CRIJ 4341 Understanding Criminal Justice Research

Spring 2024

Dr. George J. Day
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Class Hours & Location: Ferguson 471 / MWF @ 9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.
Zoom link for the virtual classroom: https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/92879866212?pwd=L0VZUGRkTEF4cTdPdWt0cjdSEViUT09

Office Hours:
- Mondays & Wednesdays: 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
- Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9:30 am – 11:30 am
- Friday: by appointment only

Office hours are available face-to-face or by Zoom at the following link:
https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/97138538584?pwd=NTlkcnhnNWmEvN3lBVVlEdHI1Tzk1dz09

When logging into the Zoom meeting, you may be placed in a virtual waiting room if I meet with another student. I will be notified that you are waiting and will admit you when it is your turn to meet with me.

Required textbook:

Recommended textbook/resource:

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 the 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.

CRIJ 4341 Understanding Criminal Justice Research (3 credits) is an upper-level course that occurs over the course of 15 weeks. The course includes comprehensive mid-term and final exams hosted on Brightspace which requires one hour to complete. Students will have significant weekly reading and written assignments and will be required to complete a research proposal facilitated through a series of assignments throughout the semester. Students will spend an average of six hours each week completing assigned work and preparing for in-class sessions.

Program Learning Objectives:

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1 When logging into the Zoom meeting, you may be placed in a virtual waiting room if I meet with another student. I will be notified that you are waiting and will admit you when it is your turn to meet with me.
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 measurements 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.

Course Engagement (formerly “attendance”) Policy:
This class utilizes a HyFlex modality which means that students have the freedom to choose how they wish to engage or interact with the course throughout the semester. Furthermore, students can change how they interact with the course at any time. See the “Required Course Work” section of the syllabus to learn more about my expectations for student engagement with the course.

Students taking a HyFlex class are expected to manage their schedules and decide which means of engaging or interacting with the course best fits their learning style and personal schedules. Students will have been considered to have “attended” class at least once for financial aid purposes if they have, during the first 12 class days, either (a) attended at least one class session f2f or via video conference (Zoom) or (b) submitted at least one assignment/quiz or participated in at least one online discussion.

Institution Absences (HOP 04-110)
An Institutional Absence may be granted to a student who participates as a representative of the University in academic (including research), extra- or cocurricular, or athletic activities. Students will be excused for institutional purposes from otherwise required academic activity only when a valid Institutional Absence is approved by the appropriate administrative unit or official and the documentation of approval is provided to the faculty member at least five (5) days in advance.

Institutional absences will not be approved for keystone events, defined as: a special or unique assignment, test, project, experience, or other academic exercise identified by the Faculty member as critical for successful completion of standards of the class and unable to be missed. These events must be identified on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and communicated to the students. Events added to the syllabus at a later date will not qualify for Keystone Event status. Keystone Events where the date/time is changed will no longer be considered a Keystone Event. Students should make themselves aware of any Keystone Events identified in the syllabus to ensure there are no conflicts.

For keystone events where the assignment dates vary, it is incumbent upon the students to work with their faculty member to not select a conflicting date.

Incomplete course work: the submission of assignments or exams after they are due 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.

Students who miss assignments for reasons other than 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. If you become ill, visit a medical professional and obtain a work excuse (many doctors and physician assistances will ask you if you need one, the correct answer is “yes”).

More information on Institutional Absences, including how to apply, can be found at https://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents/student-resources/institutional-absences.

Grading Policy
Final course grades will be assessed on the following scale:

- **“A”** 90-100% Assignments: 30% of overall grade
- **“B”** 80-89% Research proposal drafts 10% of overall grade
- **“C”** 70-79% Research Proposal: 10% of overall grade
- **“D”** 60-69% Exams (2): 40% of overall grade
- **“F”** 0-59%

Required Course Work:
- **Assignments:** Students will be expected to complete one assignment each unit related to course material. Many of the weekly assignments are designed as preparation work for the research proposal. Due dates and instructions for each assignment are available on the course calendar and with each unit.
- **Mid-term & Final exam:** During the semester students will complete a mid-term and a final exam. The exams may include multiple choice, true-false, matching, or short answer/essay items.
- **Research proposal:** Each student will produce a research proposal during the semester. Drafts of portions of the proposal will be due throughout the semester and many assignments are directly tied to sections of the proposal’s methodology. More details regarding this project can be found on D2L/Brightspace.

