Criminal Justice Research Methods
Winter, 2010
302-001

Professor: Dr. Elaine Gunnison, Ph.D.       TA: Courtney Butchard: butchard@seattleu.edu
Office Location: Casey 328
Office Phone: 296-2430
Office Hours: T & TH: 12:05 p.m.-1:30 p.m. or by appt.
E-mail: gunnisone@seattleu.edu
Web Address: http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/gunnisone/web/index.html
Class Location: PIGT 207
Class Time: 1:30 p.m. - 3:35 p.m. (T, TH)

I. Course Description:
   The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of the methods and measures used in criminal justice research. Students will learn about theory construction, data collection, sampling procedures, research designs, and how crime is measured. Students will also learn how to evaluate research performed by others and to design a simple research study, making note of research issues such as internal validity, external validity, and causal inference. Finally, students will be introduced to computer data analysis using SPSS.

II. Course Goals:

1) To learn the steps involved in conducting social science research.

2) To become familiar with the various types of research and to discuss the strengths and limitations of each.

3) To gain experience designing a research project, collecting data, analyzing the findings, and reporting the results in the form of a research paper.

4) To identify library resources that can assist in locating social science research literature.

5) To recognize the importance that research has in policy development.

6) To appreciate the need to conduct ethical research as well as discern what ethical research is.

7) To develop critical thinking skills by analyzing research in criminal justice as well as your own research.

8) To improve writing and computer skills through frequent in-class and take-home assignments.

9) To improve oral communication skills through working with others in a group setting and participating in an in-class presentation.
III. **Required Texts:**


**Assigned Readings:** Will be e-mailed to you in .pdf format.

IV. **Course Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1/5  | T   | Introduction Science, Society, & Research | Chapter 1 *(B & S)*  
Chapter 3 *(Dowdall et al.)* |
| 1/7  | TH  | Process & Problems of Research | Chapter 2 *(B & S)* |
| 1/12 | T   | Conceptualization & Measurement *Lab Exercise #1 Due* | Chapter 3 *(B & S)*  
Chapter 1, 3-4 *(Dowdall et al.)* |
| 1/14 | TH  | Sampling *Group Project Phase I Materials Due* | Chapter 4 *(B & S)*  
Chapter 5-6 *(Dowdall et al.)* |
| 1/19 | T   | Sampling *Lab Exercise #2 Due* | Chapter 4 *(B & S)*  
Chapter 5-6 *(Dowdall et al.)* |
| 1/21 | TH  | Causation & Experimental Designs | Chapter 5 *(B & S)* |
| 1/26 | T   | Causation & Experimental Designs | Chapter 5 *(B & S)* |
| 1/28 | TH  | Causation & Experimental Designs *Lab Exercise #3 Due* | Chapter 6 *(B & S)* |
| 2/2  | T   | *Group Research Project Time* | |
| 2/4  | TH  | MID-TERM | None |
| 2/9  | T   | Survey Research *Group Project Phase II Materials Due* | Chapter 7 *(B & S)* |
| 2/11 | TH  | Survey Research | Chapter 7 *(B & S)* |
**This schedule is subject to change due to unforeseen scheduling conflicts or the speed at which we move through the material. I will notify you of any changes.**

V. **Grading Policy:**

1) **Exams:**
   - There will be 2 exams administered throughout the quarter (covering both the lecture and the readings) for a total of **165 points** (mid-term=65 points, final=100 points). All exams will be closed-book and will consist of short-answer essay, multiple choice, matching, true/false, and problem-solving questions. The final exam will be cumulative. Any student arriving ten minutes after the exam has been distributed will not be allowed to take the exam and must complete a make-up exam at a later date which will be considerably more difficult than the original exam administered. *No additional make-up exams will be administered unless you can produce documentation of your own illness or death of a family member. Make-up exams will be given during the last week of the course (no exceptions).*

2) **In-Class Assignments:**
   - Throughout the quarter, there will be multiple in-class assignments that you are expected to work on by yourself and sometimes with other students in the class. It is expected that you complete the in-class assignment during the class time and participate in the class discussion regarding the assignment. I will randomly call on students to receive their input and may call upon students to demonstrate a portion of the assignment in front of the class. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain the in-class assignment for your practice and review. Please do **not** ask for a copy of the in-class assignment if you...
miss class as it will not be made available to you. Participation and completion of the assignments is worth 35 points.

3) **Lab Assignments:**

There will be five lab assignments that will be distributed throughout the quarter. You are to work on the assignments by yourself and the assignments are due within one week. The assignments are designed to reinforce class concepts and provide an opportunity for students to practice research techniques outside the classroom. Each lab assignment is worth 20 points for a total of 100 points. The assignments are due in class and should NOT be submitted in my office mailbox or underneath my office door. A detailed handout will be provided with each assignment approximately 1–1.5 weeks before the assignment is due. If you miss class, you will be able to find the assignment on the course website.

