I. Course Information

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Sara Wakefield  
Email: sara.wakefield@rutgers.edu  
Phone: 973-353-5639  
Office Hours: By appointment Mondays and Tuesdays (see TA for office hour lists)

Course Overview:

This course develops the tools needed for conducting research and writing reports and scholarly papers in criminal justice. Students that take this course will become informed consumers of criminological research, and gain the tools to conduct their own basic research projects. Specific topics include the primacy of design, principles of reliability and validity, sampling theory, survey preparation, and the differences between, and strengths and detriments of, experimental and quasi-experimental designs.

Prerequisite:

B.S., Criminal Justice Program Learning Goals

Upon completion of the B.S. in Criminal Justice at Rutgers University-Newark, students should be able to:

1) Describe the development and functions of major criminal justice institutions (e.g., police,
courts, corrections, and juvenile justice), the activities of actors within these institutions, and how they relate to one another as well as the broader social, political, and economic world.

2) Describe the mechanisms, correlates, theoretical underpinnings, and situational contexts of crime, criminal behavior and opportunity, and techniques for prevention and treatment.

3) Apply and analyze theories related to the policies and practices of the criminal justice system and its major institutions.

4) Demonstrate the ability to gather, explain, and apply empirical research in the field of criminal justice.

5) Obtain a comprehensive knowledge about the process of conducting criminal justice research, and develop the skills to conduct criminal justice research with appropriate methodologies.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

**Learning Goals for Criminal Justice Research Design**

1. Describe common methods of social science inquiry.
2. Understand the linkage between research questions and research design.
3. Explore major debates about research methods, social science, and ethics in research.
4. Critically evaluate social scientific evidence and research.
5. Become better-informed consumers of new reports, political rhetoric, and public discussion about the social world and social scientific research.

**Required Readings:**


Additional readings (articles, etc) will be provided in a folder, by week, on Blackboard for you to access prior to lecture and discussion sections.

**Course Requirements:**

Students are required to read assigned readings and participate in classroom discussions in a manner that reflects familiarity with the readings and previous class sessions. Students are required to access the course website regularly to stay informed about any changes in lecture topics, assigned readings and other course announcements.

**Course Structure:**
The course will incorporate diverse learning activities including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, and group discussions. Classroom learning is a group activity that depends upon everyone’s full participation in order to succeed. I expect students to: be prepared to begin class on time, silence or turn off and put away cell phones and other electronic devices, read and be prepared to discuss homework, submit assignments on time, and assist your classmates. You can expect that I will: be on time and prepared for every class, be available via email and appointments to answer questions, make every class engaging and valuable, and respect your contributions to class.

II. Course Schedule

See attached schedule.

III. Course Assessment and Grading

The final grade will be assessed based upon your performance on the following:

Two Exams (40% of your grade each)
Discussion Section Attendance and Online Activities (20%)
Written Assignments (40%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Linked to SLO</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #1 Midterm and Final Exams</td>
<td>SLO #1, 2, &amp; 3, 5</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #2 Discussion Section Attendance and Engagement, Online Activities</td>
<td>SLO #1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #3 Identify the Crime Rate in Your Hometown and Compare to Another City</td>
<td>SLO #5</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #4 Group Participant Observation</td>
<td>SLO #4, #5</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #5: Paper Evaluating Research</td>
<td>SLO #4, #5</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**Midterm and Final Exams (40%):** Midterm and final exams, mostly multiple-choice, with some short essay will comprise half of your grade. The midterm exam will cover the material from lecture, assigned readings, and discussion section covered in the first half of the course (Research Circle, Ethics, Reliability and Validity, Measurement, and Causality) and the final exam will cover material from the second half of the course (Specific Research Designs).

**Discussion Section Engagement and Online Activities (20%):** Discussion sections will cover additional assigned readings, online activities completed prior to class, and allow greater detailed discussion of major issues in criminal justice that are feasible during lecture. Your discussion section grade will be calculated as follows: half attendance (you may miss 1 section with no penalty) and half completion of discussion readings and engagement in section.

