

University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Criminal Justice
Summer 2021

COURSE

Title: CRIJ 3300 Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice
CRN: 31707

INSTRUCTOR

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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: 1305261100

ISBN-13: 9781305261105

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 readings, lecture notes, PowerPoint slides, and discussion boards 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.

This class is NOT self-paced. For each week of class, there is a respective module in the content area on Blackboard. All of the materials for each week, as well as the links to the required discussion posts and/or quizzes, are located in the week's module. Each week you have multiple discussion posts or a discussion post and a quiz due by 11:59pm Sunday night.

Because this course is in a compressed format the pace is very fast. It is about double the pace of a typical 16 week class in terms of readings, exams, assignments, etc. It is easy to get behind and, if you do, it may be difficult (if not impossible) to catch up. All of the assignments aside from the exams are available beginning on the first day of class and I encourage you to work ahead if possible and to not procrastinate and wait until the last minute to complete them. If you procrastinate, even for one week, you will set yourself up for a difficult struggle and severely hinder your ability to get a good grade in the course or even pass at all.

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.

Late assignment and missed exam policy:

If students fail to submit any required work before the due date they will receive a zero on the assignment or exam—no exceptions! Put another way, no late work will be accepted.

Important reminders:

The exams are timed, meaning that once you begin the exam you will have a limited amount of time (120 minutes) to complete and submit your work. The exams will automatically close and submit at the end of the time limit if you haven't already submitted it yourself. Do not wait until the last minute to begin exams. This way, if you do experience any difficulties with submissions, they can be corrected before the module closes.

Technology issues:

I will **not** provide you with technical assistance. Rather, you should familiarize yourself with assistance available to you whenever you have problems.

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 three ways you can contact me in this course. 1) Through your institutional email address. These emails will only be viewed by me; 2) Through the “send email” function under the course tools tab in Blackboard. These emails will also only be viewed by me. 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. 3) Through the “instructor’s office” forum in our discussion board. These will be seen by other students. Other students will also be able to post replies to these posts. Please consider if your question and its answer will be useful to other students. If so, please post them in the forum.

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

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. The final draft of the paper is due 7/30/2021 at 11:59pm MST. **The project must be submitted via Blackboard. Failure to make the submission by the deadline will result in point deductions as detailed in the project instructions.**

Discussion posts: (120 points total)

For most weeks during the semester you will be required to create a discussion post that refers to the assigned material from that week. Each week's discussion post and module will include instructions on what to put in the post for that week. These posts are due by 11:59pm on Sunday of their respective weeks. Each post is worth up to 10 points.

For two of the discussion posts (ch.7, ch.10) you will be expected to also reply to another student's post. More detailed instructions for these weeks are available on the discussion board and in the weeks' modules. These weeks' discussion posts will be worth up to 20 points.

A note on etiquette while online: Please remember that this is a classroom like any face to face course and you are expected to behave in the same manner as if you were having a face to face discussion with classmates. **Please refer to the Netiquette guide posted at the bottom of this syllabus.** Also refer to the following website: <https://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/utepconnect/blog/october-2017/10-rules-of-netiquette-for-students.html>

Quizzes: (30 points)

You will have three short quizzes over the semester. These quizzes will cover the assigned material in their respective weeks (i.e., syllabus, ch.3, ch.6). The quizzes will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Links for the quizzes are available in the respective week's module and in the Quizzes content area on Blackboard. The quizzes are worth up to 10 points each.

Exams: (100 points each/200 points total)

There are two exams for this course. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and fill in the blank. **You will have a window that spans several days to begin and complete each exam.**

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. The exams are timed. Once you open them you will have **120** minutes to complete them. They must be completed in one sitting, so please plan accordingly.
2. Please close all browser windows and applications before beginning the exam.
3. The **midterm** will open on **Monday 6/28 at 12:00am MST and is due on Sunday 7/4 at 11:59pm MST**. This exam covers the material from chapters 1 -5.

4. The **final** will open on **Monday 7/26 at 12:00am MST and is due on Tuesday 8/3 at 11:59pm MST**. This exam covers the material from chapters 6-11.

Grade Calculation:

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Point distribution:

Discussion posts and quizzes.....	150points
Exams.....	200points
<u>Term project.....</u>	<u>100points</u>
Total.....	450points

Grade scale:

A	90% - 100%	405 – 450 points
B	80% - 89%	360 – 404 points
C	70% - 79%	315 – 359 points
D	60% - 69%	270 – 314 points
F	< 59%	< 269 points

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. Revisions will be communicated to students via email or Blackboard.

Date	Topic	Required reading	Assignments	What you will be able to do for the term project
Week 1: 6/7-6/13	Syllabus and Introduction to Course Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry	Ch. 1	Are You Ready for Online content area; Syllabus; Discussion Post; Quiz Read Chapter 1; Lecture/PPT Chapter 1; Discussion Post	Research topic; Research questions

Week 2: 6/14-6/20	Ethical Considerations	Ch. 2	Read Chapter 2; Lecture/PPT Chapter 2; Watch Stanford Prison Exp Video; Discussion Post	Prior research on topic
	General Issues in Research Design	Ch. 3	Read Chapter 3; Lecture/PPT Chapter 3; Read extra materials in week 4 module; Quiz	Identify independent and dependent variables (if any); Identify units of analysis
Week 3: 6/21-6/27	Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	Ch. 4	Read Chapter 4; Lecture/PPT Chapter 4; Watch and read extra materials in week 5 module; Discussion Post	Construct conceptual definitions for key concepts
	Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs	Ch. 5	Read Chapter 5; Lecture/PPT Chapter 5; Watch extra materials in week 7 module; Discussion Post	Define possible threats to validity
Week 4: 6/28-7/4	Sampling	Ch. 6	Read Chapter 6; Lecture/PPT Chapter 6; Quiz; Review instructions for Term Project Midterm Exam (ch. 1-5) due 7/4 @ 11:59pm MST	Determine sampling strategy
Week 5: 7/5-7/11	Survey Research	Ch. 7	Read Chapter 7; Lecture/PPT Chapter 7; Watch and read extra materials in week 9 module; Discussion Post	Operationalize variables (construct survey)
	Qualitative Interviewing	Ch. 8	Read Chapter 8; Lecture/PPT Chapter 8; Watch extra materials in week 11 module; Discussion Post	
Week 6: 7/12-7/18	Field Observation	Ch. 9	Read Chapter 9; Lecture/PPT Chapter 9; Discussion Post	Write term project
	Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data	Ch. 10	Read Chapter 10; Lecture/PPT Chapter 10; Discussion Post	
Week 7: 7/19-7/25	Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis	Ch. 11	Read Chapter 11; Lecture/PPT; Discussion Post Term paper due 7/30 @ 11:59pm MST Final Exam (ch.6-11) due 8/3 @ 11:59pm MST	