

CJ 5334: Methods of Social Research
Sul Ross State University – Spring 2020

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Campus Office	: MAB 109	Telephone	: (432) 837 8166
Class hours	: Online	Web Page	: https://srinfo.sulross.edu/fs/9180
Office hours	: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM and by appointment.		

Required Texts

- 1) Michael G. Maxfield & Earl R. Babbie (2018), Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 8th Edition, <https://www.cengage.com/c/research-methods-for-criminal-justice-and-criminology-8e-maxfield/9781337091824PF/>
- 2) American Psychological Association (October 2019), Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition, <https://apastyle.apa.org/products/publication-manual-7th-edition-spiral>
- 3) Additional readings (e.g., articles, reports) will be posted on Blackboard.

Regarding scientific journal articles, Byrian Wildenthal Memorial Library of SRSU has an extensive database infrastructure. You can get detailed information and advising from libraries website <https://library.sulross.edu>

Once you logged in to your Sul Ross Account on Blackboard you should be automatically connected to the library webpage as well. Thus, you can browse the online databases of the University and reach the articles on the additional reading list.

Course Description

This course is intended to introduce you to research methods in social sciences in general and specifically in Criminal Justice. More specifically, the course provides an extensive information about the ways of production and accumulation of knowledge. We are living in an era which is called as “information age”. Every individual, regardless of their differences on occupation, career, research interests, and etc. is either consumer or producer (sometimes both) of research and information. For this reason, it is essential to understand how the information is produced, how the research was conducted, how the results of a study might apply in one’s occupation or everyday life. In this regard, during the course the students will gain knowledge about different topics regarding scientific research such as sources of knowledge, how to prepare, conduct, and interpret the findings of a scientific research.

Course Learning Objectives

This graduate course will help you make the transition from student to independent researcher/scholar in the field of Criminal Justice. This course is designed to provide knowledge about various topics (such as research design, sampling, data collection, measuring crime, and etc. related to research methods in Criminal Justice profession. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand and explain the difference between different sources of knowledge (tradition, authority, and scientific observation).
- Design a research project and conduct review of literature review.
- Summarize three fundamental features of social science: theory, data collection, and data analysis.
- Distinguish between inductive and deductive forms of reasoning.
- Define and discuss different ethical considerations in criminal justice research. Describe examples of the special ethical questions sometimes raised by criminal justice research.
- Define causality and describe the three basic requirements for establishing a causal relationship in science, together with what is a necessary cause and a sufficient cause.
- Understand the concepts of validity, causation, unit of analysis, ecological fallacy, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.
- Understand the role of concepts. Explain how concepts are mental images that do not exist in the real world.
- Distinguish different levels of measurement and the properties of different levels.
- Understand precision, reliability, and validity as dimensions of measurement quality.
- Understand and compare different measurements of crime based on different level of analysis. Understand the difference between crimes known by or reported by to police and self-reported crimes.
- Distinguish between experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Understand the concepts such as pretest, posttest, experimental group, control group, and manipulation.
- Understand how the logic of probability sampling makes it possible to represent large populations with small subsets of those populations. Distinguish the variety of probability and nonprobability sampling models.
- Understand the process of survey research. Distinguish different methods of survey administration and provide examples of advantages and disadvantages of those methods.
- Understand that descriptive statistics are used to summarize data under study. Describe a frequency distribution in terms of cases, attributes, and variables. Compute and interpret percentages in contingency tables. Understand that multivariate analysis examines the relationships among several variables.

Class Attendance/Participation

This class is a fully online course; there are no class meetings. However, I want you to introduce yourself to all of us. This "Introduction" is a chance for you to 'meet' your colleagues in the class and an opportunity to introduce yourself to your professor. You are also expected to log into the class at the earliest opportunity to check the class website every day for announcements. All assignments and examinations are to be completed online no later than the final due dates for each assignment. If you have questions regarding the reading material, assignments, quizzes, and exams, you e-mail me.

