CRIMINAL JUSTICE 523 Masters Project Seminar
Fall 2017

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is for Masters level students who have completed the Problem Analysis and Planning and Evaluation courses. The class is designed as a workshop/seminar in which students apply the skills learned in these classes to a final Masters project. Projects will take different forms, depending on each student’s interests, prior experiences in the field, or internship placements.

The class will largely be student directed, with the professor serving as a facilitator for problem solving and completion of the projects. Students are expected to be engaged and self-directed, working independently, and seeking assistance from the professor and other faculty members as needed.

SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

This is a 3-credit course. You will receive a letter grade. It is designed to be hands on and interesting, allowing you to apply much of what you’ve learned during your time at the School of Criminal Justice. We will discuss potential projects in early course meetings. The final product will be analytical rather than descriptive in nature, and will not be a literature review type paper.

Attendance and participation.................................................................10%
Successful IRB training completion..................................................5%
Proposal and progress reports............................................................40%
Final paper.........................................................................................45%

The grading scale is:
A 90-100
B+ 86-89
B  80-85
C+ 76-79
C  70-75
D  60-69
F  59 and below
**In order to receive a satisfactory grade, you must meet the following course requirements:**

Successfully pass the Rutgers IRB Human Subjects Training modules.

Attend designated course meeting sessions.

Submit proposal and progress reports as indicated on the meeting schedule.

Attend scheduled meeting(s) with the professor.

Submit the final Masters project you propose.

**CLASS PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Class sessions will follow a seminar format with a great deal of participation. You are expected to be prepared to participate in class, and to treat other class members with courtesy and consideration.

We will meet as a group two times and have two individual meetings throughout the semester. Both group and individual meetings are mandatory requirements for the course. Prior to starting your project, you are required to pass the Rutgers University Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Basic Course ([https://orra.rutgers.edu/citi](https://orra.rutgers.edu/citi)). This training course familiarizes researchers with appropriate protocols for conducting research that involves human subjects. Proof of successfully passing the training shall be submitted to the professor at the first individual meeting session in the second week of the semester.

The Masters Project Seminar course serves as a classroom exercise to familiarize students with the process of conducting applied research projects. As such, students will not be able to use or present findings from projects outside of the class. Additionally, student projects shall not include vulnerable populations such as prisoners or children, and will pose no more than minimal risk to potential participants. Appropriate informed consent forms will be distributed to research subjects (a template is attached to this syllabus), and anonymity of research subjects shall be ensured. Both the student and the professor shall destroy data stemming from the Masters Project Seminar upon completion of the requirements of the course.

A one-to-five page proposal is due near the beginning of the course, and sections of the final paper are due throughout the semester. Specifics about what to include in the proposal are presented in the schedule below and will be covered in the first class session. The proposal shall be submitted to the professor and forwarded to the Rutgers University IRB for approval. Progress reports should reflect an approximation of a final product for each respective section. Follow standard rules about documentation and citation. If you are unsure about how to properly cite, please contact the professor for guidance.
The final paper is due at the end of the semester on **December 11**. The professor must approve any deviations from the proposed project. Final papers should be of a graduate thesis level in quality and between approximately 40 and 70 pages in length.

**You are responsible for all announcements and class proceedings.** If you miss a class it is your responsibility to obtain notes, handouts, and announcements as soon as possible. The class schedule is subject to change with appropriate notice from the instructor.

All assignments are to be submitted via email (Michael.Ostermann@rutgers.edu) by 6:00pm on the date on which they are due. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

The Rutgers University Institutional Review Board (IRB) must review research involving the study of human subjects prior to an investigator initiating the research. Consult the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website for examples of research protocols that do and do not require review (http://orsp.rutgers.edu/). Additional details will be discussed in early sessions. Consult the professor if you have questions about whether your project involves human subjects research and/or requires review. Every student must take and successfully pass the Rutgers University Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Basic Course (https://orra.rutgers.edu/citi) as a part of this class, as well as have their project approved by the Rutgers University IRB.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students should consult the School catalog regarding University policies about academic dishonesty and plagiarism. See the professor for guidance if you are not sure that you understand these policies. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in an appropriate reduction in the course grade and in referral to the University Judicial System.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

If you have a disability that limits your full participation in this course please notify the professor and contact the Associate Dean. You will need to meet with him regarding necessary accommodations, which will be made based on his Office’s recommendations.
SCHEDULE

September 11: **Class meeting.** Introduction, identifying a project area, and research protocols involving human subjects. Preliminary discussion of project interests.

Week of September 18: **Individual meetings with professor.** Discussion about potential proposals and submission of proof of passing IRB CITI training.

September 25: No class. **Proposal due:** Students submit one-to-five page proposal. Include title, synopsis and purpose of project, aims and goals, proposed research methodologies, methods by which subjects will be accessed and consent procedure (if applicable), methods for ensuring the anonymity of research subjects, and copies of pertinent documents (survey and/or interview questions). **This proposal will be submitted to the Rutgers IRB for approval.**

October 2: No class.

October 9: No class.

October 16: No class. **Progress report due:** Students submit introduction and literature review sections.

October 23: No class.

October 30: No class.

November 6: No class. **Progress report due:** Students submit research questions, hypotheses, and research methodology sections.

November 13: **Class meeting.** Students speak about projects, present their work to date, and get collective feedback.

November 20: No class.

November 27: No class. **Progress report due:** Draft of final product due. Include prior sections you submitted as well as results, discussion, and conclusion sections.

Week of December 4: **Individual meetings with professor.** Discussion about progress and findings.

December 11: No class. Final project paper due.
CONSENT FORM
FOR ANONYMOUS DATA COLLECTION

[This form is provided to the investigator as a guide. Instructions and sample language are noted in boldfaced italics within the brackets [ ]. Please modify with your study specifics and remove these instructions in your final version]

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by ______ [Name of student], who is a student in the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to determine __________ [student fills in brief purpose of study]. This research is a part of a classroom exercise for the Masters Project Seminar class at the School of Criminal Justice.

This research is anonymous. Anonymous means that I will record no information about you that could identify you. There will be no linkage between your identity and your response(s) in the research. This means that I will not record your name, address, phone number, date of birth, etc.

The professor of record and myself are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. Reports of this study will not be published, and the results will not be presented outside of the MA Project Seminar course. All study data will be kept until the culmination of the class and then destroyed.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. In addition, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact myself at _____ [please provide full contact information-address, email and phone number].

You can also contact my faculty advisor at:

Michael Ostermann, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Criminal Justice
Rutgers University
123 Washington Street, Suite 579F
Office: 973.353.5758
michael.ostermann@rutgers.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact an IRB Administrator at the Rutgers University, Arts and Sciences IRB:

Institutional Review Board
Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Liberty Plaza / Suite 3200
335 George Street, 3rd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 732-235-2866
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu
Please retain a copy of this form for your records. By participating in the above stated procedures, then you agree to participation in this study.

[ONLINE Projects must include the following or otherwise remove]: If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and will consent to participate in the study, click on the "I Agree" button to begin the survey/experiment. If not, please click on the “I Do Not Agree” button which you will exit this program.