**Assignments (40%):** Students will complete three assignments. The first asks them to find credible information on the crime rate (describing social facts), the second is a group project that offers a participant observation experience, and the third asks students to critically evaluate four research papers utilizing research designs common in the social sciences.

**ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION (if applicable) (half of discussion section grade):**

Students may miss two discussion sections with no penalty. Participation will be evaluated in a variety of ways throughout the semester, including online activities, pop quizzes, and in-class activities.

The following grading scale will be used for this course:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90–100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85–89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80–84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75–79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70–74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Late or Missing Assignment Policy:**

*Late Assignments/Missed Exams.* Exams and reading assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due date. Late assignments will be docked 10% per day late. If you will miss an exam, you MUST have contacted the professor BEFORE the day of the exam and document the reason for your absence. I do not give makeup exams, except under extreme circumstances. You need not alert me to your absence unless you wish to receive an accommodation as a
result. If you are confused ONCE YOU HAVE REVIEWED A CLASSMATE’S NOTES AND SPOKEN TO YOUR TA, then see the instructor for clarification. Missing class more than once or twice is likely to compromise your grade.

IV. Course Policies

Classroom Rules

Use of Technology in Class. Please turn the volume OFF on all cell phones, pagers, internet on computers, MP3 players, and any other electronic device before you come to class. Students with phones that ring during class will be asked to leave and those with phones that ring during exams will be docked 5 points.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct. Students who cheat on any portion of the course will be failed on that section of the course, with no exceptions. Additional sanctions (including reports to the Dean, failing the entire course, requiring additional papers, or various symbolic shaming exercises) may also be imposed at the discretion of the instructor.

Grade Disputes: Students who wish to dispute grades on any portion of the exam or paper will, at the discretion of the instructor, be offered an anonymous re-grading opportunity. If you have a grade dispute, please communicate it to your assigned teaching assistant. The assistant will convey the argument to me and, if I agree, I will regrade your paper (anonymously and without knowing your original grade). After the re-grade, you will be given the average of the two grades. You should recognize that this may result in your grade increasing, decreasing, or staying the same.
**Academic Integrity**

As a member of the Rutgers University community you are not to engage in any academic dishonesty. You are responsible for adhering to basic academic standards of honesty and integrity as outlined in the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students [http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity](http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity)

Your academic work should be the result of your own individual effort, you should not allow other students to use your work, and you are required to recognize and reference any material that is not your own. Violations of the university’s policy will result in appropriate action.

**Academic Resources**

**Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Nondiscrimination Policy of the University and in compliance with § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For additional information please visit the website [https://ods.rutgers.edu/](https://ods.rutgers.edu/) or contact the representative for the Newark Campus.

Allen Sheffield  
Director of ADA Services and Academic Support  
Robeson Campus Center, Suite 352  
350 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Phone: 973.353.5300  
Fax: 973.353.5666  
E-mail: kate.torres@rutgers.edu  
Website: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/](https://ods.rutgers.edu/)

**Psychological and Counseling Services**

If you experience psychological or other difficulties as a result of this course, or because of other issues that may interfere with your performance in the course, please contact the university’s psychological and counseling service center ([http://www.counseling.newark.rutgers.edu; 973-353-5805](http://www.counseling.newark.rutgers.edu; 973-353-5805)), which is located in Blumenthal Hall, room 101. The center offers a variety of free, confidential services to part-time and full-time students who are enrolled at Rutgers.

If you are interested in finding out more about  
- Accelerated Master's Program (B.S. /M.A.)  
- Criminal Justice National Honor Society (Alpha Phi Sigma)  

Please refer to the School of Criminal Justice website [http://rscj.newark.rutgers.edu/](http://rscj.newark.rutgers.edu/)