

**Rutgers University – Newark  
Criminal Justice Research Methods  
47:202:301:03  
Spring 2019  
HILL 204  
Tuesday & Friday: 1PM – 2:20 PM**

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**Instructor:** Karen DeSoto  
**Office Hours:** Friday: 10:00 – 2:30pm by appointment  
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**Course Overview/Course Objectives**

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 design. Throughout the course there is an emphasis on the practical application of research methods to the real world, and their role in shaping criminal justice policy and practice.

**Prerequisites: None**

**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.

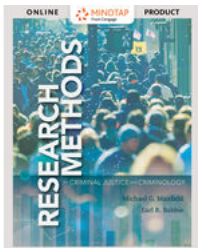
### **Course Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

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 Course Materials**

- Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E. (2015). *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*, 8th Edition. Wadsworth Publishing.



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### **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. Students are expected 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.

## Course Schedule

The syllabus is subject to changes at the instructor's full discretion. Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics and Assignment Deadlines
1	01/22/2018	Overview of course requirements, assignments, etc.
2	01/25/2018	Theory in Social Science Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 1: Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry</li> </ul>
	01/29/2018	<b>Instructions: CITI log-in and Basic Course walk-through</b> Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E. (2015) Chapter 2: Foundations of Criminal Justice Research
3	02/01/2018	How to search for peer-reviewed journal articles & how to use RU libraries
	02/05/2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 3: Ethics and Criminal Justice</li> </ul>
4	02/08/2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 4 – General Issues in Research Design</li> </ul>
	02/12/2018	<b>CITI Basic Training DUE</b>
5	02/ 15/2018	
	02/19 /2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 5: Concepts, Operationalization and Measurement</li> </ul>
6	02/22 /2018	Reading: Chapter 5
	02/26 /2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 6: Measuring Crime</li> </ul>
7	03/1 /2018	<b>Group Project I - Due</b>
	03/ 5 /2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 7: Experimental and Quasi- Experimental Design</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mid-Term Exam</b></p>
8	03/08/2018	Reading : Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015)
	03/12/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 8: Sampling</li> </ul>
	03/15	

9		Spring Recess 3/18- 3/22
10	03/26/2018	<b>Group Project II Due:</b>
11	03/29 /2018	Reading : Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015)
	04/2 /2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 10: Qualitative Interviewing Group</li> </ul>
	04/ 05/2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 11: Field Observation</li> </ul>
12	04/09 /2018	<b>Reading : Maxfield, M.G., &amp; Babbie, E (2015)</b>
	04/12 /2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 12: Agency Records, Content Analysis and Secondary Data</li> </ul>
13	04/16 /2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 13: Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis</li> </ul>
	04/19 /2018	<b>Group Project III – Due Research Article Review III (by midnight)</b>
14	04/23/2018	Reading: Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E (2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 14: Interpreting Data</li> </ul>
	04/26/2018	<i>In-class exercise: Discuss methods for research proposal</i>
15	04/30/2018	<i>Final Exam Review</i> <i>Research Proposal Review</i>
		<b>FINAL EXAM!!!! TBA</b>
		<b>Final Research Proposal Due Date!!!!!! TBA</b>

## II. Grading

### 500 points

Course Components	Possible Points
Attendance/ Participation (10%)	50
CITI Basic Course (10%)	50
Group Projects (3 at 50 points each for 30%)	150
Mid-Term Exam (10%)	50

Final Exam (10%)*	100
Research Proposal (30%)*	100

The following grading scale will be used for this course:

A	90–100%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
C+	75-79%
C	70-74%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

### Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation constitute an integral part of your grade. Two or more unexcused absences will affect a portion of your grade. As such, students’ attendance and active participation are both desired and expected. Failure to attend a class or leaving class before its conclusion will constitute an absence, unless a documented excuse is provided. *If you miss more than two (2) classes without a documented excuse, your ability to pass this class will be placed in serious jeopardy.* Also, it is important to note that lateness will not be tolerated. You will be considered late if you arrive after class has started. *Please note that three (3) tardy days equate to one absence*

### CITI Basic Registration

Students are required to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Education Basic Course and upload a copy (ideally a PDF) version of their “Completion Report” to Blackboard. Access to the certification course online can be found online (<https://www.citiprogram.org/>). The instructor will review instructions on registering on the first and second days of class. You can access the course by following the steps in this page: <http://rbhs.rutgers.edu/hsp/education/index.html>. Follow the instructions listed under the “Initial Registration for New Learners” at the bottom of the page. Once you are registered for CITI, select “Human Research” and then “Social/Behavioral/Epidemiologic Research Investigators.” There are 16 required modules; you may skip the optional modules.

**Group Projects:** Students will be divided into groups of 4. Each group will write one article review, one exercise on concepts, operationalization and measurement, and one exercise on experimental design. All group project papers must be follow **APA format, Typed, Double Spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt Font, One Inch Margins** and submitted on the discussion board on blackboard for group critiques and comments. Grade’s will be assigned to the group based on content of paper and comments provided for other groups.

- **Group Project I - Concepts, Operationalization and Measurement:** An exercise to challenge students understanding of concept, operationalization and measurement in research methods will be assigned. Each group is required to write 3-5pgs in response to the exercise.
- **Question:** Review the box titled “What is Recidivism?” in Chapter 5, page 116 of the text. From that discussion, write conceptual and operational definitions for Recidivism. Summarize how Fabelo proposes to measure the concept. Finally, discuss possible reliability and validity issues associated with Fabelo’s proposed measure
- **Group Project II- Sampling:** In this exercise, each group will be required to apply sampling and sampling techniques to write a 3-5pgs response to the assigned exercise.

- **Question:** Review the summary of the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) program in Chapter 6, page 159 of the text. Specify the target population, study population, sampling frame, and elements used in the DAWN program. Describe what type of sample Dawn uses, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of sampling procedures.

**Group Project III- Survey Design:** In this exercise, students will develop a survey of the perceptions of violent crime in the city of Newark.

- **Question:** Review the summary of the knowledge and Attitudes About Sex Offenders in Chapter 9, page 231 -233. Using a similar approach, develop a Survey for Newark residents about the perception of Violent Crime in the city. Your survey should comprise of 10-15 questions. What type of sampling best fits this survey? Explain how you intend to draw your samples?
- **Extra Credit Assignment: Article Review:** Interested students are expected to submit one Short Page Research Article Review. A checklist, or guideline for this assignment will be posted on Blackboard by the second week of class. Students are strongly encouraged to speak with the professor about their chosen article.

### **Research Proposal**

Students are required to submit a written research proposal that will lay out plans for a research study to test one or more theoretically informed hypotheses. This will present an opportunity for each student to develop their own idea for a research project, building off the knowledge and skills learned through the course. A “Research Proposal Check List” showing all relevant components of a proposal is available on blackboard. A sample proposal will also be provided for students as the semester progresses.

### **Mid-Term Exam**

Mid-examination will be taken during its scheduled time. Students will be required to answer **Multiple Choices, True or False and Short Answer questions.** The exam is designed to test students’ knowledge of material covered in the first half of the course.

### **Final Exam**

This is a cumulative final examination designed to confirm student understanding of the concepts and theories of research in Criminal Justice. In this exam students will be required to answer Multiple Choice, True or False and short questions. No text books, computers or cell phones are allowed during the exams. Students are allowed to use note cards and power point slides.

### **III. Course Policies**

#### **Classroom Rules**

All members of this class are required to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner. Laptops are permitted only if disengaged from the internet and other electronic devices should be stored away unless you specifically seek the instructor's permission. In this class, we may have discussions that challenge our taken for granted assumptions about crime and justice. Students should be prepared to engage honestly and openly about this material and perhaps even examine their own beliefs about the issues. While I am hopeful that the course materials will spark interesting discussion, personal insults or other types of demeaning, disrespectful, or threatening comments toward other class members about their experiences, backgrounds, or statements will NOT be tolerated. No eating or use of your cell phone is allowed in the classroom.

#### **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>

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**

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers, Newark campus. To request more information, sign up for tutoring or to register for workshops, visit Conklin Hall 126, or online at: <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~nwc/>

#### **Rutgers Blackboard System**

All of the materials and assignments for this course can be accessed on, and downloaded from, the Rutgers' Blackboard Course site: <http://blackboard.newark.rutgers.edu/>. Your login information is the same username and password you use to access your Rutgers student information. If you utilize an email address that is different from the one that Rutgers assigns you, please change your email address on blackboard. Emails will be sent to the class through Blackboard. Students are responsible for any messages sent via the Blackboard message system.

#### **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/> or contact the representative for the Newark Campus.

Allen Sheffield

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### 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), 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/>



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