

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CJ-5334: Methods of Social Research
Spring, 2017**

Instructor: Dr. Mark Rubin
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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday (10:00AM – 12:00Noon)
Tuesday (9:00AM – 12:00Noon)
If you need to speak to me at any other time, send me an email with your phone number and time you can talk, and I will call you.

Required Texts:

Backman, R. D. & R. Schutt (2017). *The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*. (6th Ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-5063-0681-0

Newsome, O. (2016). *An Introduction to Research, Analysis, and Writing: Practical Skills for Social Science Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4833-5255-8

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5

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.

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for Homeland Security and Criminal Justice

- **CJ SLO 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 SLO 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 SLO 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 SLO 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 SLO 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 SLO 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.

Students with a Disability

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.

Research Topics

The question I am asked the most is: What should I write about?
My answer to this complex question is: What is of interest to you in the field of Criminal Justice? (However, your selected topic MUST be able to be DIRECTLY linked to a CRIMINOLOGICAL theory, i.e. rational choice, routine activities, strain, etc. Non-criminological theories will not be accepted.)

The topic is totally up to you, but make sure that it is in the field of Criminal Justice (policing, corrections, or court systems) and it is something that you will be able to research. Think about the following topics (you don't have to use one of these...they are just ideas):

- Campus crime: A descriptive analysis of Cleary reports on major college campuses.
- Stop, it hurts: A qualitative study of Child Protective Services effectiveness in the State of_____.
- On the trail of Anonymous: A descriptive study on the impact of Anonymous on social media trends.
- If black lives matter: A quantitative study on homoracial crimes in the City of _____.
- The new age of wanted posters: A quantitative analysis of the efficacy of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Poster Program
- Back alleys and suburbia: A descriptive analysis of prostitution in the 21st century from a social control and rational choice perspective.

Remember: You only have to do the proposal (as outlined in the syllabus)...you DO NOT need to complete the study.

!!!!!!!Important!!!!!!!

Contact Dr. Rubin sooner rather than later if you are having problems with your course work or are in need of special assistance.

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 and have fun.

Grading:

Peer Reviews of Project Components (6 @ 5% - 10% each)	40%
Research Proposal Final Project	60%

Course 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.

You must submit your paper AS AN ATTACHMENT in the “Final Project” section of BlackBoard NO LATER THAN 12:00 NOON on Thursday, 4 May 2017. See rubric at the end of the syllabus for grading details

Peer Reviews: The peer review process is a major and vital component of academic research. You be writing your Research Proposal in pieces throughout the semester. You will submit these “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 6 project components leading up to the final project submission. Students will be given feedback from both their fellow students and me. Those components are:

1. Possible Ethical Issues with the selected topic (5%)
2. Annotated Bibliography (5%)
3. Significance and Importance of the Research (5%)
4. Theoretical Construct and Related Literature (10%)
5. Methodology (5%)
6. Literature Review (10%)

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** (AT LEAST 150 words), 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.

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.

Note: Your grade for the Peer Review section will be based on your critiques of others, NOT your original work. If you have questions about this format, please contact me.

Course Schedule

B = Bachman Text

N = Newsome Text

Week 1 (16 January): Course Introductions

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 1 & N Ch. 1

Week 2 (23 January): The Research Process

Project Component Due: Topic Selection. Post your topic of research along with a brief (Min 150, Max 300 words) rationale for the study of the topic (Why did you select the topic) is due to the designated discussion forum NO LATER THAN Friday, January 27th.

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 2 & N Ch. 2

Week 3 (30 January): Ethics

Project Component Due: Potential Ethical Issues. You are to consider ANY possible and potential ethical issues related to the study of your topic. These include, but are not limited to, effects on any humans involved, effects on any environmental facilities, and potential biases by either the researcher or the subjects.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, February 2nd at 11:59PM Central Time. **DO NOT POST ATTACHMENTS!!! You're your content should be posted as a "discussion-type" text.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday February 4th at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be constructive and substantive (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 3 & N Ch. 3

Week 4 (6 February): Conceptualizing Research

Project Component Due: Research Map. Post your Research Plan (your plan on how you are going to complete your project) designated discussion forum NO LATER THAN Friday, February 10th.

This is your Project Plan with your estimated work effort for each component (in hours of work). Be realistic regarding how much time you will dedicate to each project component. Literature Reviews and Theory take a great deal of time (upwards of 20 – 40 hours each) while "Chapter 1" not so much (10 – 20 hours).

