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Office Hours: Mon. 9:00-2:00p.m.; Tues. & Thur. 9:00-11:00a.m.; 12:30-2:00p.m.
+ other times by appointment.

Course Description and Goals

**CRJS 3823 Criminal Justice Research Methods I** Credit 3 semester hours. An introduction to research techniques such as formulating research questions, research design, and data collection methods such as surveys and case studies. The course also examines research ethics, locating data and navigating the special requirements for conducting research with protected populations such as incarcerated adults and juveniles. Students are also introduced to computer applications for research.

The College (of Juvenile Justice and Psychology) is committed to producing graduates with superior written and oral communication skills. Instructional approaches include a variety of technological and research tools. Our pedagogy emphasizes content and style in both individual and group settings. Our professors are encouraged to use their individual creative styles in the pursuit of academic excellence.

Note: Articles will be assigned as additional readings.
*You will need a flashdrive for this course and access to your WebCT e-mail account.

**WEEK 1:** Jan. 15 & 17: Review of the syllabus; introductions; types of research; purposes of research; epistemology, ontology, methodology and common criminal justice paradigms.
📖: Chapter 1.

**WEEK 2:** Jan. 22 & 24: Ways of knowing, errors in knowing, theory, causation, dimensions and indicators; the Social Science research process; primary and secondary data.
*Jan. 24th Exam I review.
📖: Chapter 2.

**WEEK 3:** Jan. 29 & 31: (*on Tuesday, January 29th the class meets in the library reference area*).
*Note: EXAM I - Thursday Jan. 31st*
📖: Chapter 4 & 5.

**WEEK 4:** Feb. 5 & 7: Logic and logic of sampling; research design, power analysis; experiments and quasi-experiments; correlations; validity; reliability.
  Chapter 7 & 11.

  Chapter 13.
  *Feb. 21st - Exam II review.
  Thursday Feb 21st - Refereed journal article critique due.

  Chapter 13 continued.
  *Note: EXAM II - Thursday Feb. 28th

 WEEK 8: Mar. 4 & 6: Regression continued; ethics and politics in research; the Institutional Review Board (I.R.B.).
  March 6th - Data analysis printouts (of Phases I-IV) due.

 WEEK 9: Mar. 10-15th - No Classes! Spring Break!

 WEEK 10: Mar. 18 & 20: Constructing and using surveys.
  Chapter 12.

 WEEK 11: Mar. 25 & 27: Fieldwork; evaluation research; qualitative research and software analysis.
  Chapter 3.

 WEEK 12: Apr. 1 & 3: SAS; BMDP; spreadsheets and graphics.
  Chapter 8.
  Note: Tuesday, April 1, 2007 online ethics training certificates due.

 WEEK 13: Apr. 8 & 10: Presentation of final projects.
  April 10th - Projects due.

 WEEK 14: Apr. 15 & 17: Presentation of final projects.

 WEEK 15: Apr. 22 & 24: Presentation of final projects.

 WEEK 16: April 29: Final Exam review and the last date that project re-writes will be accepted; no class May 1st - study day.

 WEEK 17: Final Examination: Tuesday, May 6, 2008 at 1:30p.m.
Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester students should have:
- a knowledge of research basics sufficient for being effective consumers of research.
- a knowledge of the preparation of research proposals
- a knowledge of basic statistics sufficient for running rudimentary data analyses
- a knowledge of how to put together a basic scientific research article.

Course requirements:

* **Readings** should be done by the dates indicated. Quality class participation evidencing that the readings have been completed and given depth of thought is expected. Because of the abstract nature of the course materials it is best to keep reading, studying and working on assignments as they are given.

* **Tardiness and absenteeism are NOT encouraged** since a considerable amount of information will be covered each week. Of course, classes will begin on time. If for some reason you will be absent for more than one class during the semester please call the instructor to let her know. YOU are responsible for materials covered in any classes that you miss. The instructor will be available for clarification on lecture materials. Please see the latest version of the undergraduate handbook for the university attendance policy.

* **Courtesy:** Students are expected to exhibit courteous behavior towards each other and towards faculty. Cell phones should not be heard ringing in class. The reasons are obvious. If, in the rare event you find it unavoidable to take a child to class or on campus with you, TAMUS rules require that at no time should that child be unescorted. PVAMU faculty are expected to be on time for class and to not hold students beyond class time.

Final grades will be based on:

Three exams (EXAM I worth 22%; EXAM II worth 26%; EXAM III worth 25% of the final grade). Each exam will have approximately 40 questions. These questions will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and true/false items. It is most ill-advised to miss any of the exams. Students will be permitted to take the make-ups ONLY in instances of a documented emergency (i.e. death of someone close, hospitalization of oneself or one’s child or spouse, an urgent medical appointment that cannot be re-scheduled for a non-class time, a surprise work audit, etc.). Expect the make-ups to be more challenging than regularly scheduled exams. Any make-ups must be Saturday, April 29, 2008 at 8:00a.m. - the only possible exceptions will be students who miss an examination per official university business.

