

University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Criminal Justice
Fall 2018

COURSE

Title: CRIJ 3300 Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice
CRN: 16463

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours: MW 1:30pm-3:00pm MST

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:

Attendance is required for this course. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each regular class period (i.e., not during exams). You will earn 1 point for each day you attend class up to a maximum of 25 points. Because there are 26 non-exam days in the class you can miss up to 1 day of class (aside from exam days) and still earn the full 25 points. Attendance will be taken by a sign-in sheet passed out at the beginning of class. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet. Students who sign the sheet for someone else will forfeit all attendance points. Students who arrive unreasonably late (i.e., > 20 minutes) or who leave early will not receive attendance points. I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences, thus it is unnecessary to provide me with documentation for your absence *unless* it is for an **extended** (i.e., more than 1-2 class periods) medical condition/emergency. In this case, the policy may be altered at my discretion.

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 are not submitted on Blackboard **and** 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.

Electronic device policy:

Modern communication technology can be extremely disruptive in a learning environment; therefore, dumb phones, smart phones, and mp3 players must be turned off and placed in your belongings. I understand that many of you may prefer to take notes on laptops or tablets; therefore, I will allow these in the classroom with one caveat: they must be used solely for note-taking. **Those who violate these policies may be asked to leave the room.** If you are a first responder or otherwise need limited access to a mobile device for emergency purposes, please notify me during the first week of class.

Recording policy:

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.

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

Attendance: (25 points)

As stated above, attendance is required for this course. Each non-exam day you are present and not late is worth 1 point. Because there are 26 non-exam class periods, you can miss up to 1 day and not be penalized.

Group activities, quizzes, 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 in-class, closed-book/note examinations. Each will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. The 3rd exam is **not** comprehensive. The dates of the exams are listed below. **Each student must purchase three Scantron forms (#882E) from the bookstore and must bring one of these and two #2 pencils to class on each exam day.**

Peer review: (25 points)

There will be one class period devoted to peer reviewing your fellow students' term projects. Students are required to bring outlines, rough drafts, and any other materials related to their term papers for review to this session. Students who attend and review others' papers but do not have any materials will receive 7 points, those who have some materials will receive between 10 and 20 points at my discretion, and those who have a full rough draft will receive the full 25 points.

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 11/26/18. The final draft of the paper is due at the beginning of class on 12/6/18. **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:

Attendance.....	25 points
Group activities, etc.....	100 points
Exams.....	300 points
Peer review.....	25 points
<u>Term project.....</u>	<u>100points</u>
Total.....	550points

Grade scale:

A	90% - 100%	495 – 550 points
B	80% - 89%	440 – 494 points
C	70% - 79%	385 – 439 points
D	60% - 69%	330 – 384 points
F	< 59%	< 330 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. Students are required to regularly check their UTEP email and Blackboard to look for communication of syllabus revisions.

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Mon 8/27	Syllabus/Introduction to the course		
Wed 8/29	Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry	Chapter 1	
Mon 9/3	No Class-Labor Day Holiday		
Wed 9/5	Ethics	Chapter 2	
Mon 9/10	Ethics	Jacobs reading (on Blackboard)	Assignment: Find Research Articles
Wed 9/12	General Issues in Research Design	Chapter 3	

Mon 9/17	General Issues in Research Design/ Census Day		
Wed 9/19	Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	Chapter 4	
Mon 9/24	Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement		
Wed 9/26	Review for Exam 1		
Mon 10/1	Exam 1		
Wed 10/3	Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	Chapter 5	
Mon 10/8	Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs		
Wed 10/10	Sampling	Chapter 6	
Mon 10/15	Sampling		
Wed 10/17	Survey Research	Chapter 7	
Mon 10/22	Survey Research		
Wed 10/24	Review for Exam 2		
Mon 10/29	Exam 2		
Wed 10/31	Qualitative Interviewing	Chapter 8	
Fri 11/2	Drop/Withdrawal Deadline for guaranteed "W"		
Mon 11/5	Qualitative Interviewing		
Wed 11/7	Field Observation	Chapter 9	
Mon 11/12	Field Observation		

Wed 11/14	No Class-Outside assignment		
Mon 11/19	Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data	Chapter 10	
Wed 11/21	Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data		
Mon 11/26	Peer Review		Rough draft of term project due
Wed 11/28	Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis	Chapter 11	
Mon 12/4	Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis		
Wed 12/6	Review Exam 3		Term project due
Fri 12/14	Final Exam 10:00-12:45		