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**47: 204:482:Q1 Senior Thesis II Seminar**  
**3 Credits**  
**Fall, 2018**

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Class time: Mondays- 8:30am- 10:30am; 1:30pm- 3pm (9/10/18- 12/17/18)

Location: NSP

Professors: Dr. Amy Shlosberg

**Course Description**

This course is a research-based seminar designed for students demonstrating the academic maturity and preparation to pursue a thesis project independently. Students will draw on their knowledge of theory, methods, and policy learned in core and elective courses to analyze and propose a research plan on an important topic in criminal justice.

The primary assignments for students in this course will be to produce a research paper and present the final product. Overall, this course requires students to undertake a directed, instructor-approved, research project, produce a thesis paper, and orally present the research. Several related assignments will help students develop their thesis and construct their paper. Since students will be spending numerous hours reading, thinking, and writing about this topic, they will be encouraged to choose a topic that they feel passionate about (within the criminal justice arena). The final product will demonstrate students' research, analytical, and writing skills.

**Learning Objectives**

The Senior Thesis provides exceptional senior students in Rutgers School of Criminal Justice with an opportunity to participate in a focused research project under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Successful completion of the Thesis will help students to gain understanding of the research enterprise and to prepare for graduate programs and/or competitive employment opportunities.

Overall, students will develop technical writing and oral presentation skills through interactions in the classroom, by writing a final report on their project, and by summarizing their work in a final presentation before students and faculty. At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Locate and identify appropriate sources of scholarly research.
- Synthesize and evaluate information from sources.
- Develop research questions or specific hypothesis relevant to previous research.
- Analyze research findings, including data, the construction of arguments, and use of evidence.
- Develop conclusions and an argument based on researched results.

- Present findings in a well-written academic paper (including notes, bibliography, and paper format) and professional presentation.
- Work independently, meet deadlines, and take initiative for moving forward with the thesis.

**Required Readings**

Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.C., & Williams, J.M. (2003). *The Craft of Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (“TCR” in course outline)

Additional readings will be included in course reader, which will be provided to students on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of class. (“CR” in course outline)

**Course Requirements**

- Data Collection
- Introductory section and theory discussion of paper (approximately 10 pages)
- In class revision workshop
- Data analysis
- Full draft due (see below for final paper requirements)
- Students present thesis work at faculty/student “Research Day”

**Course Schedule\* Senior Year, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics and Assignment Deadlines</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>“Introduction/Overview”</b> Course introduced and explained as a continuation of the “Senior Thesis I.” Learning and semester goals introduced.
<b>2</b>	<b>“Data Collection”</b> Students are guided in the appropriate research areas where relevant data for their projects can be collected.
<b>3</b>	<b>“Planning”</b> “TCR,” Ch. 12, (Avoid Three Common but Flawed Plans, Planning Your Report), pp. 177-186. Class discussion around planning and organizing a formal research paper. Students continue collecting research data.
<b>4</b>	<b>“Drafting”</b> “TCR,” Ch. 13, <i>Drafting Your Report</i> (Draft in a Way That Feels Comfortable, Use Key Words to Keep Yourself on Track, Quote, Paraphrase, and Summarize Appropriately, Integrating Direct Quotations into Your Text, Show Readers How Evidence Is Relevant, Guard against Inadvertent Plagiarism, The Social Importance of Citing Sources, Four Common Citation Styles, Work through Procrastination and Writer’s Block) pp. 187-202. Class discussion around making a formal draft of a larger research paper. Students continue collecting research data. Students begin developing draft summaries of their larger project.

	<b>Thesis statement, annotated bibliography, and outline due.</b>
<b>5</b>	Review writing techniques and citation styles.
<b>6</b>	<p><b>“Revising/Organizing and Argument”</b>  “TCR,” Ch. 14, <i>Revising Your Organization and Argument</i> (Thinking Like a Reader, Revising the Frame of Your Report, Revising Your Argument, Revising the Organization of Your Report, Check Your Paragraphs, Let Your Draft Cool, Then Paraphrase It), pp. 203-212. Continued class discussion around making a formal draft of a larger research paper. Students will continue collecting data, and working on the draft summary of their Senior Thesis.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>“Communicating”</b>  “TCR,” Ch. 15, <i>Communicating Evidence Visually</i> (Choosing Visual or Verbal Representations, Choosing the Most Effective Graphic, Designing Tables, Charts, and Graphs, Specific Guidelines for Tables, Bar Charts, and Line Graphs, Communicating Data Ethically), pp. 213-231. Class discussion around most effective ways of communicating particular forms of data. Students will continue collecting data, working on draft summaries of their project.</p> <p><b>Initial abstract due.</b></p>
<b>8</b>	Explore options for visual presentation of data.
<b>9</b>	<p><b>“Introductions”</b>  “TCR,” Ch. 16, <i>Introductions and Conclusions</i> (The Common Structure of Introductions, Step 1: Establish Common Ground, Step 2: State Your Problem, Step 3: State Your Response, Setting the Right Pace for Your Introduction, Writing Your Conclusion, Finding Your First Few Words, Finding Your Last Few Words), pp. 232-248. Class discussion around constructing an effective Introduction to a research paper. Students will continue data collection, developing the draft summary of their larger project, and construction of their introductory chapter.</p>
<b>10</b>	Practice writing introductions for papers.
<b>11</b>	<p><b>“Revising”</b>  “TCR,” Ch. 17, <i>Revising Style: Telling Your Story Clearly</i> (Judging Style, The First Two Principles of Clear Writing, A Third Principle: Old before New, Choosing between Active and Passive, A Final Principle: Complexity Last, Spit and Polish), pp. 249-270. Class discussion around revision techniques, and completing a “finished” product. Students will continue all portions of the course covered so</p>

