

Fall 2000

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE 105
RESEARCH METHODS

Instructor: Mona Lynch
office / phone: MH 513 / 924-2958
e-mail: mlynch@email.sjsu.edu
Class meetings: T-Th. 12:00-1:15 PM--MH 526
Office hours: T 2:00-5:30 PM; Th. 9:00-10:30 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will systematically cover the basic elements of social science research methodology, with an emphasis on criminal justice research. We will cover the necessary components of research methods to understand, critique, design, and carry out sound research. We will learn about such things as: critically reading research on crime and justice issues, conceiving a workable criminal justice research question, selecting an appropriate method for the research question, designing a criminal justice research study, ethical issues faced when conducting criminal justice research, and how to make sense of research findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In addition to participating in the class discussions and activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you need to: complete the required readings prior to the class for which they are assigned; complete a cumulative research project that will be the compilation of several interrelated assignments done throughout the semester, and take three in-class objective format exams that will cover the readings and lecture materials. The required projects can be on any of a range of topics related to the criminal justice, depending upon your interests.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Maxfield, Michael and Earl Babbie (1998). Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 2nd Edition. West/Wadsworth Publishing.

GRADING, MISSED EXAM & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Only legitimately excused missed exams can be made up. My policy for what constitutes legitimate excuses will be outlined during our first class meeting. Only under extreme and unavoidable emergency circumstances will you be able to

make up an exam for a legitimate excuse if you have not given notice of your absence before the actual scheduled exam period. In other words, don't report your absence after the exam was given, unless you can document your complete and total inability to do so before the exam. You may only make up 1 scheduled exam during the semester, so if you are not in attendance for more than 1 scheduled exam, you will receive zero points for any additional missed exams. Excused missed exams #1 & #2 will be taken on the final day of class, December 7th, during the class period. The make-up exams will be in a different format than the original exams. Excused missed finals will be made up on Tuesday, December 19, 10:45-12:00 in MH 523, and will also be in a different format than the original final.

The assignment / final project deadlines are firm deadlines. Each day that your assignment is late will result in a 5 point deduction from your grade for that assignment. Again, only legitimate excuses as outlined in the first class meeting will be accepted to avoid the late penalty. Computer / printer breakdowns are generally NOT legitimate excuses. Your final grade for the course will be based upon your performances on the in-class exams, the assignments, and the final project, as follows:

Exam #1:	200 points maximum
Exam #2:	200 points maximum
Exam #3:	200 points maximum
Assignments:	50 points <u>each</u> maximum x 5 assignments
Final project:	150 points maximum
Total possible:	1000 points

A range = 900 points or above

B range = 800-899 points

C range = 700-799 points

D range = 600-699 points

F = 599 points or below

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS / ASSIGNMENTS / DUE DATES:

WEEK 1 (August 29-31): Introduction to asking and answering research questions.

Read: By Thursday: Chapter 1

WEEK 2 (September 5-7): Theory and causation.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 2 & handout.

Read: By Thursday: Chapter 3, to bottom of p. 55.

Assignment #1--your responses to the handout--due Tuesday, September 5.

WEEK 3 (September 12-14): Introduction to research design.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 4, Appendix A.

Assignment #2--your research question--due Thursday, September 14.

WEEK 4 (September 19-21): From concepts to measures.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 5.

WEEK 5 (September 26-28): Measurement issues in criminal justice research.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 6. **BRING ONE RESEARCH ARTICLE TO CLASS, Tuesday, September 26.**

Assignment #3--the relevant literature list--due Thursday, September 28.

WEEK 6 (October 3-5): Exam and library work

EXAM #1 (Tuesday, October 3)

Thursday, October 5: Independent library work--work on bibliography and synthesis.

WEEK 7 (October 10-12): Ethics and research.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 8 (note switch in chapter order).

WEEK 8 (October 17-19): Introduction to data collection.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 9 (note switch in chapter order).

Assignment #4--the relevant literature synthesis--due Thursday, October 19

WEEK 9 (October 24-26): Experimental designs.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 7 (note switch in chapter order).

WEEK 10 (October 31-November 2): Survey research.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 10.

WEEK 11 (November 7-9): Field research.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 11.

EXAM #2 (Thursday, November 9)

WEEK 12 (November 13-15): RESEARCH DESIGN PROJECT WORK
NO FORMAL CLASSES THIS WEEK--REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS ON RESEARCH PROJECTS

WEEK 13 (November 21-23): Unobtrusive methods.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 12.

NO CLASS ON THURSDAY--THANKSGIVING.

WEEK 14 (November 28-30): Program evaluation.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 13.

Assignment #5--the research design--due Tuesday, November 28.

WEEK 15 (December 5-7): Making sense of findings; Communicating research findings.

Read: By Tuesday: Chapter 14, Appendix C.

EXAM 1 & 2 MAKE-UPS; FINAL PROJECTS--THURSDAY

FINAL PROJECT DUE: Thursday, December 7 in class.

Final exam during scheduled exam period (NOTE LATER START TIME):

Thursday, December 13, 10:45 AM-12:00 noon.