Research project paper and Powerpoint presentation of the project (worth 16% of the final grade). Students will be expected to analyze a data set (using at least SPSS) and to write an article on what their data reveal. Papers should be approximately 8-10 double-spaced pages. The writing format is that of the American Psychological Association. Please see the latest version of the Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (available in the bookstore and the library). It is advised that you visit the Writing Lab in Hilliard Hall before submitting the paper to the Instructor. Late papers will be subject to a grade penalty not exceeding one letter grade. Students will also be expected to make about a 10-minute Powerpoint presentation of their research findings to the class for their critique. A good presentation will be innovative,
thorough, statistically logical, concise and clear. An unexcused absence on the presentation date will result in a grade of zero.

**Professional attire** (that is, conservative clothing and appearance appropriate for an interview for a criminal justice job - such as a dark colored suit) is required for the presentation.

For starters:

**Women:** Dark colored suits- blue, black, gray (skirts or pants); closed toe pumps, stockings (no mesh); no chipped nail polish, nor nails that look like claws, no dangling earrings, no visible tattoos, no visible body piercings beside the ear, no cleavage, no gold tooth, skirts should not be shorter than the span of your arms, nor too tight; hairdo should be neat and not overly creative; minimize the number of accessories.

**Men:** Dress shoes and socks; dress pants; white shirt (or other non-bright color shirt – without patterns and well coordinated with the choice of pants), and a tie; no earring(s); no visible tattoos; no visible body piercings; no gold tooth; hair and face neatly groomed (no braids; no dreadlocks except with a religious excuse).

Attire is calculated into your presentation grade. You have been given this sheet prior to your presentation date. Therefore NO excuses about attire will be accepted!

**Empirical peer reviewed journal article critique of a criminal or juvenile justice topic (worth 5% of the final grade).** Late papers will be subject to a grade penalty not exceeding one letter grade. The critique should be thorough yet no more than four pages, typed, double-spaced. Students are required to visit the Writing Lab in Hilliard Hall to improve the quality of the paper before submitting it to the Instructor with proof of a Writing Lab visit. When the assignment is submitted there should be: a) a copy of the peer reviewed journal article b) a typed copy of the paper discussed in the writing lab c) a copy of the paper after the suggestions for revisions in the lab have been made and, d) proof of a visit to the lab. NOTE: The lab might be busy, so waiting until the last minute to do this assignment is most ill-advised.

**Online ethics training worth 3% of the final grade:** Available at: http://cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp

The first time you visit the site you will need to register; remember the password and user name that you give yourself. The training is divided into different modules. You need not finish all of them at one sitting. When you have completed all of the modules the website will issue a certificate with your name on it. Submit a copy of this certificate as proof of training completion. Due by Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

**Periodic class assignments (worth 3% of the final grade).** The first assignment (worth 2 points) involves attending one of the College’s research presentation seminars or the College research symposium, or a campus thesis or dissertation defense presentation as announced by the instructor. The dates of these events will be announced throughout the semester. Proof of meaningful attendance (that is, that you went and stayed for the duration) is required for credit.

*If you encounter problems in meeting any of these requirements, or are unclear about them, do not hesitate to utilize my office hours, e-mail or voicemail.*
Grade Scale:

90-100 = A  
80-89 = B  
70-79 = C

*Expect no extra credit assignments.

- Incompletes are rarely given. Please see the university handbook for the university policy on the assignment of “Incomplete” grades. NOTE: Students who have a failing average in a course cannot receive an incomplete grade.

PLEASE NOTE: Academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will not be tolerated!!! Anyone caught engaging in any such activities – FAILS!!! If you are foolish enough to cheat in this course, I will be like a tick on a cow’s behind in pursuit of your dismissal from the program!

Disabilities: If you have a disability and will require special accommodations notify the instructor and the Director of Disabled Services (Evans Hall room 317 or 936-261-3585 or call the campus operator for their new telephone number) as soon as possible.

The Academic Appeals process may be found in the undergraduate catalog available at the bookstore and online.

Administrative Dates:

- Drop/Add ends for graduate students – Friday, January 18, 2008
- Drop Day for non-payment of fees, etc. – Wednesday, January 30, 2008
- Grade of “W” begins – Thursday, January 31, 2008
- Last day to apply for Spring 2008 graduation – Saturday, February 2, 2008
- Grade of “W” ends – Tuesday, March 31, 2008
- Last day to withdraw from the university for Spring 2008, Tuesday, April 29, 2008
- Early registration for Summer and/or Fall 2008 begins Tuesday, April 8, 2008