

**San José State University, Fall 2009**  
**Department of Justice Studies**  
**JS202 Research Methods, Design, & Evaluation**

**Instructor:** Danielle A Harris PhD  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9-11am; 2-4pm  
**Class Days/Time:** Thursdays 5:30pm – 8:15pm  
**Classroom:** MacQuarrie Hall TBA

**Course Description**

The nature of criminal justice and criminology necessitates a wide range of methodological approaches in both quantitative and qualitative research. This course has three main objectives. The first goal is to review research methods and ensure that students are comfortable with the basic processes of traditional sociological research. This part of the class will expand on JS 105 by introducing the student to a range of different types of research. The second goal is to familiarize the student with the methods of program evaluation and policy analysis. Finally, the class will require the student to participate in a research project in accordance with either of these methods. In the following semester, JS 203 will build upon the foundations provided in this class and focus more specifically on data analysis using statistical techniques.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbooks**

APA (2005 or later) Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association

Berk & Rossi (1998) Thinking About Program Evaluation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Maxfield & Babbie (2006) Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Weiss (1998) Evaluation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

## Other Readings

PDFs of journal articles will be distributed electronically as required.

## Classroom Protocol

### Instructor's Note on Communication

As you know, graduate school is a significant undertaking and requires a high level of commitment, time management, organization, and initiative. Thus, it is in your best interest to stay on top of the readings and keep in touch with the instructor. The best way to keep in touch is in-person during office hours, or at another time by appointment. If you cannot meet with me in person, I prefer that you email me. Emails will be responded to Tuesday through Thursday only. Please include a phone number and availability in all email communication.

## Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, academic renewal, etc. Refer to the current semester's [catalog policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html> for any add/drop deadlines, policies, and procedures section and specific registration information. [Late drop policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

In order to receive a grade for this course, **all** course requirements must be met. Failure to complete any one of them may result in a failing grade for the course.

Deadlines are firm. Late papers will not be accepted and presentations will not be rescheduled (without extenuating personal circumstances due to own or family health; or other university recognized excuse). Plagiarism will not be tolerated on **any** piece of assessment, under any circumstances. Students found to be guilty of plagiarism will be referred to the University's Honor Council.

Attendance and Participation (10%): Critical reading, thinking, and writing involve a number of practical skills. These skills must be practiced to be developed and maintained. Graduate students are expected to keep up with class reading, and to attend all class meetings well prepared to contribute to the classroom exchange of ideas and information. Therefore, attendance and participation is essential in order to pass JS202. This is especially true at the graduate level and is particularly important given that the class meets only once a week.

Article Critiques (20%): Students will be required to critique four existing studies as reported in various journal articles. This will help the student become familiar with the nature of traditional and evaluative research conducted in justice related fields. It will also enable students to practice APA style (writing and referencing) in preparation for

their final papers. Articles have been pre-selected by the instructor and critiques will be due throughout the semester.

Homework Assignments (20%): Students will be required to conduct field observations and exploratory studies including survey and observational research during the semester and report their results.

Research Paper (30%): Students are required to participate in one of five ongoing research projects. This might include traditional sociological research or an evaluation of a local justice related program. Your specific topic and research question must be approved by the instructor by week 4. Students may work individually, or in groups of two or three but remember that the specific focus of the project and final write-up will still need to be completed independently.

Presentation (20%): Students are required to present their research project to the class during the dates specified in the schedule below. The presentation will allow the students to discuss their project with the rest of the class and practice their public speaking skills. An outline of your presentation should be provided to the instructor and the presentation should be limited to 30 minutes per person (i.e. a group of three students will take 90 minutes).

## **University Policies**

### **Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/faculty_and_staff/academic_integrity/index.html) is available at [http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/faculty\\_and\\_staff/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/faculty_and_staff/academic_integrity/index.html). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html) is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

### **Learning Assistance Resource Center (Optional)**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The [LARC website](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>.

### **SJSU Writing Center (Optional)**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

# JS202 Research Methods, Design, & Evaluation,

## Fall, 2009 Course Schedule

The Class Schedule below is tentative. The dynamics and abilities of the individual class often dictate the amount of time spent on classroom discussions and so on. This usually means that it is necessary to adjust some activities or materials as the semester progresses. This makes it particularly important to come to class on time (to receive those announcements) and to check in with the instructor after any absences.

**Table 1 Course Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Due dates</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	08/27	Overview of course, introductions, how is this relevant to future careers, main distinction between policy evaluation and research methods, “what is grad school?”		Babbi Chap 1 Berk Chap 2
2	09/03	Responses to AC 1 experience, IRB (what/how to), research ethics, description of available semester projects, group assignments	AC1	Babbi Chap 2, 10 PDF: experimental studies SJSU IRB website
3	09/10	AC 1 feedback; policy analysis, evaluative research: purpose, description, examples, process v outcome studies, understanding programs, criminal justice, and social inquiry. Finalize paper topics today.		Berk Chap 3 Weiss Chap 1, 2
4	09/17	Key concepts and terminology of evaluations, general issues in (traditional and evaluative) research design	AC2	Weiss Chap 3, 6
5	09/24	Units of analysis, introduction to data collection, operationalization and measurement of concepts, testing new and ongoing programs, bias	IRB	Berk Chap 4 Weiss Chap 7 PDF: for AC3 (IQ)
6	10/01 ATSA	Data collection, sampling, developing measures, validity and reliability,	AC3	Babbi Chap 3,4
7	10/08	Experimental and quasi-experimental design, randomized experiments	Reliability exercise	Babbi Chap 5, 6 Weiss Chap 9 PDF: Weisburd PDF: Dunford PDF: Boruch et al
8	10/15	Qualitative methods: field research (participant observation, interview, case study), how to write survey questions, content analysis, divide into observation and survey groups	AC4 Survey Questions	Babbi Chap 7, 8 Weiss Chap 11

9	10/22	Coding survey responses, data entry (of survey responses), collect and collate observation and survey results, introduction to interpreting data, preliminary analysis	Field study	Weiss Chap 13
10	10/29	Univariate descriptive statistics, results, conclusions, limitations from our field study. Demonstration of a conference presentation, guide for paper and presentation, APA style etc.	AC5 (?)	Babbi Chap 9, 11
11	11/05 ASC	Work on papers and presentations, question time with Bridget in class		
12	11/12	Presentations		
13	11/19	Presentations	Paper due	
14	11/26	No class – Thanksgiving		
15	12/03	Presentations		
16	12/10	Presentations		