




## **Criminal Justice 100: Introduction to Criminal Justice Research Methods**


**California State University, Sacramento**  
**Division of Criminal Justice**  
**Spring, 2009**

**Instructor:** Dr. Yvette Farmer  
**Office:** Alpine Hall, Room 103  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday 4:30 – 6:00 pm  
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### **Required Readings**

-  Maxfield, M.G. & Babbie, E. (2007). Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology (Fifth Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
-  Brinkley, S. (2007). Study Guide: Maxfield & Babbie's Research Methods For Criminal Justice and Criminology (Fifth Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
-  Additional readings may be assigned by your instructor

### **Recommended Reading**

-  APA Style Manual (published in 2004 or later)

### **Course Description**

The current CSUS catalog description for this course reads as follows:

Introduction to research methodologies used in the social sciences, with a special emphasis on those methods most often used in the study of crime and criminal behavior, police/court systems, and correctional institutions, policies, and programs. Students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, critically analyze and assess descriptive and quantitative research studies. Topics include the roles of theory and ethics in research, hypothesis testing, and research design.

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the criminal justice research process. Students will be instructed on the specific methods and techniques of research in the field of criminal justice and criminology. Major topics include the relationship between theory and research; the nature of causation; research designs and techniques; conceptualization and measurement; operationalization; sampling; basic descriptive statistics; obtaining criminal justice data and other information on the Internet; and ethical issues in research. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the basics of research methods, as well as the application of these methods to examples in the criminal justice system. Knowledge of these methods should assist students in becoming better consumers of research and literature in their field, and give them the basic knowledge they need to actively participate in evaluation and planning efforts conducted within their future career placements.

<b>Course Objectives</b>
<b>Objective 1:</b> Use research terminology appropriately and apply research-related concepts to the field of criminal justice.
<b>Objective 2:</b> Understand the relationship between theory and research including familiarity with the issues and process of theory construction.
<b>Objective 3:</b> Recognize a wide variety of research techniques and design issues that are relevant to the Criminal Justice field.
<b>Objective 4:</b> Identify ethical obstacles and dilemmas encountered in the process of research and develop an appreciation for ethical research.
<b>Objective 5:</b> Interpret and critically appraise research literature to develop an ability to discriminate between “good” and “bad” research.

### **Course Requirements**

This course meets at one of the following days/time:

<u>Course # (Section)</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Time</u>
31937 (7)	T & Th	1:30pm – 2:45 pm
31938 (8)	T & Th	3:00 pm – 4:15 pm

Although attendance is not mandatory, it is highly recommended. Attendance will be monitored and used as a measure of your effort in this class. The material presented in class will be related to the readings, but should extend your knowledge beyond the information presented in your text. ALL material presented in class - e.g., lectures, videos, exercises, etc. (as well as your assigned reading material and homework assignments) will be subject to examination. For this reason, you should identify at least two other people in this class that you can rely upon for missed notes/assignments and announcements should you have to miss a class.

There will be several quizzes based on your reading(s) worth 26% of your final grade. Each quiz is worth a possible 10 or 20 points for a possible total of 130 course points. All quizzes will consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions. Dates and point values for each quiz are indicated below. If you miss a quiz, that particular quiz cannot be made up (see section on make-ups).

You will also be required to complete two homework assignments worth 24% of your final grade. Each homework assignment is worth a possible 60 points for a possible total of 120 course points. All homework assignments are due at the **BEGINNING** of class on the dates indicated in this syllabus. Assignments that are received after that time will be considered **LATE** and will NOT receive full credit.

You will also be required to complete in-class exercises. Participation in this activity will be recorded and used, in part, as another measure of your effort in this course.

Finally, there will be three exams and a final exam worth 50% of your final grade. Each exam is worth a possible 50 points and the final exam is worth a possible 100 points for a total of 250 course points. The first three exams may consist of true/false, multiple-choice, and short-answer essay questions. The final exam is cumulative and will consist of true/false and multiple choice questions only.

You will need Answer Sheet form no. 4521 for each quiz and exam.

Class sessions will be conducted according to a lecture-discussion format. You are responsible for **reading the assigned material prior to class and then participating in class discussions of that material.** I believe that one of the most important ways to learn about research methods is through interaction in an environment of mutual respect. It is our responsibility to create such an environment and you must do your part as follows:

- be punctual—arriving late is disruptive to other students as well as to your instructor
- sit near the door if you must leave early—this will help to minimize class disruption
- turn off cell phones, pagers, and wrist watch alarms in consideration of others (see below for more information)
- be prepared to learn—asking relevant questions may help you and other students learn.

Make sure that your behavior is consistent with CSUS policy – you are advised to review CSUS policies on academic dishonesty, possession of firearms, etc. in your effort to engage in appropriate classroom behavior.

