

202:301:60:01 Criminal Justice Research Methods

Fall Semester 2020

Professor Joel Miller

Instructor:	Professor Joel Miller 549 Center for Law and Justice 123 Washington St. joel.miller@rutgers.edu
Zoom meeting times:	Mon 2:30pm-3:50pm; Wed 1:00pm-2.20pm
Virtual locations:	Canvas (https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/87918) Zoom (meeting ID: 913 3904 6033; passcode: 922998; https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/91339046033?pwd=eDg0c0hTdjhGbm9ZMW51cFZ3aG1Odz09)
Virtual office hours:	Tue: 9:00am-1pm (use Zoom details below; also send an email to joel.miller@rutgers.edu before/when you arrive) Zoom (meeting ID: 913 3904 6033; passcode: 922998; https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/91339046033?pwd=eDg0c0hTdjhGbm9ZMW51cFZ3aG1Odz09)
Student resources:	There is a permanent Zoom hangout space for students to join and chat at any time (meeting ID: 977 7101 7598; passcode 749848; https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/97771017598?pwd=TjNtVVJLLzV6MjJCRUkweU1BMXhzZz09) Students can also communicate with class peers (and the professor) using class-specific discussion boards.

Course description

This course will introduce students to research methods in social science, focusing on examples from criminal justice and criminology. The course will begin by reviewing the character, purpose and ethics of social scientific research. It will go on to discuss key principles of research design, including issues of validity, causal inference, measurement, and experimental and quasi-experimental designs. It will examine approaches to sampling and data collection. Throughout, there will be an emphasis on the practical application of research methods to the real world, and their role in shaping criminal justice policy and practice.

Expected learning outcomes

This course is intended to educate students about the purpose and method of social science research. At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Describe basic principles of social science
2. Explain ethical principles in research design
3. Interpret existing research studies
4. Identify relevant topics for research, based on literature
5. Develop relevant research questions and hypotheses for research
6. Recognize and explain key steps in designing research
7. Explain core quantitative and qualitative research methodologies
8. Design data collection tools
9. Design research projects

Class textbook

The following text is **required** for this course. This can be rented online, for example

Maxfield, M.G., and Babbie, E. (2016). *Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*, 4nd Edition. Wadsworth Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-1305261105./ ISBN-10: 1305261100

Other readings are indicated in Canvas modules.

Organization and communication

Scheduled meetings

The class will meet virtually on Zoom at the scheduled class times (except when the syllabus/Canvas indicates otherwise). Zoom details are: meeting ID: 913 3904 6033; passcode: 922998. Or students can use this link: <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/91339046033?pwd=eDg0c0hTdjhGbm9ZMW51cFZ3aG1Odz09>.

Zoom etiquette

There are a number of rules to follow for ensuring a smooth Zoom classroom experience:

1. Use your real name in the Zoom room (instructions for adjusting your name are provided in Class 1 videos).
2. Stay muted unless the professor invites you to speak. You may raise your hand (on your participants panel). Please bear in mind, however, this is this a large class, and it may be difficult for the professor to keep track of raised hands.
3. If you have questions, use the chat window (chat to "Everyone")
4. You are not required to switch on your own video is optional. However, it does make for a greater atmosphere of participation.
5. If you do use video, please dress and behave as you would in a regular classroom. You can use a Zoom background if you don't want people to see your surroundings.
6. Please do not record meetings.

Activities (including pre-class preparation)

Full information on each class will be posted to Canvas (<https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/87918>). Classes will typically involve (1) some student pre-class preparation, including video lectures (2) class Q&A discussion (3) group-based work (4) in some cases a post-class quiz or assignment

For each class there will be a discussion board, allowing students (and the professor) to pose and ask questions about the material being learned. Engagement in this activity will contribute to a participation grade.

Communication with the professor

There are three main options for students to communicate with the professor:

1. If questions are focused on the substantive course content, and not of a private nature, students are encouraged to post their questions to the discussion board.
2. Students can also join the classroom Zoom meeting during office hours to talk one-to-one with the professor (meeting ID: 913 3904 6033; passcode: 922998; link: <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/91339046033?pwd=eDg0c0hTdjhGbm9ZMW51cFZ3aG1Odz09>. Students are advised to email the professor when/before they enter to let him know they will be attending (joel.miller@rutgers.edu). They will be held in a waiting room on Zoom until the professor admits them. This ensures privacy between students.
3. Students can also directly email the professor with questions (joel.miller@rutgers.edu). Replies may take a couple of days.

