

Fall 2018
MA Research and Evaluation (27:202:522)
Center for Law and Justice (CLJ) Room 574
Thursdays 2:00pm – 4:40pm

Instructor Contact Information:

Dr. Jasmine Silver
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TA Contact Information:

Felipe Salazar
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Office Hours:

Instructor: Wednesdays 2-4pm or by appointment.
TA: Tuesdays 2-4pm or by appointment

Course Materials:

- Maxfield, Michael G., and Earl R. Babbie. 2010. *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* (8th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Additional articles assigned on Blackboard (see below)

Course Overview and Objectives:

Provides a basic introduction to research design in the social sciences, with an emphasis on criminology and criminal justice applications. Students will learn the steps required for framing an empirical question and be introduced to a variety of research methodologies. The course will provide equal emphasis on causal-explanatory, exploratory-descriptive, and qualitative designs, and students will learn the strengths and weaknesses of each. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the purposes of criminological research.
- Understand the structure and technologies of research.
- Become familiar with data sources for criminological research.
- Develop the skills necessary to assess the merit of published research findings.
- Develop the competency to plan and conduct a feasible and professional research project.

Grades:

You can receive up to 500 total points in this class. You will be graded on: two exams (2 x 100 = 200 points); ten reading quizzes (10 x 10 points = 100); participation in ten or more class activities (10 x 5 = 50 points); and two research design projects (2 x 75 = 150 points).

Exams (2 x 100 points each = 200 points): There will be two exams. The exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions.

Reading Quizzes (10 x 10 points each = 100 points or 20%): At the beginning of each class you will complete a short quiz assessing your understanding of the assigned readings. Reading quizzes cannot be taken later without an approved excuse. **Your overall reading quiz grade will be based on your 10 best reading quiz scores. YOU CAN USE WRITTEN OR PRINTED NOTES, so take good ones!**

Participation (10 x 5 points each = 50 points or 10%): Participation will be assessed through a variety of in-class activities, including but not limited to: group discussions, short writing activities, responses to guest speakers, etc. You can expect about one participation activity per regular class, for a total of about 12 over the course of the semester (plus occasional extra opportunities, minus snow days, etc.). **Your participation total will be based on your 10 best participation scores.**

Research Design Projects (2 x 75 points each = 150 points or 30%) – CHOOSE TWO: You must complete two of the following research design projects. Each one centers on a different research design skill (surveys, experiments, and field notes). Note that the due dates are different for each one, and more specific information will be provided about how to complete each project as the course progresses.

Option #1 – Survey Design (Due Nov. 20th): Submit a research question of interest, then design a 5- to 10-minute survey to answer that question.

Option #2 – Experimental Design (Due Nov. 1st): Write a Short Studies proposal for 3 items to be included on a Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS) omnibus survey. This proposal should be 1-2 pages single-spaced and include a description of a research question as well as a clear explanation for how your experiment/follow up items will answer that question. See <http://www.tessexperiments.org/ssp.html>.

Option #3 – Qualitative Field Notes (Due Dec. 6th): Conduct **three hours** of social observation in a place you have never been before or don't go often. **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PERMISSION TO BE THERE.** Turn in your jotted and full fieldnotes.

Grading Scale (Total Points):

A: 500-463	B: 432-413	C: 382-363	D: 332-313
A-: 462-448	B-: 412-398	C-: 362-348	D-: 312-298
B+: 447-433	C+: 397-383	D+: 347-333	F: 297 or below

Extra credit:

You can get 1 point of extra credit point toward your final grade for writing out answers to group activities (being the “scribe”).

Technology:

Your Rutgers email account is the official form of communication for this class and you should check it regularly. You are responsible for all information about the class sent to that email address. I will only respond to emails from your Rutgers address. When you send me an email,

write your main topic/concern in the subject line, keep emails professional, and sign your name. I will respond within 24 hours. Laptops, tablets, or other note-taking devices are fine in class, please just refrain from watching weird porn while I'm talking.