	far, including data collection and draft summaries of their larger project, and work on the first chapter of their Senior Thesis. <b>Introductory section and theory discussion due.</b>
<b>12</b>	Peer editing
<b>13</b>	<b>“Writing the Senior Thesis”</b> Students will work, largely independently, on their individual Thesis projects.
<b>14</b>	Peer editing
<b>15</b>	<b>“Writing the Senior Thesis”</b> Students will continue work, largely independently, on their individual Thesis projects. <b>In-Class revision workshop</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>“Writing the Senior Thesis”</b> Students will continue work, largely independently, on their individual Thesis projects. <b>In-Class revision workshop</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>“Writing the Senior Thesis”</b> Students will continue work, largely independently, on their individual Thesis projects.
<b>18</b>	<b>“Senior Thesis”</b> <b>Completed “Senior Thesis” due.</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>“Research Day”</b> <b>Students will present a showcase of their final projects.</b>

\*Note: This syllabus/course schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

### **Grading**

Your final thesis and presentation constitutes the bulk of your grade—other assignments are designed to enhance the final product. These assignments will not all be part of your final grade but they cannot be omitted. To pass the course these assignments must be submitted in a timely manner and reflect a solid effort. The weights for the final grade are:

Thesis statement, annotated bibliography, and outline: 10%

Initial abstract: 10%

Introductory and theory section: 20%

Final Paper: 40%

Final Presentation: 20%

The following grading scale will be used for this course:

A	= 90.0% - 100.0%
B+	= 85.0% - 89.99%
B	= 80.0% - 84.99%
C+	= 75.0% - 79.99%
C	= 70.0% - 74.99%
D	= 60.0% - 69.99%
F	= 59.99 and below

## **Overview of Assignments**

### *Introductory Section and Theory Discussion*

The Intro/Theory sections should include:

1. A discussion of the central issue or question to be explored. This discussion will serve as the foundation for your introduction. It should include your thesis statement and a convincing discussion explaining why this issue is important. (approximately 2-3 pages).
2. A clear statement of your thesis or specific hypothesis to be tested or examined in connection with the topic. A carefully defined thesis statement will help you focus your research. Since the thesis statement clearly defines your project, referring back to your thesis statement during the course of your research will help you identify what information belongs in your paper and what does not. However, a thesis statement is not chiseled in stone—it can evolve during your research.
3. A review of the pertinent literature and a clear statement of the methodology and analytical techniques you will employ in analyzing your central issue or question. Your literature review may expand as your research progresses, but you should explain how your research fits in with, and contributes to, the existing literature on your topic. (Approximately 4-6 pages)
4. A discussion of the applicable theory will constitute a major section of your final paper. This discussion will form the basis for the theory section of your paper. (Approximately 6-8 pages)

### *Final Paper Requirements*

- Margins: 1½ inch left margin, 1 inch top, right and bottom
- Paragraph Formatting: double-spacing, ½ inch indentation at the start of each paragraph
- Font: Times New Roman, 12-point typeface
- Title Page: format according to the template in the appendix
- Page Numbering: start with page 1 after the title page (and after any table of contents page)
- APA Citation Formatting
- Abstract: include final version of your abstract (150-250 words)

### *Final Presentation*

Each student will present their project at “Research Day.” Students and faculty will attend this event. At the conclusion of the presentation audience members will have the opportunity to ask questions or offer feedback.

\*\* Pending approval, students will also have the opportunity to present their research at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference via skype. The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) is an international association that fosters professional and scholarly activities in the field of criminal justice. ACJS promotes criminal justice education, research, and policy analysis within the discipline of criminal justice for both educators and practitioners. This would be invaluable to students, as it would expose them to professionals in the field of criminal justice while building their credentials and network.

## **Course Policies**

### *Classroom Rules*

All members of this class are required to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner. 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.

### *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. 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.