

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CJ-5334: Research Methods**

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Introductory Conference Call:

Due to the complex nature of this course, I will be conducting an introductory conference calls during the first week of class. The purpose of this conference call is to explain the research project and its components as well as the schedule of the class. Participation in this call is completely voluntary, but HIGHLY recommended. I am offering 2 sessions so that everyone may have the opportunity to attend.

Session 1: Wednesday 21 January 2015 @ 1:00PM Central Time

Session 2: Thursday, 22 January 2015 @ 8:00PM Central Time

Call-in Number: 719-955-1371 (or) 888-450-5996

Passcode: 137333 (Please dial in 5 minutes before the call time)

Required Texts:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Additional Resources:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Nature of the Syllabus

This syllabus is an academic contract between the instructor and the student. Any oversights, contradictions, or discrepancies will be clarified by the instructor as the oversight is discovered.

Criminal Justice Graduate Program Learning Objectives (PLOs)

CJ PLO 1: Demonstrate knowledge of Criminological theories, and apply those theories to practical criminal justice events. The ability to identifying a prominent criminological theory within an actual criminal event or simulated criminal event. The ability to compare and contrast the basic concepts of the differing competing Criminological Theories.

CJ PLO 2: Working knowledge of the specific language of the Criminal Justice and the ability to identify the individual parts of the CJ System. An awareness of the costs associated with the Criminal Justice System, and the ability to recognize and be aware of political influence on the system. The ability to apply historical knowledge of the CJ system and recognize patterns of system change.

CJ PLO 3: Ability to identify, assess and compare policy processes and outcomes in criminal justice. Ability to identify and analyze various legal challenges to laws and policies within criminal justice.

HS PLO 1: Develop the ability to apply historical knowledge of the CJ system and recognize patterns of system change, particularly since 9-11. Develop the ability to identify and analyze various legal challenges to laws and policies within Homeland Security.

HS PLO 2: Working knowledge of the structure and goals of Homeland Security at the local, state and national levels. Ability to identify, assess and compare policy processes and outcomes in Homeland Security.

HS PLO 3: Develop a working knowledge of the process and application of the methods of scientific research. The ability to critique a piece of research based on its methodology. Develop the ability to apply research to Homeland Security policy.

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of research design. This overview consists of understanding the preliminary considerations that go into selecting a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research design. These include knowing the definition for these different approaches, considering philosophical worldviews, reviewing the literature, understanding the use of theory, anticipating ethical issues, and developing writing strategies. We will discuss the process of research as it relates to each approach. This process includes writing an introduction, specifying a purpose statement, and developing research questions and/or hypotheses. This course will also discuss the methods and procedures for quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

Platform: This course will be contained within the Blackboard format and will not meet in person during the term. Students are expected to log in regularly to complete assignments. Students should familiarize themselves with all of the sections of blackboard available for this course. Assignments and tests will be listed under the appropriate subheading. Students will also need to become familiar with the discussion board for completing some of this work.

As this is a graduate course, students will be expected to be self motivated, and work independently. Standards for graduate courses are higher than those for undergraduate work – students will engage in more research, reading, and writing. Any computer

glitches must be reported promptly or the student will not receive credit on the affected work.

Technical problems can be reported to me - through e-mail is usually the best idea, and/or to the Help Desk at 432-837-8888 locally, 8888 from on campus or 1-888-837-2882 from out of area. You can also log into the LTAC system and create a ticket by going to <https://techassist.sulross.edu/> If you report an issue through the Help Desk or create a ticket by logging into the system, you should send me an email with a description of your issue and the ticket number so I can help ensure that technical issues are addressed and do not negatively affect your grades. If you do not promptly report your technical problems, you will not get credit for any work affected by the problem.

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Cheating and Plagiarism

This is a master's level course so everyone should know not to engage in these practices. Students are expected to do their own work on all papers. Cheating and plagiarism on assignments will result in a grade of "F" on that part of the course, a possible grade of "F" for the entire course, and possible recommendation for suspension from the university.

Plagiarism consists of presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations or other work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person (see the Student Handbook). Plagiarism includes improper use of citations in the research paper, copying from sources without citations, copying without quotation marks, etc.

Important!

Contact your instructor promptly if you are having problems with your course work or are in need of special assistance.

Qualified students with disabilities needing academic or other accommodations to ensure full participation in the programs, services and activities at Sul Ross State University should contact Grace Duffy in the Accessibility Services Office, Ferguson Hall 112, Box C-122, (432) 837-8203.

Standard Work Week: For the purposes of this course, the work week begins on Monday morning at 6:00AM and ends on Saturday evening at 11:59PM, Central Time. Sunday will be a day for each of us to relax.