Late work:

Late assignments will be penalized by one letter grade (10%) for each day they are late. The penalty will max out at 5 days, meaning that the most you lose for late work is 50%.

Missed Work or Exams:

Absences resulting in missed work or exams will be excused for personal or family emergencies or illness. Make sure to inform me **as soon as possible** that you will be missing an assignment. I reserve the right to ask for documentation, as well as to refuse to give make-up work for issues that are brought to my attention after the fact.

Disability Services:

Students with a documented disability who wish to discuss special accommodations should contact the instructor as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester. For information on documentation and reasonable accommodations, students may consult the website of the Office of Disability Services at <http://disabilityservices-uw.rutgers.edu>.

Counseling Center:

Students who experience any emotional or other difficulties that interfere with their performance in this course should be aware that the university offers a variety of free, confidential services. For information on psychological and counseling services, students may refer to the Counseling Center website at <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu>.

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. Note that I will report you if I catch you, *even for first time offenses*.

Schedule: Please note that dates and assignments are subject to change. "BOOK" refers to the course textbook.

Date	Topic	Reading	What's Due
9/6	Introduction to Course		
9/13	Theory and Research Questions Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapters 1, 2, 3 • Chapter 4 from: Reynolds (2007). <i>A Primer in Theory Construction</i>. 	In class: Reading Quiz #1
9/20	Variables and Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 5 • Kovar (2000). Four million adolescents smoke: Or do they? 	In class: Reading Quiz #2

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strauss (1999). The controversy over domestic violence by women. 	
9/27	Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 8 • Fricker (2008). Sampling methods for web and e-mail surveys. • Blumstein and Benedict (1999). Criminal violence of NFL players. • Pickett et al. (2018). The response rate test: Nonresponse bias and the future of survey research in criminology and criminal justice. 	In class: Reading Quiz #3
10/4	Research Design Basics Causality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 4 • Weisburd et al. (2001). Does research design affect study outcomes in criminal justice? • Lange et al. (2005). Testing the racial profiling hypothesis for seemingly disparate traffic stops on the New Jersey Turnpike. 	In class: Reading Quiz #4
10/11	Experiments Quasi-Experiments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 7 • Chapter 8 from: Cook and Campbell (1979). <i>Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings</i>. • Sampson (2010). Gold standard myths: Observations on the experimental turn in quantitative criminology. 	In class: Reading Quiz #5
10/18	Exam 1	Exam 1	Exam 1
10/25	Survey Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 9 • Chapter 5 from: Fowler (2002). <i>Survey Research Methods. 3rd edition</i>. 	In class: Reading Quiz #6
11/1	Survey Experiments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1, 3, 4, and 6 from: Mutz (2011). <i>Population-Based Survey Experiments</i>. 	In class: Reading Quiz #7
11/8	Measuring Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 6 • Lynch and Addington. (2010). Identifying and addressing response errors in self-report surveys. 	Assignment: Project #1 Due In class: Reading Quiz #8

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cork and Cohen (2002). Window on Washington. 	
11/15	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
11/20 (TUES)	Qualitative Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 10 • Chapter 5 from: Lofland et al. (2006). <i>Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis</i>. • Hunt (1985). Police accounts of normal force. • Stuart (2016). Becoming “Copwise”: Policing, culture, and the collateral consequences of street-level criminalization. 	Assignment: Project #2 Due In Class: Reading Quiz #9
11/22	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
11/29	Program and Policy Evaluation Research Partnerships Research in a Political Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapter 12 • Rosenfeld and Fornango (2014). The impact of police stops on precinct robbery and burglary rates in New York City, 2003-2010. • Worden et al. (2014). Research partners in criminal justice: Notes from Syracuse. 	In Class: Reading Quiz #10
12/6	Analyzing Secondary Data Interpreting and Critiquing Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOK: Chapters 11 and 13 • Kleck (1997). Illegitimate practices in summarizing research on guns and violence. • Simmons et al. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. 	Assignment: Project #3 Due In class: Reading Quiz #11
12/14	Exam 2	Exam 2	Exam 2