CRIJ 4341_590 Understanding Criminal Justice Research

Fall 2020
Dr. George J. Day,
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice; Department of Government

Office: LAN Room 108         Office Phone: (936) 468-3948          email: daygj@sfasu.edu

Office Hours:
• Monday-Friday mornings      9:00 am – 10:30 am
  https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/96498778077?pwd=YoYxRi0wUGZwR3F5SD1NeHVpaCq1UT09
• Monday-Thursday afternoons   2:00 pm – 3:30 pm
  https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/91867336863?pwd=RU56bFpoVWIodnZoWGJLYnpES21UT09

Students may meet with me either face-to-face (f2f) or by Zoom for office hours. If meeting with me by Zoom, make sure you use the correct link for morning or afternoon office hours. During office hours, I will have a Zoom meeting open for students to meet with me. When logging into the Zoom meeting, you will be in a virtual waiting room. If I am meeting with another student, I will be notified that you are waiting and will admit you to the Zoom meeting as soon as I finish with the student meeting with me. If you wish to meet with me f2f, you are required to wear a mask/face-covering in accordance with the SFA president’s directives and Texas governor’s mandatory mask order.

Required textbook:


Recommended textbook:


Course Protection and Intellectual Property
My personal work contained in this syllabus, the course calendar, and all handouts and assignments created by me are my intellectual property and are protected by law. You do not have authorization to duplicate any part of the work without my permission.

Course Description:
An Introduction to research methods in criminal justice. It will begin with basic intuition and curiosity and will lead students through the process of creating, understanding and interpreting research. This course is writing enhanced.

CJS 441 Understanding Criminal Justice Research (3 credits) is an upper-level fully online course that occurs over the course of 16 weeks. Students are required to complete weekly reading quizzes which are hosted online through Brightspace and require 30 minutes each to complete. The course also includes a comprehensive final exam hosted on Brightspace which requires one hour to complete. Students will have significant weekly reading assignments and will be required to complete a 10-15 page research proposal facilitated through a series of assignments throughout the semester. Students will spend an average of six hours each week in the completion of assigned work and preparation for in-class sessions.
Program Learning Objectives:
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of the purposes and operation of the major components of the criminal justice system, and the student will be able to critically analyze the criminal justice system and its aims and outcomes.
- The student will demonstrate a fundamental understanding of human behavior from a historical, criminological and sociological perspectives that influence the development of criminological theory and the application of theory to justice administration.
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of legal and/or social science research and will apply professional standards of writing and research to criminal justice issues.
- The student will demonstrate an awareness of multicultural and ethical issues in criminal justice, and will use ethical reasoning to formulate decisions and promote positive organizational and professional trust.

Student Learning Objectives: By completing this course, students should be able to:
- Explain the methods and ethical issues related to the study of crime patterns and criminal behavior.
- Develop operational definitions of concepts and measurement for the purpose of criminological research.
- Conduct experimental and quasi-experimental research utilizing appropriate sampling techniques and survey design.
- Demonstrate the basic processes used for program evaluation research related to criminal justice agencies.

“Attendance” Policy:
Since this is an online course, attendance is not relevant. Students who wish to be successful in this course, however, should log on to the course at least 3-4 times a week, complete all assignments, and make use of the professor’s office hours while creating their research proposal.

Grading Policy
Final course grades will be assessed on the following scale:
- “A” 90-100% Chapter quizzes: 20% of grade
- “B” 80-89% Mid-term & Final exam: 20% of grade
- “C” 70-79% Assignments: 40% of grade
- “D” 60-69% Research proposal: 20% of grade
- “F” 0-59%

Required Course Work:
- Quizzes & Exams:
  - Chapter Quizzes: Each week, there will be a quiz associated with the chapter being studied in class that week. Students All quizzes are hosted on D2L/Brightspace. Students will be allowed up to four attempts at each quiz as long as a minimum grade threshold is met on each attempt. Note: students are required to complete at least one quiz attempt each week before being allowed to access other course material for the week.
Mid-term & Final exam: At the end of the semester, there will be a comprehensive final exam hosted on D2L/Brightspace. The final exam will utilize the same format as the chapter quizzes (and the same testbank).

- note: Students who earn a 90% or better average on the quizzes for chapters 1-5 & 7 will be exempt from the mid-term exam (the quiz average will be used as the mid-term exam grade). Students who earn a 90% or better average on the quizzes for chapters 8-13 will be exempt from the final exam (the quiz average for those quizzes will be used for the final exam grade).

Assignments: Students will be expected to complete two content assignments each week related to course material. Due dates and instructions for each assignment are available on the course calendar and with each week’s instructional material. Assignments names are title by week and assignment number. Hence the first assignment from week 2 is entitled W2A1.

Research proposal: Each student will produce a research proposal during the semester. More details regarding this project can be found on D2L/Brightspace.

Incomplete course work: Late assignments will not be accepted will not be permitted without approval obtained from the instructor based on extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to: military deployment, religious holidays/observances, court appearances, jury duty, family emergencies, personal or immediate family illness, or participation in student athletics or other university-approved activity.

Please note the following course policies regarding course work missed as a result of absences:

- Students who miss exams because of participation in student athletics or other university-approved activities will be permitted to take a make-up exam at the professor’s convenience. Such students will also be allowed to make up assignments given or completed in class on the day of the approved absence.

- Students who miss assignments for reasons other than student athletics or other university-approved activities will need to provide acceptable documentation of the absence. Acceptable documentation includes, but is not limited to: notices from doctors/medical providers on official stationery that include the date(s) of illness; published obituaries that include the date of funeral services; a copy of military orders; or a copy of jury duty summons or other judicial document supporting a court appearance.

- Requests for late submission of assignments must be made in person (or via Zoom) during regular office hours. The professor will ignore such requests made by email.

We will not be held to account for how others treated us, but by how we treat others. — Dr. George J. Day

Conduct: While the 1st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects each individual’s freedom of expression, freedom of speech is NOT an absolute right. Students who express themselves in a way that belittles, insults, bullies, or otherwise attempts to make another person feel like they are less human than another will be held accountable for their inappropriate conduct. Discussion boards are intended for polite, reasoned discussion between mature adults on topics relevant to the course. There will be consequences for being a bully, insulting or belittling another, or being mean and hateful. Students violating this policy will be given one opportunity to apologize publically. Those that refuse to apologize or continue to disrespect, bully, or harass others in the class will be removed from the course with a grade of F.
Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in the act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism include (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Consequences: Students who, by a preponderance of the evidence as judged by the professor, engage in academic dishonesty or plagiarism may face the any or all of the following at the discretion of the professor: (1) receive a grade of zero on the relevant assignment or exam or (2) receive a grade of zero for the course.

Disabled Student Policy:
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Course Withdrawal and Withheld Grades:
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. The last day to drop the course with a grade of W is 21 October 2020.
The university administration is requiring faculty to include the following in all syllabi. Obviously this statement does not apply this course since it is being taught online.

**COVID-19 MASK POLICY** Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.