

**University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Criminal Justice
Spring 2021**

COURSE

Title: CRIJ 3300 Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice

CRN: 28207

Online and monthly Synchronous meetings: Jan 20th, Feb. 17th, March 24th, April 21st from 10-11 am on Bb.

INSTRUCTOR

Name: Rebecca Pastrana- MCJ

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Email: rapastrana@utep.edu

Office Hours: MW 12:00pm-12:30pm MST- text or email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to research with a focus on the importance of suitability of the sample for the research question, as well as the correctness of the concepts, methods of data collection and analysis used. Students should develop the skills required to become educated users of research findings and reports.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook:

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

ISBN-10: 1-305-27697-0

ISBN-13: 978-1-305-27697-0

Additional readings for the course are available on Blackboard.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic methods of research design, measurement, and data collection used in criminal justice and criminology.
2. Evaluate information sources critically and incorporate selected information into papers and projects.
3. Utilize information sources ethically and effectively document and communicate acquired information.

INSTRUCTOR'S CLASSROOM 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.

Students with disabilities:

If you require modifications to the course or testing environment, **please** inform me as soon as practical via email or during office hours. Accommodations are coordinated through the 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) or visit them at Union Building East Room 106.

Attendance policy:

Online attendance is required for this course.

Exceptions for Regular Absences (non-Exam days):

The only two exceptions where written notice is required are students serving in the military and students who will be absent for a UTEP-related event (such as student athletes).

Active military duty absences are permitted as long as students who are called to active military duty provide a copy of their military orders to the instructor in advance, work is completed prior to departure and/or within one week of returning, and absences do not exceed more than 25% of the total number of class meetings per UTEP policy.

Late assignment and missed exam policy:

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the day they are due unless I specify otherwise. Late assignments will only be accepted in the case of a documented medical emergency and at my discretion. Assignments that will be submitted only Blackboard **and not** in paper form on the due date will have points deducted per the assignment instructions.

Makeup exams will not be routinely allowed. You must have a **documented** excuse (e.g., death in the family, medical emergency, family emergency, etc.) to take a makeup exam. If possible, you must notify me via email **prior** to the set time of the exam.

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.

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.

Scholastic dishonesty:

Scholastic dishonesty includes cheating on an exam, turning in someone else's assignment from a previous class, or plagiarism: "(1) use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without fully and properly crediting the author with citations or biographical reference; (2) unacknowledged use of work/materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials; (3) unacknowledged use of original work/material that has been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators."

I take cases of alleged scholastic dishonesty seriously. Cases wherein students have allegedly engaged in any form of scholastic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). While the case is being investigated by OSCCR, an "I" (Incomplete) will be assigned until the case is resolved. If the student is found by OSCCR to have engaged in misconduct, sanctions may include a failing grade on the assignment or exam in question, a failing grade in the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University. Information about scholastic dishonesty can be found here: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/student-conduct/index.html>

Learn more here: [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#)

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>

UTEP 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.

Student 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.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Discussion Boards (150)

There are 7 DB’s each worth 20 points and the Introduction is worth 10 points for a total of 150. Each DB must have 4 complete sentences referencing each Chapter from the textbook. You must also cite your reference book in every DB. Reply to at least two classmates. All post must be completed by Thursday of week’s due date; however, the thread will remain open until Sunday in order to complete replies only.

Quizzes and writing assignments (100 points)

Students will receive points for group activities, pop quizzes, a writing assignment, and other in-class activities. As these various measures will be unannounced (i.e., you will not know about them ahead of time), your success at them will hinge on whether you come to class prepared (e.g., having read all of the required materials for that day). Moreover, quizzes will be given 5 minutes after class begins, thus if you arrive late, you will not be given the opportunity to take the quiz. Each of these measures will worth up to ten points.

Exams: (100 points/300 points total)

There will be 3 online open book/note examinations. Each will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. The 3rd exam is comprehensive. The dates of the exams are listed below.

Term project: (100 points)

There is one term project assigned for this course. 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 4 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. Please note that a rough draft of this paper is due in class for peer review on 04/29/20. The final draft of the paper is due at the beginning of class on 05/08/20. **The project must be submitted in class and via Blackboard. Failure to make both submissions by the deadline will result in point deductions as detailed in the project instructions.**

Grade Calculation:

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Point distribution:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Discussion Boards..... | 150 points |
| Quizzes and writing assignments... .. | 100 points |
| Exams..... | 300 points |
| Term project..... | 100 points |
| Total..... | 650 points |

Grade scale:

| | | |
|---|------------|------------------------|
| A | 90% - 100% | 600 – 650 points |
| B | 80% - 89% | 599 – 550 points |
| C | 70% - 79% | 459 – 400 points |
| D | 60% - 69% | 399 – 354 points |
| F | < 59% | < 353 points Estimated |

COURSE SCHEDULE*

* Students are responsible for reading all the required materials prior to coming to class 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.

| Date | Topic | Required reading | Assignments | What you will be able to do for the term project |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---|
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---|

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|---|---|---------------------|---|--|
| Week 1: 1/19-24/21 | Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry | Ch. 1 | Discussion board post and reply | Research topic; Research questions |
| Week 2 & 3: 1/25/21-2/7/21 | Ethics General Issues in Research Design | Ch. 2 Ch. 3 | Discussion board post and reply | Prior research on topic Identify independent and dependent variables (if any); Identify units of analysis |
| Week 4; 2/8/21-2/14/21 | Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement | Ch. 4 | Discussion board post and reply Research Question and Exam 1 due. | Construct conceptual definitions for key concepts |
| Week 5 & 6: 2/15/21-2/28/21. | Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs Sampling | Ch. 5 Ch. 6 | Discussion board post and reply; Introduction paragraph due. | Understand the differences in designs. Determine sampling strategy |
| Week 7 & 9: 3/1/21-3/21/21 Week 8 - Spring Break 3/15-19 | Survey Research Qualitative Interviewing | Ch. 7 Ch. 8 | Discussion board post and reply; Annotated Bibliography and citation page due. | Operationalize variables (construct survey) |
| Week 10 & 11: 3/22/21-4/4/21 | Field Observation Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data | Ch. 9 Ch. 10 | Discussion board post and reply Exam 2 due. Surveys due | Modes of observation How and why use of secondary data. |
| Week 12 -15: 4/5/21-5/4/21 | Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis | Ch. 11 | Discussion board post and reply; Complete Term Paper. Final Exam due. Term paper due 5/1/21 @ 11:59pm MST; Final Exam (comprehensive) due 5/4/21@ 11:59pm MST | Evaluating research |