Weekly Assignments (10 Points Each)

Assignments will be given each week. The assignments will be posted on Blackboard and you will have the whole week to complete the assignment. I believe that the assignments help students in a great way to develop a deeper perspective towards the course topic and they also improve students' achievement. The due dates for the assignments will be Sunday 11:59 PM every week.

Weekly Quizzes (10 Points Each)

You will take a quiz for every week to measure the knowledge of the week's required readings. The questions will be posted Friday 1:00 PM and due date will be Sunday 11:59 PM every week.

Midterm Exam (100 Points)

There will be a midterm exam which will cover the assigned chapters and other relevant material covered in the course up to the date of the examination. The midterm exam is worth 100 points. No make-up test will be given, unless an uncontrollable emergency or illness arises (written proof required).

Final Paper - Research Proposal (300 Points)

This course is specifically designed on issues regarding the research process and one of the first steps of conducting a research is to write a research proposal. In general a research proposal describes planned activities. In this class you will write a research proposal on any topic you are interested in criminal justice.

There will be 3 major steps in this assignment. First you will write an annotated bibliography (100 points), then the literature review (100 points) and finally the research proposal (100 points). You can find detailed information about these three topics in the required books. A detailed guide for the steps to complete this assignment will also be added to the Blackboard.

A plagiarism detection software (SafeAssign) is used in this course. SafeAssign will detect and report all instances of plagiarism including where the student copied and pasted directly from a source. Students will receive a grade of "0" in these instances, and possibly fail the course. All of your assignments in this class will be submitted through SafeAssign.

Some Useful Websites for Research Data

- 1- U.S. Census Bureau <https://www.census.gov/data.html>
- 2- The General Social Survey <http://gss.norc.umd.edu/get-the-data/spss>
- 3- Cornell University ROPER Center for Public Opinion Research <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/>
- 4- SDA: Survey Documentation and Analysis <http://sda.berkeley.edu/index.html>
- 5- ICPSR, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu>
- 6- The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>
- 7- FBI The Uniform Crime Reports <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr>
- 8- The Police Data Initiative <https://www.policedatainitiative.org/>
- 9- DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics <https://www.bjs.gov/>
- 10- National Comorbidity Survey (NCS) <https://www.hcp.med.harvard.edu/ncs/>
- 11- UMass. Amherst <https://guides.library.umass.edu/c.php?g=672421&p=4735755>

Recommended Video Website for Research Methods

“Against All Odds” is an excellent video resource series for students who want to understand and deepen their knowledge on research methods and basic statistical techniques. The videos may be watched at: <https://www.learner.org/resources/series65.html#>

Academic Integrity

Sul Ross State University students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the “Sul Ross Student Code of Conduct.” Student Code of Conduct, Responsibilities, Procedures, and Rights are found in the University website.

Sul Ross State University and the instructor of this course both place a high priority on the academic integrity of their student scholars. As a result, all institutional guidelines and instructional policies concerning academic integrity will be strictly and uniformly enforced with all students regardless of context.

Academic integrity includes, but is not limited to, the following activities: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, obtaining an unfair advantage, and falsifying academic records. In addition, academic dishonesty can include both actions and omissions to act in regards to academic exercises and activities.

Cheating is defined here as:

the obtaining of information (electronic or otherwise) during an examination, the unauthorized use of books, notes, or other sources of information prior to or during an examination, the unauthorized use of books, the removal of faculty examination materials, the alteration of documents or records, or actions identifiable as occurring with the intent to defraud or use under false pretenses.

Collusion is defined here as:

helping other students engage in acts of academic dishonesty, whether the student involved obtains any direct academic advantage from these acts.

Plagiarism is defined here as:

the submission of the ideas, words, or artistic productions of another, without giving due credit or when attempting to falsely represent them as one’s own.

APA Style

This course will use the American Psychological Association (APA) Seventh Edition formatting and style guide for all written assignments. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of APA a number of resources have been provided below. Please note that all external sources must be appropriately cited. A failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and is a violation the course academic honesty standards. Beside numerous online sources you can also visit the following link for help with APA https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html.

