

CCJ5705 Research Methods in Criminology

College of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Florida State University

Fall Semester, 2022

Thursday, 10:00am-12:30pm, Room EPS 0214

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will provide you with graduate-level training in fundamental social research methods as applied to criminology and criminal justice. We will cover a range of topics including the logic of social inquiry, problem formulation and conceptualization; measurement, sampling, and research design; modes of data collection; and the logic and techniques of data analysis. We will also learn about different types of research methods, including experiments, surveys, secondary data analysis, qualitative interviews, historical/comparative research, and ethnography. Being familiar with the methods that social scientists use to conduct research will enable you to understand the significance and the limitations of contemporary social research. Eventually, your critical thinking skills and the knowledge and methods you gain in this class should be combined to help with your own evaluation of the social world and with initiation and execution of valuable research projects of your own.

By the end of this class, students should:

1. Be familiar with the methods used by researchers to investigate social phenomena
2. Be equipped with skills required to conduct basic research and analyze resulting data
3. Be able to critically evaluate findings from studies that are reported by various sources.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice, Author: Ronet D. Bachman and Russell K. Schutt, Publisher: Sage, Edition: 6th, Year Published: 2019, Copyright Year: 2019

Travis Hirschi and Hanan C. Selvin. 1967 [1996]. "Delinquency Research: An Appraisal of Analytic Methods." The Free Press.

James A. Davis. "The Logic of Causal Order." A Sage University Paper.

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Exams

There are two in-class exams during the semester. The exams will not be cumulative. You are required to take the exams at the time they are scheduled. No make-up exams will be given. Each of the exams draws heavily on lectures, assigned readings, and the textbook, so it will be to your advantage to attend class regularly and read the assigned readings.

Research Proposal

Throughout the semester, you will write a research paper that takes the form of a research proposal. You will choose a topic that you would like to study and indicate how you would carry out the research. Specifically, you will complete three assignments throughout the semester. Each of the four assignments is one component of your research proposal (i.e., formulation of research topic/outline, literature review, and data and methods). You are expected to revise each assignment based on the instructor's comments and suggestions upon the submission of your next assignment. Therefore, you will eventually be able to compile these shorter assignments to complete a research proposal, which will be handed in at the end of the class. These papers must be submitted on Canvas by the Thursday midnight (11:59pm). Each submission should be double spaced in Word, using 12-point Times New Roman font, and with one-inch margins. Citations and references should be formatted according to APA style. Pages should be numbered.

Attendance and Class Participation

Participation in this class is defined by regular attendance and engagement in discussions and activities suggested during the class. You are expected to attend classes regularly and to actively participate with questions or comments during lectures. Throughout the semester, there will be several in-class assignments. Some may take the form of group work. In-class discussions and assignments will help you clarify some complicated notions and logic. These in-class discussions and assignments are also important for developing the critical thinking skills that are a crucial component of this class. Taken together, these in-class discussions and assignments will count for 10% of your grade.

DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS

| Assignment | Percent |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Midterm Exam | 25% |
| Final Exam | 30% |
| Research Proposal | 35% |
| Attendance and Participation | 10% |

Your grades will be weighted at the end of the class based on the distribution of points

outlined above. For example,

If you get 93/100 on your Midterm, your score (93) will be multiplied by .25: $93 \times .25 = 23.25$

If you get 89/100 on your Final, your score (89) will be multiplied by .30: $89 \times .30 = 26.70$

If you get an average of 95/100 on your papers, your score (95) will be multiplied by .35:
 $95 \times .35 = 33.25$

If you get 90/100 on your attendance and participation, your score (90) will be multiplied by .10: $90 \times .10 = 9$

The sum of these outcomes will constitute your final grade from this class.

$23.25 + 26.70 + 33.25 + 9 = 92.20$ (92.20 is your final grade from the class)

Letter grades will be determined in the following way:

| | | | |
|----|---------|----|--------|
| A | 94-100% | C | 73-76% |
| A- | 90-93% | C- | 70-72% |
| B+ | 87-89% | D+ | 67-69% |
| B | 83-86% | D | 63-66% |
| B- | 80-82% | D- | 60-62% |
| C+ | 77-79% | F | 0-59% |

UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY

You must attend class each week, complete and return all assignments. There will not be any opportunities for extra credit. Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>)

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Your academic success is a top priority for Florida State University. University resources to help you succeed include tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. The following information is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Dean of Students office to learn more.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet integral requirements of the course. To receive academic accommodations, a student: (1) must register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS); (2) must provide a letter from OAS to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and, (3) should communicate with the instructor, as needed, to discuss recommended accommodations. A request for a meeting may be initiated by the student or the instructor. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Office of Accessibility Services

874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
oas@fsu.edu
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

CONFIDENTIAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

Victim Advocate Program

University Center A, Rm. 4100

(850) 644-7161

Available 24/7/365

Office Hours: M-F 8-5

<https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap>

Counseling and Psychological Services

Askew Student Life Center, 2nd floor

942 Learning Way

(850) 644-8255

<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

University Health Services

Health and Wellness Center

(850) 644-6230

<https://uhs.fsu.edu/>

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

| Date | Topic and Assessment | Reading due |
|-------------|--|---|
| 08/25 | Introduction to Course and Overview | Syllabus |
| 09/01 | Purpose, Functions & Methods of Science | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 1 and 2 Kleck et al. 2006. "What Methods are Frequently used in Research in Criminology and CJ?" |
| 09/08 | The Logic of Causal Order | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 6 (pp. 147-158) Davis. The Logic of Causal Oder (pp.1-26) Hirschi and Selvin, Ch. 3-7 |
| 09/15 | The Logic of Causal Order (cont.) | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 6 (pp. 158-170) Wright et al. 1999. "Reconsidering the Relationship between SES and Delinquency." |
| 09/22 | Problem Selection and Hypothesis Formation (Unit of Analysis; Research Design) Research Proposal: Formulation of Research Topic/Outline Due | Gottfredson and Hirschi. 1987. "The Methodological Adequacy of Longitudinal Research" Menard and Elliott. 2006. "Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional Data Collection and Analysis." Mears et al. 2013. "Code of the Street" |
| 09/29 | Problem Selection and Hypothesis Formation (Unit of Analysis; Research Design) | Dugan. 2010. "Estimating Effects over Time for Single and Multiple Units." Mitchell et al. 2017. "Examining Prison Effects on Recidivism" |
| 10/06 | Midterm Exam | |
| 10/13 | Issues in Measurement (Reliability and Validity; Levels of Measurement); Exam Review | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 4. Goldkamp. 2010. Construct Validity. Pepper, Petire, and Sullivan. 2010. "Measurement Error in Criminal Justice Data." (optional) |
| 10/20 | Reading Tables & Elaboration (Central Tendency, Statistical Inference); Survey Research | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 13 and Ch. 8 |
| 10/27 | Survey Research (cont.) Research Proposal: Literature and Review and Hypotheses Due | Lynch and Addington. 2010. "Identifying and Addressing Response Errors in Self-Report Surveys." Brame, Turner, and Paternoster. 2010. "Missing Data Problems in Criminological Research." Schonlau et al. 2009. "Selection Bias in Web Surveys and the Use of Propensity Scores." |
| 11/03 | Sampling (Probability and Non-Probability Samples; Unobtrusive Measures, Secondary Analysis) | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 5 |
| 11/10 | Experimental Designs | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 7 Sherman. 2010. "An Introduction to Experimental Criminology." Taxman and Rhodes. 2010. "Multisite Trials in CJ Settings." |
| 11/17 | Evaluation Research Research Proposal: Data and Methods Due | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 11 Farrington, Loeber and Welsh. 2010. "Longitudinal-Experimental Studies." |
| 11/24 | Thanksgiving Day Holiday. No classes. | |
| 12/01 | Participant Observation & Qualitative Methods | Bachman and Schutt Ch. 9 |

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| | | Dreby. 2012. "The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families." Mastrofski et al. 2010. "Systematic Social Observation in Criminology" Maruna. 2010. "Mixed Method Research in Criminology" (optional) |
| 12/08 | Final Exam | |

RECOMMENDED BUT NOT REQUIRED:

Blumstein, Alfred and Joel Wallman, eds. 2000. *The Crime Drop in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 8 and 9.

Blalock *Causal Inferences in Nonexperimental Research*

Blalock *Methodology in Social Research*

Coleman, James S. 1986. "Social Theory, Social Research, and a Theory of Action." *American Journal of Sociology* 91: 1309-1335.

Durkheim, Emile [1895] 1982. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. New York: The Free Press

Elliott, Delbert S. and Suzanne S. Ageton. 1980. "Reconciling Race and Class Differences in Self-Reported and Official Measures." *American Sociological Review* 44: 95-110.

Kempf, K. 1990. *Measurement Issues in Criminology*. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Lesley, Noaks and Emma Wincup. 2004. *Criminological Research: Understanding Qualitative Methods*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Lewis-Beck "Applied Regression"

Liska, Allen E. 1990. "The Significance of Aggregate Dependent Variables and Contextual Independent Variables for Linking Macro and Micro Theories." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 53: 292-301.

Mears, Daniel, and Joshua Cochran. 2019. *Fundamentals of Criminological and Criminal Justice Inquiry. The Science and Art of Conducting, Evaluating, and Using Research*

Mosher, Clayton, Terance D. Miethe and Dretha M. Phillips. 2002. *The Mismeasure of Crime*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Nguyen & Loughran 2017. "On the Reliability and Validity of Self-Reported Illegal Earnings"

Piquero & Rosey 1998. "The Reliability and Validity of Grasmick's Scale"

Popper *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*

Shadis, Cook, and Campbell. "Quasi-Experimentation"

Short, James F., Jr. 1985. "The Level of Explanation Problem in Criminology." Chapter 3 in Robert F. Meier, ed. *Theoretical Methods in Criminology*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

----- 1998. "The Level of Explanation Problem Revisited--The American Society of Criminology 1997 Presidential Address." *Criminology* 36: 3-36.

Wadsworth & Roberts 2008. "When Missing Data are not Missing"