

Spring 2002

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. 10:30-11:45 AM  
Office hours: T 2:00-5:30 PM; Th. 9:00-10:30 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

This course will systematically cover the basic elements of social science research methodology, with an emphasis on criminal justice research. We will learn about the necessary components of research methods to understand, critique, design, and carry out sound research. This class will cover: 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. Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 3rd 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 generally include the following: your own serious illness or injury (documented by a physician); a documented death in your immediate family; unavoidable, documented, schedule conflict for SCHOOL related purposes (i.e., required by athletic team to be on the road). 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. Missed exams #1 & #2 will be taken on the final day of class, May 15, during the class period. The make-up exams will be in a different format than the original exams. The missed final period will be arranged if necessary, and will also be in a different format than the original final.

The assignment deadlines are firm deadlines. No late assignments will be accepted without prior arrangement with me. Again, only legitimate excuses will be accepted to avoid being penalized on the assignments. Computer / printer breakdowns are generally NOT legitimate excuses. The final project will be graded down 10% for each CALENDAR day late.

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:	240 points maximum (6 assignments x 40 pts.)
Final project:	160 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 (January 29-31): Introduction to asking and answering research questions.

Read: By Tuesday, 1-29: Chapter 1.

Read: By Thursday, 1-31: handout.

Assignment #1--your responses to the handout--due Thursday, January 31.

WEEK 2 (February 5-7): Theory and causation; reading social science research.

Read: By Tuesday, 2-5: Chapter 2.

Read: By Thursday, 2-7: Chapter 3, to bottom of p. 55.

**Assignment #2--your research question--due Thursday, February 7.**

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

Read: By Tuesday, 2-12: Chapter 4, Appendix A.

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

Read: By Tuesday, 2-19: Chapter 5.

**Assignment #3--the relevant literature list--due Thursday, February 21.**

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

Read: By Tuesday, 2-26: Chapter 6.

**BRING ONE RESEARCH ARTICLE TO CLASS, Tuesday, 2-26**

WEEK 6 (March 5-7): Ethics and research.

**EXAM #1 (Tuesday, March 5)**

Read: By Thursday, 3-7: Chapter 8 (note switch in chapter order).

WEEK 7 (March 12-14): Introduction to data collection.

Read: By Tuesday, 3-12: Chapter 9 (note switch in chapter order).

**Assignment #4—single article summary--due Tuesday, March 12.**

WEEK 8 (March 19-21): Experimental designs.

Read: By Tuesday, 3-19: Chapter 7 (note switch in chapter order).

**Assignment #5--the relevant literature synthesis--due Thursday, March 21**

WEEK 9 (March 26-28): SPRING BREAK--NO CLASSES

WEEK 10 (April 2-4): Survey research.

Read: By Tuesday, 4-2: Chapter 10.

WEEK 11 (April 9-11): Field research.

Read: By Tuesday, 4-9: Chapter 11.

WEEK 12 (April 16-18): Unobtrusive methods.

**EXAM #2 (Tuesday, April 16)**

**Read:** By Thursday, 4-18: Chapter 12.

WEEK 13 (April 23-25): RESEARCH DESIGN PROJECT WORK

**NO FORMAL CLASSES THIS WEEK--REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS  
ON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

WEEK 14 (April 30-May 2): Program evaluation.

**Read:** By Tuesday, 4-30: Chapter 13.

**Assignment #6--the research design--due Thursday, May 2**

WEEK 15 (May 7-9): Making sense of findings; Communicating research findings.

**Read:** By Tuesday, 5-7: Chapter 14.

**Read:** By Thursday, 5-9: Appendix C.

WEEK 16 (May 14): EXAM 1 & 2 MAKE-UPS; FINAL PROJECTS

**FINAL PROJECT DUE:** Tuesday, May 14 in class.

**Final exam during scheduled exam period: Tuesday, May 21, 10:45 AM-NOON.**

**(NOTE LATER START TIME)**