



The University of Texas at El Paso

Department of Criminal Justice

CRIJ 3300: APPLIED RESEARCH METHODS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CRN: 23226; SPRING 2024

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Office hours: M/W 9:30am – 10:30am, or by appointment

Office location: Education building, 111J

Course meeting time: M/W 10:30am – 11:50am MST

Course location: Education Building 112

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on topics surrounding conducting original and secondary research. Specifically, students will learn the processes involved in developing and evaluating research designs, deciphering primary from secondary data sources, as well as understanding the concepts of validity and reliability and how to operationalize and conceptualize constructs.

COURSE OBJECTIVES OR EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

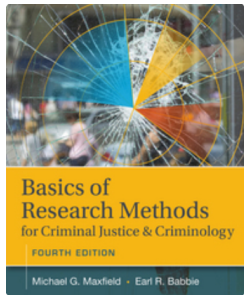
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic methods of research design and data collection.
2. Understand the ethics surrounding research with human subjects.
3. Critically evaluate information sources.
4. Articulate the measurement process, including conceptualizing and operationalizing constructs.
5. Identify the various challenges facing social scientists.

UTEP EDGE

This course is designed with the UTEP Edge in mind. In this class, students will focus on improving several specific Edge Advantages: confidence in your knowledge of conducting criminological research, critical thinking, communication skills, problem solving, and teamwork experience.

To learn more about the UTEP EDGE: <https://www.utep.edu/edge/>

REQUIRED MATERIALS



Maxfield, Michael G., and Earl R. Babbie. Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice & Criminology 4th edition

ISBN: 1305261100

ISBN13: 9781305261105

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Syllabus Quiz (10 points)

There is syllabus quiz that is worth 10 points. You can take it as many times as you need. This quiz will be due on January 19th, Friday @11:59pm MST.

*Exams (100 points * 3 = 300 points total)*

There are three exams for this course. Each exam will cover approximately one-third of the course material. The exams will include a mix of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and short answers. They will cover material from the required readings and class lectures. Exams are all closed book and closed notes.

*Homework Assignments (25 points * 4 = 100 points total)*

There are four homework assignments during the semester. You will submit a paper in response to a topic covered in class that week. The format of these papers will vary depending on the topic assigned. See the Blackboard to review assignment specifics once each prompt is posted. You are expected to turn them in on Blackboard before the due date.

Term Project (100 points)

There is one team project assigned for this course. Each team would have 3-4 students. For this project, you will create several elements of a research proposal. These include a short paper discussing your research question, the population of interest, the units of analysis, the variables of interest, the background and rationale of the proposed study (including 3 outside references), the sampling strategy, potential threats to validity, ethical and practical considerations, limitations, and a reference section. The project also requires that you create a survey consisting of 20-30 questions. The term project is due on Friday, April 26th by 11:59pm. Each person must submit the final product individually on Blackboard. Failure to make submission by the deadline will result in point deductions as detailed in the project instructions.

Please refer to the Writing Center if you need assistance with your written assignments. The University Writing Center is located in Library, Room 227. It is a great place to receive help with editing your written papers, and with APA style assistance. They are open M-Th 9:00am-5:00 pm, Fr 9:00am-2:00 pm, and Sundays 12:00pm-5:00pm. Appointments are recommended well before the deadline, but they will take walk-ins.

Peer Review (20 points)

Students should review their team members' contribution to the project. Their evaluation will be reflected in "peer review" grading category, which will worth 20 points. The due for peer review is Friday, April 26th by 11:59pm, and the review should be submitted via Blackboard.

Attendance (20 points)

Attendance is required for this course and will be randomly checked throughout the semester.

Grade Distribution:

Syllabus quiz	10 points
Exams	300 points
Homework assignments	100 points
Term project	100 points
Peer review	20 points
Attendance	20 points
<u>Total.....</u>	<u>550 points</u>

Grade Scale

Grad	Percentage	Points
A	Above 90%	Above 495 points
B	80% – 89.99%	440 – 494 points
C	70% – 79.99%	385 – 439 points
D	60% – 69.99%	330 – 384 points
F	Below 59.99%	Below 330 points

Policy on Late or Missed Exams/Assignments:

You are required to notify me before the due date if an urgent situation arises and an assignment will not be submitted on time or an exam cannot be completed before the due date. Please follow the appropriate university policies to request an accommodation for religious practices or to accommodate a missed assignment due to university-sanctioned activities.

Late assignments/make-up exams will ONLY be permitted at the discretion of the instructor and will be contingent upon two requirements being met:

- a. Valid documentation of an emergency (e.g., physician's note)
- b. Notification PRIOR to the due date

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 download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. 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 POLICIES

General

This class will feature lectures, discussions, and a variety of activities to promote learning. To succeed in the class, it is essential that you keep up with readings, lectures, and assignments.

The grade you earn in this course will be based on the amount of effort you exert. If you need a specific grade for this course, be proactive and contact me as early and often as possible. I will make every effort to assist you in achieving your goals.

Dissemination Policy

All the materials in this course, aside from that in the assigned text, should be considered as my intellectual property and, as such, under copyright protection. This includes my lectures, exams, written assignments, and notes. These are intended for your use during this course and may not be disseminated to anyone outside of the course without my explicit written permission.

Class Recordings

Students may NOT record any portion of the course meetings without first obtaining my permission. This includes audio and video recordings. If permission is granted, these recordings cannot be shared with others outside of this course unless required by UTEP.