A note on assignment feedback: For many assignments, I will attach a file containing feedback such as corrections, comments, and suggested edits/revisions. These files cannot be accessed from D2L’s gradebook, rather they are accessed through the dropbox tab instead.

**Conduct:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn and participate in the course. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.

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2 Immediate family is defined for this purpose as a student’s parent or grandparents (by blood or marriage), spouses, children, siblings.
3 Note that documentation related to medical or mental health issues do not need to provide details of specific diagnoses (in fact, I would prefer that they do not), they need mere need to verify that you are or were under a doctor’s care and the dates of the absence.
4 I operate under a principle of “trust but verify”; a good philosophy to adopt when you work in the criminal justice field.
Rules of the Classroom

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. 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\(^5\) publicly. 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.

Grades are not given; they are earned. I do not offer or entertain requests for extra credit. I do not round grades. Do not ask; you may assume the answer will be “no.”

The tentative class schedule is a general guide. Coverage of the material may be accelerated, decelerated, rearranged, augmented, diminished, or otherwise modified when the professor believes such change would be to the benefit of the class.

This syllabus will act as the final word in the event of a discrepancy, error, or misunderstanding. Make sure you read and understand it completely—and make sure you keep a copy for reference during the semester.

Academic Integrity

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

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\(^5\) A proper apology includes (at a minimum), (1) a recognition of the harmful act and the harm caused by that act and (2) a commitment to not repeat the harmful behavior in the future. ‘Apologies’ that are used as microaggressions are unacceptable.
Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

*Academic Integrity and the Use of AI*
All submitted work, including assignments, papers, discussion posts, and exams, must be the original work of the individual student unless explicitly stated otherwise. The use of AI technology, such as ChatGPT, is not permitted (see Policy Number 10.4, Article VI [vi]). While AI can be a useful and helpful tool, it is not an acceptable substitute for real scholarship.

*Academic Integrity and Background Investigations*
Students who wish to work for a state or federal criminal justice agency should keep in mind that background investigators frequently talk to people who know an applicant but are not on that applicant’s reference list (such as professors). If I determine that a student has violated this academic integrity policy and that determination is confirmed through a due process hearing conducted by the Dean of Student Affairs, that student’s lack of integrity will be the first thing I tell an investigator about them.

*Students with Disabilities:*
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/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

*Student Wellness and Well-Being*
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
*The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)*
[www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

*SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202*
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

*The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”*
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.
To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Withheld Grades Policy:
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 coursework 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 to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.
**Class Schedule** – subject to change at instructor’s discretion; All assignments are due by midnight on the last day of a unit unless otherwise indicated on D2L/Brightspace (all times CST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
<th>Assignments (due dates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1 Jan 19-27</td>
<td>Beginning the Journey</td>
<td>Ch. 1-2</td>
<td>Assignment #1 (1/27/24) Research proposal assignment #1 (1/27/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2 Jan 29-Feb 3</td>
<td>Ethics of Research</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
<td>Assignment #2 (2/3/24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 3 Feb. 5-10</td>
<td>Causality</td>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
<td>Assignment #3 (2/10/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4 Feb. 12-17</td>
<td>Operationalization of Variables</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
<td>Assignment #4 (2/17/2024) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5 Feb. 19-24</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
<td>Assignment #5 (2/24/24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 6 Feb. 26-Mar 2</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
<td>Assignment #6 (3/2/24) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 Mar. 4-9</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
<td>Assignment #7 (4/9/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 8 Mar. 18-23</td>
<td>Official &amp; Secondary Data</td>
<td>Ch. 12</td>
<td>Research proposal assignment #2 (3/18/24 @ 8:00 am) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam Mar. 25-27</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: 11:59 pm, March 27, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 9 Apr. 1-6</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Ch. 10</td>
<td>Research proposal assignment #3 (4/6/24) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 10 Apr 8-13</td>
<td>Field Research</td>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
<td>Research proposal assignment #4 (4/13/24)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 11 Apr 15-20</td>
<td>Program Evaluation / Presenting results</td>
<td>Ch. 13</td>
<td>Assignment #10 (4/13/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 12 Apr 22-May 4</td>
<td>Presentations &amp; Program Completion</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Research Proposal (5/4/24) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: 11:59 pm, May 8, 2024.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates assignments that cannot be accessed by students without an approved topic.