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**27:202:553 Masters Project Seminar**

**3 Credits (online)**

**Fall 2023 Syllabus**

Instructor: Dr. William Calathes

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Office hours: Online availability (Zoom) by appointment

Phone number: 917-837-6047

Course Canvas Page: rutgers.instructure.com/courses

**Additional Student Support**

Writing Center

Located at Conklin Hall, Room 126, 175 University Avenue, Newark, NJ 07102

E-mail: nwc@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Phone: (973) 353-5847

https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/writing-center

**Canvas Tech Support**

E-mail: help@canvas.rutgers.edu

Phone: (877) 361-1134

https://canvas.rutgers.edu/students/getting-started-in-canvas-students/

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

This online course is for master’s 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 (NB: 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://bja.ojp.gov/)) 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://bja.ojp.gov/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://bja.ojp.gov/funding/expired)

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# SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

A class meeting will be held at the start of the semester to orient the class, discuss requirements, and overview procedures. Videos covering assignments (e.g., letter of interest, statement of the problem, project design and implementation, etc.) are posted to Canvas.

You must meet individually with the inspector to discuss your project at least twice during the semester (in-person or virtually) once in September and once in late October to discuss individual topics and research approaches. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed. The class schedule is subject to change upon notice from the instructor.

# Requirements/Due Date:

# September 5 Zoom Meeting with instructor 10%

# September 19 Letter of interest 5%

# October 3 Revised letter of interest 5%

# October 17 Statement of the problem 10%

# November 6 Project design and implementation 10%

# November 21 Potential impacts and dissemination 10%

# December 11 Final Assignment 50%

# 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**

**Due Date: 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.

1. A brief description of your proposed methodology(ies).
2. A concluding paragraph with a summarization.
3. **Literature cited. Must use in-text citations (e.g., Smith 2021) and follow American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines for works cited in your LOI and all subsequent documents.** The university provides free access to citation software (e.g., Endnote) through its software portal **(**[**https://software.rutgers.edu/info/login/**](https://software.rutgers.edu/info/login/)**). Grammarly will also check your citations.**

# Progress Reports

**Due Date: Statement of the problem.** Similar to a literature review (~8-10 pages)

1. Introduce the subject/problem that you are proposing to address. You have already introduced your project and organization in your LOI so you do not need a lengthy introduction (.5 page is typically sufficient).
2. Communicate the purpose, goals, and objectives of the proposed project and

demonstrate its importance (i.e., worthy of funding). This was also covered

in your LOI so should not be lengthy (1 page is typically sufficient)

1. 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 Revie*w papers for example) or meta-analyses.

1. State how the project is expected to contribute to our collective understanding of

your topic area.

1. Works cited.

**Due Date: Project design and implementation** (~8-12 pages).

1. Introduce the subject/problem that you are proposing to address. You have already introduced your project and organization in your other submissions, so you do not need a lengthy introduction (.25 page is typically sufficient).
2. 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.

1. Discuss limitations with the proposed project’s design. Remember, as George Box

(1976) noted, “All models are wrong, but some are useful.”

1. Works cited.

**Due Date**: Potential impacts and dissemination (~6-8 pages)

Potential Impacts

1. Introduce the subject/problem that you are proposing to address. You have already introduced your project and organization in your other submissions, so you do not need a lengthy introduction (.25 page is typically sufficient).
2. 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, policymakers, participants and their communities, scholars, and researchers,

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

3. Works cited

**Due Date: Final Assignment** (~22-35 pages)

A revised proposal that addresses all the feedback on the progress reports and integrates them 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.

Example assignments from students in previous cohorts are available on the class Canvas page. **NOTE** that these assignments will have strengths and weaknesses so make sure to ask questions about them if you plan to use them as models.

**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 if it was submitted in the 24 hrs after it was due).**

# 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 its mission of access and support:

**For Individuals Experiencing Disability:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with students with medical, physical, and/or mental conditions who encounter disabling barriers to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations for access. Students who have completed the process with ODS and have approved accommodations are provided a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) specific to each course. To initiate accommodations for their course students must both provide the LOA and have a conversation with the course instructor about the accommodations. This should occur as early in the semester as possible. More information can be found at the RU-N ODS website (ods.newark.rutgers.edu). Contact ODS at (973) 353-5375 or via email at [ods@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto: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) 353-5063 or via email at [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

**For Short-term Absence Verification:** The Office of the Dean of Students can help with 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](mailto: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, recovery from surgery, etc.). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

**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 Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures located at <https://uec.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/60-1-33-current-1.pdf>

**For support related to Interpersonal Violence:** The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) can provide any student with confidential support. VPVA is a confidential resource and does not have a reporting obligation to Title IX. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. VPVA also maintains a confidential text-based helpline available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support. Students do not need to be a victim/survivor of violence to receive assistance; any student can receive services, information, and support.

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

**For Psychological Support (Stress, Mood, Family Issues, Substance Use concerns and other personal challenges):** The Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center provides individual therapy and support groups for students dealing with psychological issues. To schedule an appointment, email counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or call (973) 353-5805.

Additional support is available to any RU-N student through Uwill services:

• Umatch: Teletherapy with flexible scheduling, starting with a free account.

• Uhelp: Crisis support at 833-646-1526 (available 24/7/365).

• Urise: Wellness-based video collection with a free account.

Access Uwill@RUN at https://my.rutgers.edu using your netid. Services are confidential and free.

**For emergencies,** call 911 or Rutgers University Police Department at (973) 353-5111.