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 4 & N Ch. 4

Week 5 (13 February): Reading

Project Component Due: Begin your research.

Assigned Reading: B Appendix A & B and N Ch. 5

Week 6 (20 February): Reading (Continued)

Project Component Due: Annotated Bibliography. You must complete your annotated bibliography PROPERLY citing (APA format) and annotating AT LEAST 15 sources for your research project.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, February 23rd at 11:59PM Central Time. **DO NOT POST ATTACHMENTS!!! You're your content should be posted as a "discussion-type" text.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday, February 25th at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible. Answer this question: Are the annotations sufficient to describe the significance of the article within the research? Or, do you not know what the article actually contributes to the research?

Week 7 (27 February): Arguments

Project Component Due: Significance and Importance of the Research. You must complete a document detailing (Min 500, Max 1,000 words) the importance of your research within the world and why your research is important.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, March 2nd at 11:59PM Central Time. **DO NOT POST ATTACHMENTS!!! You're your content should be posted as a "discussion-type" text.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday, March 4th at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Assigned Reading: N Ch. 7

Week 8 (6 March): Theories and Causations

Project Component Due: Associated Criminological Theory. You must complete a document detailing (Min 500, Max 1,000 words) the theoretical basis for your research. Which theoretical “lens” will you use to evaluate your research? Remember, this **MUST** be a **CRIMINOLOGICAL** theory, such as rational choice, routine activities, strain, etc. You must detail how the theory applies to your research (and how your research can be explained by the chosen theory), a history of the theory development (major authors, timeline, impact of the theory on the field of criminal justice, etc.)

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board **NO LATER THAN Thursday, March 9th at 11:59PM Central Time. DO NOT POST ATTACHMENTS!!! You’re your content should be posted as a “discussion-type” text.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to **AT LEAST two (2)** of their classmates’ initial posts **NO LATER THAN Saturday, March 11th at 11:59PM Central Time.**

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 6 & N Ch. 8

Week 9 (13 March): SPRING BREAK

It might be wise to look ahead and start working on week 10 – 12.

Week 10 (20 March): Methods

Project Component Due: Methodology. You must complete a document detailing (Min 300, Max 1,000 words) how you will conduct your research (surveys, secondary data, etc.) and justify your methodology as a comprehensive method of completing your research. Remember, you will not actually be doing the research, simply painting a roadmap of how it would be conducted.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board **NO LATER THAN Thursday, March 23rd at 11:59PM Central Time. DO NOT POST ATTACHMENTS!!! You’re your content should be posted as a “discussion-type” text.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to **AT LEAST two (2)** of their classmates’ initial posts **NO LATER THAN Saturday, March 25th at 11:59PM Central Time.**

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 7 & 8 and N Ch 9

Week 11 (27 March): Writing

Project Component Due: Begin Literature Review

Assigned Reading: B Ch. 11 & N Ch. 11

Week 12 (3 April): Literature Review

Project Component Due: Literature Review. Using the TEMPLATE provided in the CONTENT section, you must complete your Literature Review detailing previous research on your research topic and related studies. The Literature Review is a SYNTHESIZED document, meaning it is not simply a list of prior work. It is a well formatted and detailed essay recounting prior work. This will be Chapter 2, and the largest part, of your final project. Use, and build on, your annotated bibliography. I would expect this to be anywhere between 10 and 15 pages in length, with a minimum of 20 sources. You must also have a Reference page.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, April 6th at 11:59PM Central Time. **THIS SHOULD BE POSTED AS AN ATTACHMENT.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday, April 8th at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Week 13 (10 April): Finalize Chapter 1

Project Component Due: Chapter 1. Using the TEMPLATE provided in the CONTENT section, you must finalize Chapter 1 (Introduction, Significance, Importance, and Ethical Issues) of your project. I would expect this to be anywhere between 5 and 8 pages in length, with all sources used properly cited in APA format.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, April 13th at 11:59PM Central Time. **THIS SHOULD BE POSTED AS AN ATTACHMENT.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday, April 15th at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be **constructive and substantive** (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Week 14 (17 April): Finalize Chapter 3

Project Component Due: Chapter 3. Using the TEMPLATE provided in the CONTENT section, you must finalize Chapter 3 (Methodology) of your project. I would expect this to be anywhere between 4 and 6 pages in length, with all sources used properly cited in APA format.