**Cell phone use/activity during class is not permitted—make sure cell phones are turned off while you're in the classroom. Students that violate this policy or engage in other inappropriate classroom behaviors will receive a warning for the first violation and a reduction in the final grade for subsequent violations.**

### Academic Dishonesty

The following information reflects the University policy on academic dishonesty. That policy indicates that academic dishonesty refers to both cheating and plagiarism and includes (but may not be limited to) the following behaviors:

## Cheating

1. Copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other evaluation instrument;
2. Using crib notes, "cheat sheets," or any other device, including electronic devices, in aid of writing the exam not permitted by the instructor;
3. Submitting work previously graded in another course unless doing so has been approved by the course instructor or by department policy;
4. Submitting work simultaneously presented in more than one course, unless doing so has been approved by the respective course instructors or by the department policies of the respective departments;
5. Altering or interfering with grading or grading instructions;
6. Sitting for an examination by a surrogate, or as a surrogate; and
7. Any other act committed by a student in the course of his or her academic work that defrauds or misrepresents, including aiding or abetting in any of the actions defined above.

## Plagiarism

1. The act of incorporating into one's own work the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another's work without giving appropriate credit thereby representing the product as entirely one's own. Examples include not only word-for-word copying, but also the "mosaic" (i.e., interspersing a few of one's own words while, in essence, copying another's work), the paraphrase (i.e., rewriting another's work while still using the other's fundamental idea or theory); fabrication (i.e., inventing or counterfeiting sources), ghost writing (i.e., submitting another's work as your own) and failure to include quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged; and
2. Representing as one's own another's artistic or scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculptures, or similar works.

**Students who engage in cheating or plagiarism will receive zero points for the exam or assignment and may be referred to university authorities for further disciplinary action.**

## Make-ups

If you miss a quiz, a make-up assignment will be given only under severe circumstances (determined by your instructor) provided that you or someone you know has left a message with me prior to or shortly thereafter the missed quiz. The make-up assignment involves some writing and will be worth the same possible point value as the missed quiz. This substitution can only be done for ONE missed quiz.

If you miss an exam or the final exam, a make-up will be given only under severe circumstances (determined by your instructor) and may be entirely ESSAY in format.

### **Grades**

Students will accumulate points for credit earned on each quiz, homework assignment, and exam. Grades will be based upon the total number of points attained in relation to the total points possible for each quiz, homework assignment, and exam. If all students score less than the total points possible, then grades will be based upon the number that represents an equal distance between the total points possible and the highest score attained by any student. Final grades will be assigned according to a plus-minus system.

### **Students with Special Concerns**

Students with disabilities or specific concerns that affect their academic performances are strongly encouraged to see the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

## Tentative Schedule

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
1/27 – 1/29	Introduction to course Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry	Chapter 1
2/3 – 2/5	Quiz (20 points – Ch. 1 & 2) Theory and Criminal Justice Research Library Instruction (2/5) – Lib 2024	Chapter 2
2/10 – 2/12	Theory and Criminal Justice Research (cont.) Quiz (10 points) – <i>Wednesday (2/12)</i> Ethics and Criminal Justice Research	Chapter 3
2/17	Ethics and Criminal Justice Research (cont.)	
2/19	<b>Exam 1 – Chapters 1-3, lectures, &amp; assignments</b>	
2/24 – 2/26	Quiz (10 points) General Issues in Research Design	Chapter 4
3/3 – 3/5	Quiz (10 points) Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	Chapter 5
3/10 – 3/12	Quiz (10 points) Measuring Crime Independent Study (3/12)	Chapter 6
3/17	Measuring Crime (continued) <b><i>Homework Assignment #1 is DUE on 3/17/09</i></b>	
3/19	<b>Exam 2 – Chapters 4-6, lectures, &amp; assignments</b>	
3/24 - 3/26	Quiz (10 points) Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs	Chapter 7
3/31 – 4/2	<b>Spring Recess</b>	

Tentative Schedule (continued)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
4/7 – 4/9	Quiz (10 points) Sampling <b>Homework Assignment #1 Returned</b>	Chapter 8
4/14 – 4/16	Quiz (10 points) Survey Research & Other Ways of Asking Questions	Chapter 9
4/21 – 4/23	Quiz (10 points) Field Research <b>Homework Assignment #2 is DUE on 4/23/09</b>	Chapter 10

4/28	<b>Exam 3</b> – Chapters 7-10, lectures, & assignments
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4/30	Quiz (10 points) Agency Records, Content Analysis, & Secondary Data	Chapter 11
5/5 – 5/7	Quiz (10 points) Agency Records, Content Analysis, & Secondary Data (cont.) Evaluation Research & Policy Analysis	Chapter 12
5/12 – 5/14	Quiz (10 points) Interpreting Data <b>Homework Assignment #2 Returned</b>	Chapter 13

<b>FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE</b>		
<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Final Exam Date (Day)</b>	<b>Final Exam Time</b>
31937	5/21/09 (Thursday)	12:45 – 2:45 pm
31938	5/19/09 (Tuesday)	3:00 – 5:00 pm
<i>Note:</i> The final exam will cover all chapters, lectures, assignments, etc. with special emphasis on chapters 11-13.		