Email Policy (Contacting the Instructor)

There are two ways you can contact me in this course. 1) Through your institutional email address. 2) Through the "send email" function under the course tools tab in Blackboard. I expect you to identify yourself within the body of the email. I also expect you to compose emails using standard word and sentence structure (i.e., no acronyms, slang, etc.). In other words, do not email me as if you are texting your friends.

I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours under most circumstances from Monday through Friday. I will also do my best to check my email at least once on Saturdays and Sundays; however, at times I may not be able to respond over the weekends. Please plan accordingly.

Course Drop Policy

If circumstances arise to where a student must drop this course, it is the student's responsibility to initiate the course drop. It is also the student's responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect his or her financial aid. Students are limited to dropping no more than 6 courses over their entire academic career of all courses taken at any public college or University in Texas.

- a) If a course is dropped within the first 2 weeks before the "official census date":
 - a. the course will not appear on the transcript and
 - b. the course will not count toward the 6-course drop limit.
- b) If a course is dropped after the official census data but before the "course drop date":
 - a. the student will receive a "W" in the course
 - b. the drop will show on transcripts but will not lower GPA
 - c. the drop will count toward the 6 class drop limit
- c) If the course is dropped after the "course drop date" or if the student just stops coming/taking tests, etc.:
 - a. UTEP requires the instructor to issue an "F" in the course that permanently remains on the transcript.
 - b. the drop will count against the 6 class drop limit.
- d) UTEP also allows instructors to administratively drop any student because of excessive absences, lack of effort, or disciplinary reasons. In this case, the student will be notified of the course drop through their UTEP email account. A "W" will be issued if the drop occurs before the course drop date, and an "F" will be issued if a student is administratively dropped for disciplinary reasons or after the course drop date. This type of drop counts against the 6 drop limit.
- e) If circumstances occur where a student must miss an excessive number of classes and/or is unable to submit multiple assignments (e.g., student medical reasons, medical conditions of a family member, death of a family member, active military service), they should first discuss the possibility of withdrawal from all classes with their academic advisor. If a student withdraws completely from all classes, kindly notify me at: tedickinson@utep.edu. Complete withdrawals from all classes in the same semester do not count against the 6 drop limit.

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.

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). If you feel an accommodation is necessary please contact CASS at 915-747-5148 (tel) cass@utep.edu (email), visit them at Union Building East Room 106, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

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](#).

Guidance on Artificial Intelligence

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is not allowed for homework assignments in this class. However, it can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of the final project, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often “hallucinate” or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use. That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

A Note about Sexual Misconduct

What you should know about sexual misconduct: UTEP does not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and all forms of sexual violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. It is important to know that federal regulations and University policy require faculty to promptly report complaints of potential sexual misconduct known to them to their campus Title IX Coordinator(s) to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available. The University will work with you to protect your privacy by sharing information with only those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. Any student who believes that he or she may be experiencing sexual harassment or misconduct is encouraged to consult with or report such conduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinators. Contact information for UTEP’s Title IX Coordinators can be found here: <http://utep.edu/titleix/Title%20IX%20Coordinators%20.html>

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.

Or please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources.



COURSE SCHEDULE

* Students are responsible for reading all the required materials on the dates listed below.

* I reserve the right to adjust the course syllabus as needed. Students are required to regularly check their UTEP email and Blackboard to look for communication of syllabus revisions.

Week 1: January 17 (Wednesday)

Class Introduction; Overview of the Syllabus; Pop Quiz

*Syllabus quiz due: January 19 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 2: January 22 (Monday) & January 24 (Wednesday)

Topic: Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry

Required Reading: Chapter 1

Week 3: January 29 (Monday) & January 31 (Wednesday) – Spring Census Day

Topic: Ethics and Criminal Justice Research

Required Reading: Chapter 2

*Homework Assignment #1 due: February 2 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 4: February 5 (Monday) & February 7 (Wednesday)

Topic: General Issues in Research Design

Required Reading: Chapter 3

Week 5: February 12 (Monday) & February 14 (Wednesday)

Topic: Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement

Required Reading: Chapter 4

*Homework Assignment #2 due: February 16 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 6: February 19 (Monday) & February 21 (Wednesday)

*Review of exam #1; Exam #1

Week 7: February 26 (Monday) & February 28 (Wednesday)

Topic: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs

Required Reading: Chapter 5

Week 8: March 4 (Monday) & March 6 (Wednesday)

Topic: Sampling

Required Reading: Chapter 6

Week 9: March 11 (Monday) & March 13 (Wednesday)

*Spring Break

Week 10: March 18 (Monday) & March 20 (Wednesday)

Topic: Survey Research

Required Reading: Chapter 7

*Homework Assignment #3 due: March 22 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 11: March 25 (Monday) & March 27 (Wednesday) – Fall Drop/Withdrawal Deadline (March 28)

*Review of exam #2; Exam #2

Week 12: April 1 (Monday) & April 3 (Wednesday)

Topic: Qualitative Interviewing

Required Reading: Chapter 8

Week 13: April 8 (Monday) & April 10 (Wednesday)

Topic: Field Observation

Required Reading: Chapter 9

*Homework Assignment #4 due: April 12 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 14: April 15 (Monday) & April 17 (Wednesday)

Topic: Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data

Required Reading: Chapter 10

Week 15: April 22 (Monday) & April 24 (Wednesday)

Topic: Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis

Required Reading: Chapter 11

*Term project & Peer review due: April 26 (Friday) by 11:59pm

Week 16: April 29 (Monday) & May 1 (Wednesday)

*Review of exam #3; Exam #3