Requirements:

Research Proposal: The primary method of evaluation in this course will be the development of a research proposal. For the research proposal, students may pursue a research topic of their choice as it pertains to criminology/criminal justice. The final research proposal will account for 55% of the final grade. **You must submit your paper to the instructor as an attachment by e-mail NO LATER THAN 12:00 NOON on THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015.**

Peer Reviews: Students will produce a research proposal during the semester. The proposal will be submitted in “project components” per the instructions given in the course schedule and in the Blackboard Discussions Forum, with the final research proposal submitted as noted above. There are 10 project components leading up to the final project submission. All project components will be visible on the first day of the course. Students will be given feedback prior to submitting the final full proposal. Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday at 11:59PM Central Time of the week the component is due. Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates’ initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday at 11:59PM Central Time. Critiques must be constructive and substantive, as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible. All project components will be visible on the first day of the course. See course schedule for due dates. Project components will account for 30% of the final grade (3% each). **Note: Project components may be critiqued by the instructor on the message board. The critique may include areas of: deficiencies, needing improvement as well as positive attributes. The comments can be seen by other students in order to promote further student learning. NO grade will be posted on any assignments where other students can see said grade.**

Discussion Questions: In addition to the above, each week students will be presented with a discussion question related to the chapter readings and related lecture notes for the week. Discussion questions will become visible each Monday at 6:00AM. Students are expected to post their initial discussion thread to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday at 11:59PM Central Time of each week. Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST one (1) of their classmates’ initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday at 11:59PM Central Time. Responses must be substantive. There are a total of 15 discussion questions (your personal introduction and 14 textbook-based questions) worth 15% (1% each) of your overall grade.

Students are expected to contribute in significant ways to the discussion boards, based on the readings, but also on personal experience and knowledge gained through other course work, etc. This portion of the course is expected to replace the normal dialog that would

occur within an in-class course and students will be expected to have a thorough knowledge of the subjects being discussed. This also means that students may have to do outside research.

Students will need to log frequently in order to deal with class posts in a timely manner. Students will also be expected to respond to the information posted by other students which may mean logging in several times a week. The professor will review all initial posts and responses, *but may or may not respond to individual students.*

Course Schedule

Week 1 (20 – 24 January 2015): Introductions & The Selection of a Research Approach

Discussion Questions: Introductory Discussion Question AND Discussion Question 1

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 1; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 2 (26 – 31 January 2015): Review of the Literature

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 2

Project Component 1 Due: Topic Selection

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 2; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 3 (2 – 7 February 2015): Review of the Literature (cont.)

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 3

Project Component 2 Due: Annotated Bibliography

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 2 (cont.)

Week 4 (9 – 14 February 2015): The Use of Theory

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 4

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 3; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 5 (16 – 21 February 2015): The Use of Theory (cont.)

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 5

Project Component 3 Due: Theoretical Framework Draft

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 3 (cont.)

Week 6 (23 – 28 February 2015): Writing Strategies

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 6

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 4; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 7 (2 – 7 March 2015): Ethical Considerations

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 7

Project Component 4 Due: Ethical Considerations

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 4 (cont.)

NOTE: I will be in Orlando at the ACJS Conference this week. I will be available, but it may take me a bit longer than usual to respond to questions (maybe 4-6 hours).

Week 8 (9 – 14 March 2015): The Introduction

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 8

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 5; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 9 (16 – 21 February 2015): SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (23 – 28 March 2015): The Purpose Statement

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 9

Project Component 5 Due: Proposal Introduction

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 6; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 11 (30 March – 4 April 2015): Research Questions and Hypotheses

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 10

Project Component 6 Due: Purpose Statement

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 7; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 12 (6 – 11 April 2015): Quantitative Methods

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 11

Project Component 7 Due: Research Question(s) and Hypothesis(es)

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 8; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 13 (13 – 18 April 2015): Quantitative Methods (cont.)

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 12

Project Component 8 Due: Literature Review

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 8 (cont.)

Week 14 (20 – 25 April 2015): Qualitative Methods

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 13

Project Component 9 Due: Theoretical Framework Revisited and Methodology

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 9; Dr. Rubin's Lecture Notes

Week 15 (27 April – 2 May 2015): Qualitative Methods (cont.)

Discussion Question: Discussion Question 14

Project Component 10 Due: Final Draft Proposal (*I will return comments on your draft no later than 4 May 2015.*)

Assigned Reading: Creswell Text Chapter 9 (cont.)

Week 16 (4 – 8 May 2015): Final Research Proposal DUE

THE FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL IS DUE **NO LATER THAN 12:00 NOON on THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015.**