and accommodations are provided to anyone who has disclosed victimization. It is important that you know, should you disclose ongoing or past victimization in writing assignments, during class, or to me personally, I am legally obliged to relay this information to a Title IX Coordinator.

Course Resources
UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

Technology Resources
- **Help Desk:** Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources
- **UTEP Library:** Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- **University Writing Center (UWC):** Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- **Math Tutoring Center (MaRCS):** Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- **History Tutoring Center (HTC):** Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- **RefWorks:** A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

Individual Resources
- **Military Student Success Center:** Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- **Center for Accommodations and Support Services:** Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.
Prohibition of Course Work Acquired Outside of Student’s Own Work:

Written work or papers that are purchased, written by another individual, or written using or with the assistance of an artificial intelligence system or software (e.g., ChatGPT) are strictly prohibited in this course. Failure to adhere to this will be considered academic dishonesty. See the Scholastic Integrity section of this syllabus for more information about academic dishonesty and its consequences.

Inclusive Course:
This class will be taught in an inclusive and comfortable online space that is intellectually challenging. As the professor, I will work to foster an environment that is supportive, accepting, respectful, and intellectually stimulating. However, these classroom goals are contingent on your active participation as well. I expect all students to contribute to the shaping of an inclusive, comfortable, and educational setting by honoring the diverse backgrounds, statuses, and experiences of your fellow classmates. The field of criminal justice is characterized by a diverse continuum of perspectives, and the university educational experience requires that we examine issues from numerous angles. With this in mind, do not attack another because their position is different than yours. Instead, practice refining your discussion/debate skills by becoming more informed about issues that interest you (even better, practice taking the alternative position and defending it). These are invaluable skills which are useful both professionally and interpersonally.

Changes to Syllabus:

The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be notified via email and/or blackboard and changes will be made through online medium.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK &amp; TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS &amp; Lectures</th>
<th>READINGS/ ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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</table>
| **6/12-6/16**  
Syllabus Week & Introductions to Research Methods; Science, Society, & Criminological Research; The Process & Problems of Criminological Research, Reading Journal Articles; Research Ethics | • Chapter 1  
• Chapter 2  
• Chapter 3  
• APA 7 Lecture  
• How to Review and Find Research Lecture | Quiz 1 Due  
Quiz 2 Due  
Quiz 3 Due  
Discussion Board #1 Due  
*All Due Sunday 6/18 by 11:59PM* |
| **6/19-6/23**  
Conceptualization & Measurement; Sampling; Causation & Research Design | • Chapter 4  
• Chapter 5  
• Chapter 6 | Quiz 4 Due  
Quiz 5 Due  
Quiz 6 Due  
Discussion Board #2 Due  
*All Due Sunday 6/25 by 11:59PM* |
| **6/26-6/30**  
Experimental Designs; Survey Research; Qualitative Methods; | • Chapter 7  
• Chapter 8  
• Chapter 9 | Quiz 7 Due  
Quiz 8 Due  
Quiz 9 Due  
Discussion Board #3 Due  
*All Due Sunday 7/2 by 11:59PM* |
| **7/3-7/7**  
Analyzing Content; Evaluation & Policy Analysis | • Chapter 10  
• Chapter 12 | Quiz 10 Due  
Quiz 11 Due  
Article Review Due  
*All Due Sunday 7/9 by 11:59PM* |

*This class schedule is tentative. Students will be notified of any schedule changes made to the syllabus.*