4) **Group Research Project:**

At the beginning of the quarter, I will randomly assign students into groups to work on research project that will cumulate into a 15-20 page research paper and a 20 minute oral presentation of the research on March 9, 2010 or March 11, 2010. This project is worth a total of 100 points. A detailed handout will be provided to students regarding the specific requirements of the project.

When possible, I will provide some class time for groups to work on their projects. However, it is expected that you will work on your group projects outside of class. It is expected that all group members contribute to the project at hand. Those members who do not participate in the project (e.g., failing to turn in a piece of work to the group, failing to meet with group members at assigned dates and times, failing to return phone calls or e-mails of group members, etc.) will have their final grade on the project lowered. Please note that all students will be completing evaluations of group members' contributions at the end of the quarter.

5) **Quizzes:**

At random class meetings throughout the quarter, I will administer short quizzes during the first 7 minutes of class. If you miss the quiz, you will not be allowed to make it up regardless of why you may have missed class. If you walk into class after the quiz has been administered, you will also not be allowed to make up the quiz. At the end of the quarter, I will drop your lowest quiz score and then calculate a mean score. The mean score on your quizzes will be converted into points (rounded to the nearest whole number) and added to your final grade earned in the class. Thus, if you average a 70 on your quizzes, 7 points will be added to your final grade. This will serve as the only opportunity for you to earn extra credit in the course.

6) **Class Attendance:**

In order for you to perform well in this course, your attendance and participation is extremely important and mandatory. **If you miss more than four classes, you will be asked to withdraw from the course. This is a departmental policy!** It is also my expectation that you attend class for the entire session. If you arrive late to class or leave early, you WILL be counted as missing a full day of class. I do NOT give credit for attending class for half of the session. Please make note of this policy and do not ask me to make any exceptions to this. There are no "excused" or "un-excused" absences. Thus, I do not differentiate between a legitimate reason for missing class (ex. a death in the family, work conflict) from a non-substantial reason for missing class (ex. I need to miss class so that I can take a cruise to the Bahamas). Therefore, do not ask me to make any exceptions to the four missed class day policy.
7) **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty in the form of cheating (e.g., looking at another’s exam or using a crib sheet) or plagiarism (i.e., copying word for word from an author without quoting that author or paraphrasing an author without citing the author) will result in you automatically failing the course.

8) **Grade Breakdown:**

Total of 400 points possible

- 372 - 400 points = A
- 360 - 371 points = A-
- 344 - 359 points = B+
- 332 - 343 points = B
- 320 - 331 points = B-
- 304 - 319 points = C+
- 292 - 303 points = C
- 280 - 291 points = C-
- 268 - 279 points = D+
- 252 - 267 points = D
- 240 - 251 points = D-
- 239 points or below = F

There are no extra credit opportunities besides the quizzes. Please do not ask for any additional extra credit options!

VI. **Disruptive Behavior:**

1) Do not make a habit of coming to class late. It is not only disruptive to me, but it interferes with the concentration of students in the class. **Note:** It is your responsibility to get to class on time.

2) It is expected that students will be attentive during class and participate in class discussions. **It is also expected that students will stay for the entire class session.** (i.e., no sleeping, working on assignments for other classes, reading books)

3) Turn off cell phones and beepers before coming to class.

4) Do not ask me for my lecture notes. They are not available.

**The first time such behaviors occur a warning will be issued to the student. The second time a student disrupts the class, he/she will receive a written warning specifying the nature of the behavior and the dates of its occurrence. A copy of this notice will be provided for Department Records. If the student is disruptive a third time, procedures will be initiated to have the student dropped from the class.**

VII. **Computer Rules:**

During this course, we will use the computer often for in-class exercises. My rules, are as follows, for computer usage:

1) When class begins (at the start or after break), monitors on the computers are to be turned off.

2) Monitors are not to be turned on until I give you the "okay" to turn them on.

3) When working on in-class exercises, you are NOT to surf the net, check e-mails, etc.

4) While students on working on in-class exercises, I will randomly check on students to determine if they are indeed working on the task and not using the computer for any other purpose than the task at hand.

5) Be aware that if you break the rules, you will automatically lose 5 points (for every instance) from your final course grade. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please do not appeal to me to change my mind…it will NOT happen!
VIII. **Special Note:**

It is my goal to provide you with a positive and rewarding learning experience. In working towards this goal, I think we will have some fun learning and discussing research methods in criminal justice. If at any time you feel confused or overwhelmed by any of the material covered in class, please meet with me, and I will do my best to get you back on track.

IX. **Disclaimer Statement:**

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an ‘invisible disability’ such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process. You may also visit their website at [www.seattleu.edu/student/lc/index.htm](http://www.seattleu.edu/student/lc/index.htm).