Students are expected to post their project-related material to the associated discussion board NO LATER THAN Thursday, April 20th at 11:59PM Central Time. **THIS SHOULD BE POSTED AS AN ATTACHMENT.** Thereafter, students are expected to respond to AT LEAST two (2) of their classmates' initial posts NO LATER THAN Saturday, April 22nd at 11:59PM Central Time.

Critiques must be constructive and substantive (AT LEAST 150 words), as the purpose is to help each other build the best proposal possible.

Week 15 (24 April): Pulling It All Together

Project Component Due: You will work this week on finalizing the entire project. Pull all three chapters together, double check your formatting, citations, and reference page. Check grammar and spelling. You are almost done!

Week 16 (1 May): ITS OVER!!!

Project Component Due: Turn your COMPLETED project into the FINAL PROJECT AS AN ATTACHMENT NO LATER THAN 12:00 NOON on **Thursday, 4 May 2017.**

Research Proposal Rubric

Each student will a complete research proposal as delineated in this syllabus. The proposal must include the elements listed in this rubric. Students will be expected to support their opinion with examples from the textbook and outside research.

Rating:

Exceptional corresponds to an A- to A (90-100%). Performance is outstanding; significantly above the usual expectations.

Proficient corresponds to a grade of B- to B+ (80-89%). Skills and standards are at the level of expectation.

Basic corresponds to a C to C+ (70-79%). Skills and standards are acceptable but improvements are needed to meet expectations well.

Novice corresponds to a D to C- (50-69%). Performance is weak; the skills or standards are not sufficiently demonstrated at this time.

0 This criterion is missing or not in evidence.

Criteria	Ratings				
	0	Novice	Basic	Proficient	Exceptional
<p>Introduction (including Purpose Statement) <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses prior knowledge to identify a question to be studied. • Breaks question down into a series of steps that will lead to the questions to be addressed in the study. • Identifies complexities and nuances in the question. 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Literature Review <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a thorough and relevant literature review. • Excellent variety of sources. • There are clear linkages among the information presented to the question under consideration. • All information is factually correct. 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Theoretical Framework <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent discussion of detail. • Impressive depth of insight/analysis 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Research Questions and Hypotheses <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws sound conclusions from the previous research and communicates a logical path from the data to the hypothesis 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17

<p>Methodology and Data Collection Approach</p> <p><i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs controlled investigation using equipment appropriate to the study and using appropriate safety/ethical measures. Identifies relevant constraints. • Data is collected carefully and with appropriate precision and adequate statistical power. Flaws are not readily apparent. • Plans pilot work or other methods to refine the study. • Considers possible criticisms of the experimental plan and addresses them 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Grammar, spelling, and syntax are appropriate to the graduate level and use APA 6th Edition format.</p> <p><i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 3 errors in the paper. 	0	7 8	9 10	11 12 13	14 15

Score: _____ of 100

Comments:

Research Proposal Rubric

Each student will a complete research proposal as delineated in this syllabus. The proposal must include the elements listed in this rubric. Students will be expected to support their opinion with examples from the textbook and outside research.

Rating:

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Criteria	Ratings				
	0	Novice	Basic	Proficient	Exceptional
<p>Introduction (including Purpose Statement) <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses prior knowledge to identify a question to be studied. • Breaks question down into a series of steps that will lead to the questions to be addressed in the study. • Identifies complexities and nuances in the question. 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Literature Review <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a thorough and relevant literature review. • Excellent variety of sources. • There are clear linkages among the information presented to the question under consideration. • All information is factually correct. 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Theoretical Framework <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent discussion of detail. • Impressive depth of insight/analysis 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Research Questions and Hypotheses <i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws sound conclusions from the previous research and communicates a logical path from the data to the hypothesis 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17

<p>Methodology and Data Collection Approach</p> <p><i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs controlled investigation using equipment appropriate to the study and using appropriate safety/ethical measures. Identifies relevant constraints. • Data is collected carefully and with appropriate precision and adequate statistical power. Flaws are not readily apparent. • Plans pilot work or other methods to refine the study. • Considers possible criticisms of the experimental plan and addresses them 	0	7 8 9	10 11 12	13 14 15	16 17
<p>Grammar, spelling, and syntax are appropriate to the college level and use APA 6th Edition format.</p> <p><i>Exceptional Level:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 3 errors in the paper. 	0	7 8	9 10	11 12 13	14 15

Score: _____ of 100

Comments: