

CRIMINAL JUSTICE 553
Masters Project Seminar Fall 2022 Section 3 (3credits)

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Course Canvas Page: <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/199527>

REMINDER: Vaccinations are required; masks are required in class

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is for Masters level students in their last semester of the School of Criminal Justice MA program. The class is hands-on, requiring you to apply much of what you learned during your time at the.

Imagine that you work in a local or state criminal justice agency. Identify a problem in need of research that requires financial support to conduct research to assist in addressing the problem (N B: the proposal is for research **not** for agency operation or service delivery).

You will write a letter of interest followed by a full funding proposal to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA; [Home | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](https://www.ojp.gov/bja)) to request funding to address your agency's problem and/or area of need. The BJA is a part of the United States Office of Justice Programs and provides funding opportunities to strengthen the nation's criminal justice system through grants, training, and technical assistance ([Funding & Awards | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](https://www.ojp.gov/bja/funding)). The BJA partners with local and state criminal justice agencies to make communities safer through supporting programs and initiatives in areas such as tribal justice, crime prevention, protecting vulnerable populations, and capacity building.

Projects will take different forms, depending on your interests, prior experiences in the field, funding agency, and internship placements. The intention of this project is to get you comfortable with putting together letters of interest and funding proposals for the agencies in which you work, or endeavor to work in the future. Grant writing and the ability to secure external funding sources will serve you well in your career.

The class will largely be student-directed, with the professor serving as a facilitator for problem-solving and completion of the projects. Students must be engaged and self-directed, work independently, and seek assistance from the professor and other faculty members as needed.

Examples of applicants to the BJA that were recommended for funding can be found at the following sites:

[Past Funding | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](https://www.ojp.gov/bja/funding)

SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

A class meeting will be held at the start of the semester, Wednesday September 7, 6-8 pm, room SCJ 567 to orient the class, discuss requirements, and overview procedures. Videos covering particular assignments (e.g., letters of interest, statement of problem, project design and implementation, etc.) will be posted to Canvas in the first few weeks of class. Virtual drop-in classes, 6:30-7:30pm will be held to answer questions about each assignment.

Letter of interest: September 14
Statement of the problem: September 28
Project design and implementation: October 19
Potential impacts and dissemination: November 9

Students are required to meet with the professor individually in-person or virtually in the beginning weeks of the semester to discuss individual topics, research approaches, and funding ideas. Individual follow-up meetings are expected of students, as needed, midway and toward the end of the semester. The class schedule is subject to change upon notice from the instructor.

Requirements: See the Canvas course page for example letter and paper

Letter of interest (September 26)	15%
Revised letter of interest (one week after assignment is returned)...	5%
Progress Reports	
1) Statement of the problem (October 17)	10%
2) Project design and implementation (November 7)	10%
3) Potential impacts and dissemination (December 5).....	10%
Revised progress reports (one week after each assignment is returned (10% each)	30%
Final Assignment (no later than December 19).....	20%

Submit all assignments on Canvas by 6:00 pm on the date on which they are due.

Grading scale:

A	90-100
B+	86-89
B	80-85
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Assignments

September 26: Letter of interest

Foundations, federal agencies, and other funding sources often request respondents to requests for proposals (RFPs) to submit a letter of interest prior to seeking funding. This

allows the funder to perform the first pass at projects that fit their funding portfolios but also allows them to get an idea of the staff needed to review proposals.

Your letter of interest should not exceed 5 pages in length, and should include:

1. An introduction to your project.
2. A description of the organization that is applying for funding.
3. A statement of why the proposed research should be funded. Every investment in a research project means not investing in others. Why is the project worthier of funding than others for which you are competing?
4. A brief description of your proposed methodology(ies).
5. A concluding paragraph with a summarization.

Progress Reports

October 17: Statement of the problem. Similar to a literature review (~8-10 pages)

1. Introduce the subject/problem that you are proposing to address.
2. Communicate the purpose, goals, and objectives of the proposed project and demonstrate its importance (i.e., worthy of funding).
3. Review and evaluate relevant literature to demonstrate awareness of the state of current research in your problem area. Look for reviews that summarize a field (Annual Review papers for example) or meta-analyses.
4. State how the project is expected to contribute to our collective understanding of your topic area.

November 7: Project design and implementation (~8-12 pages).

1. State the central research question(s) and any hypotheses (precise, testable). Describe your research design (i.e., description of the method(s) you will use to collect data) and provide precise details on how you will collect the data. Describe the population of interest, the sample, and the sampling technique that will be used. Discuss measurement and analysis.
2. Discuss limitations with the proposed project's design. Remember, as George Box (1976) noted, "All models are wrong, but some are useful."

December 5: Potential impacts and dissemination (~6-8 pages)

Potential Impacts

1. Describe the implications of your project for practice and policy. How will your agency and the broader criminal justice system benefit from funding your research? What benefits will the research provide participants, those connected to them, and their communities?

Dissemination Plan

1. Describe a plan to make findings available to broader audiences, including relevant practitioners, policy-makers, participants and their communities, scholars, and researchers,

Describe the various products and the mechanism by which you will make these available (policy briefs, conferences, webinars, webpages, blog posts, etc.)

December 19: Final Assignment (~22-35 pages)

A revised proposal that integrates all of the revised progress reports into a coherent package. This should be a reasonable approximation of a document that could be sent to the BJA for funding consideration.

Submission Guidelines

All assignments must be submitted on Canvas. Use Times New Roman 12- point font, double-spaced, and left-justified only. Use in-text citations and follow American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines (e.g., Smith 2021). All progress reports **require** a set of references that follow APA guidelines (guide available on class Canvas page).

Example assignments from students in previous cohorts are available on class Canvas page

Writing: The SCJ will hire a writing tutor in October. You can make appointments with the tutor through the university writing center. <https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>

Deadlines: Contact the instructor at least three days before an assignment is due if you are struggling to meet a deadline. Extensions are rare but may be provided on a case-by-case basis given extenuating circumstances. Late assignments receive a .25 penalty for each day late (e.g., a paper graded as 9/10 would receive 8.75).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Consult the School catalog regarding University policies about academic dishonesty and plagiarism and see the professor for guidance if you are not sure that you understand these policies. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in an appropriate reduction in the course grade and in referral to the University Judicial System.

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 (e.g., 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 (e.g., 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 support.

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 an 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