Student Support Services and Blackboard Help Desk

Sul Ross State University has established a variety of programs to help students meet the challenges of college life. Support to students includes advising, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and writing assistance. For a complete list of academic support services, visit the Student Support Services at <https://www.sulross.edu/section/311/student-support-services>. For more information, students are encouraged to contact SSS at (432) 837-9118 or visit Ferguson Hall Room 105. For Blackboard help visit <https://www.sulross.edu/bb> or call (432) 837-8523 (M-F 09:00 am-06:00 pm).

Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, such as online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires 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. You can get The Distance Education Handbook at <https://tvpb.sulross.edu/start/index.html>.

Students with Special Needs - Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA)

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the Student's responsibility to initiate a request. Please contact me, Ms. Rebecca Greathouse Wren, M.Ed., LPC-S, Director/Counselor, Accessibility Services Coordinator, Ferguson Hall (Suite 112) at 432.837.8203; mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Students should then contact the instructor as soon as possible to initiate the recommended accommodations.

Late Assignment Submission Policy

Students are supposed to finish their coursework on time and assignments must be submitted before the deadlines. In principle, I do not accept late work and do not believe in allowing students to turn in work after the due date. My position is that everyone knows the rules of engagement at the beginning of the term and that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to submit their assignments and take their exams in a timely manner.

If an assignment/exam is missed or late the students are expected to show an appropriate cause for this issue. Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is an excuse that is recognized by the university. Students are encouraged to frequently review the syllabus and remain aware of the deadlines for all assignments and exams.

Grading

Every week there will be a quiz for the related chapter. Each quiz is worth 10 points. The total points will be 120 for all quizzes. Weekly reaction papers is worth 10 points each. The total points for reactions papers will be 130. The Midterm is worth 100 points. There will be no makeup exams. Your final paper (research proposal) is worth 300 points.

1 Midterm Exam	100 points
12 Weekly Quizzes	120 points (10 points each)
13 Weekly Assignments	130 points (10 points each)
1 Final Paper (Research Proposal)	300 points
Total	650 points

Final Grading Scale

A 650 - 585

B 584 - 520

C 519 - 455

D 454 - 390

F 389 & below

End of Course Evaluations

Student evaluations of faculty are administered online at the end of each term/session for all courses with five or more students. Students will receive an email containing a link to a survey for each course in which they are enrolled. All responses are anonymous.

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings
1	January 13 - 17	Introduction of Syllabus and course requirements	Course syllabus & Maxfield and Babbie - Introduction
2	January 20 - 24	Crime, Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 1 Assignment 1 & Quiz 1
3	January 27 - 31	Foundations of Criminal Justice Research	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 2 Assignment 2 & Quiz 2
4	February 3 - 7	Ethics and Criminal Justice Research	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 3 Assignment 3 & Quiz 3
5	February 10 - 14	General Issues in Research Design	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 4 Assignment 4 & Quiz 4
6	February 17 - 21	Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 5 Assignment 5 & Quiz 5
7	February 24 - 28	Measuring Crime ***Annotated Bibliography is Due***	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 6 Assignment 6 & Quiz 6
8	March 2 - 6	***Midterm Exam***	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 7 Assignment 7
---	March 10 - 12	Spring Break, No classes, University Closed	
9	March 16 - 20	Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 8 Assignment 8 & Quiz 7
10	March 23 - 27	Sampling	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 9 Assignment 9 & Quiz 8
11	March 30 - April 3	Survey Research ***Literature Review is Due***	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 10 Assignment 10 & Quiz 9
12	April 6 - 10	Qualitative Interviewing	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 11 Assignment 11 & Quiz 10
13	April 13 - 17	Field Observation	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 12 Assignment 12 & Quiz 11
14	April 20 - 24	Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 13 Assignment 13 & Quiz 12
15	April 27 - 29 April 30 May 1	Interpreting Data Dead Day Final Examinations	Maxfield & Babbie - Ch. 14
16	May 4 - 6	Final Examinations - Research Proposal is due	

****Syllabus is subject to updates and changes by announcement, always look to the course announcements and reminders for updates. The faculty member reserves the right to amend this syllabus as needed****