Assessment

Course assessment is based on varied assignments and activities. The list below provides a brief overview, while full descriptions of key assignments will be available on Canvas:

1. **Article review (written assignment)** – Students will identify a peer review academic article, and provide a review, according to its key features and its conclusions. **Due Sunday, September 20 (5%).**
2. **CITI Human Subjects Certification – online course/test** – Students are required to complete the Rutgers Human Subjects Certification and upload a copy (PDF) of their certificate to Canvas. Access to the course can be found online: <https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=14> **Due Sunday, September 27 (Pass/fail – pass required).**
3. **Literature review (written assignment)** – Students will conduct a literature review, based on scholarly academic sources, focused on a topic of interest. This will be used to inform a subsequent research design proposal later in the course. **Due Sunday, October 11 (10%)**
4. **Experiment design memo (written assignment)** – Students will write a brief memo on how they would conduct an experiment to test a criminal justice intervention. **Due Sunday, October 25 (12%)**
5. **Questionnaire design (written assignment)** – Each student will develop a questionnaire designed to test hypotheses arising from a theory of interest, as well as ask open ended questions. **Due Sunday, November 8 (13%)**
6. **Research proposal (written assignment)** – 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. **Due Sunday, December 6 (20%)**
7. **Quizzes (online)** – There will be 7 quizzes, spread across the semester. Students will be scored based on the average of their best five quiz scores - **(15%)**
8. **Final online exam** - An online final exam will be administered. **Date TBD. (15%)**
9. **Participation** – This will be assessed through students' engagement in class activities, including in-class group work and discussion board contributions. **(10%)**

Late submission policy

Students submitting assignments after the due date (without permission obtained from the professor prior to this date), will **lose 5% of the assignment grade per day** following the deadline. Deadline extensions may in exceptional compelling cases be granted but will require documentation of reasons (e.g. sickness) for inability to deliver the assignment on time. The professor reserves the right to permit or deny requests for assignment extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Grading

The final grade will be based on the following weighting of assignments and activities.

1. Article review		5%
2. CITI Human Subjects Certification	n/a (pass required)	
3. Literature review		10%
4. Experiment design memo		12%
5. Questionnaire design		13%
6. Research proposal		20%
7. Quizzes		15%
8. Final exam		15%
9. Participation		10%
TOTAL		100%

The following grading scheme will be used:

A	Outstanding	4.0	90-100%
B+		3.5	87-89%
B	Good	3.0	80-86%
C+		2.5	77-79%
C	Satisfactory	2.0	70-76%
D	Poor	1.0	60-69%
F	Failure	0.0	<60%

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://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>) 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.

Class schedule

Week	Date	Class description
1	Wed - Sep 2	Introduction and overview of course requirements
2	Mon - Sep 7	NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)
	Tue - Sep 8	Criminal justice research
	Wed - Sep 9	Conducting a lit review, developing research questions
3	Mon - Sep 14	Ethics 1
	Wed - Sep 16	Ethics 2
4	Mon - Sep 21	Research design 1
	Wed - Sep 23	Research design 2
5	Mon - Sep 28	Research design 3
	Wed - Sep 30	Concepts, operationalization and measurement 1
6	Mon - Oct 5	Concepts, operationalization and measurement 2
	Wed - Oct 7	Experiments
7	Mon - Oct 12	Quasi-experiments
	Wed - Oct 14	Sampling 1
8	Mon - Oct 19	Sampling 2
	Wed - Oct 21	Surveys 1
9	Mon - Oct 26	Surveys 2
	Wed - Oct 28	Qualitative interviewing 1

10	Mon - Nov 2	Qualitative interviewing 2
	Wed - Nov 4	Field observations 1
11	Mon - Nov 9	Field observations 2
	Wed - Nov 11	Agency records etc. 1
12	Mon - Nov 16	Agency records etc. 2
	Wed - Nov 18	GIS and crime mapping 1
13	Mon - Nov 23	GIS and crime mapping 2
	Wed - Nov 25	NO CLASS (FRIDAY CLASSES)
14	Mon - Nov 30	Evaluation research and problem analysis 1
	Wed - Dec 2	Evaluation research and problem analysis 2
15	Mon - Dec 7	REVIEW
	Wed - Dec 9	REVIEW

Accommodation and support statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

For English as a Second Language (ESL): The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a second language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>.

For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does *not* have a reporting obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out *TAO at Rutgers-Newark* for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: <https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO>.

For emergencies, call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.