

Spring 2005

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE 105
RESEARCH METHODS

Instructor: Mona Lynch
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Class meetings: T-Th. 10:30-11:45 AM, MH 324
Office hours: T 2-5:30 PM; Th. 9-10:30 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

This course will systematically cover the basic elements of social science research methodology. 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 justice issues, conceiving a workable research question, selecting an appropriate method for the research question, designing a research study, ethical issues faced when conducting social science 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 4 homework assignments done throughout the semester, and take 1 in-class quiz and two in-class objective format exams which will cover the readings and lecture materials.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Maxfield, Michael and Earl Babbie. Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 4th Edition. West/Wadsworth Publishing. Available at Spartan and Roberts bookstores.

GRADING, MISSED EXAM & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Only legitimately excused missed quizzes/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. You may only make up 1 scheduled test during the semester, so if you are not in attendance for more than 1

scheduled exam or quiz, you will receive zero points for any additional missed exams. Missed quizzes and midterms will be taken on the final scheduled day of class during the class period. The make-up tests may be in a different format than the original exams. The missed final period will be arranged if necessary, and may also be in a different format than the original final.

The assignment deadlines are FIRM deadlines. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED** unless there is a documented emergency that absolutely prevents you from turning it in. Computer / printer breakdowns are generally NOT legitimate emergencies. You are responsible for knowing any schedule changes for exams or assignment due dates that were announced in class, even if you were not in attendance. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN DURING CLASS ON THE DUE DATE.**

Please familiarize yourself with the SJSU policy on academic dishonesty, available in pdf format at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/academic.html>. It is also published in the SJSU print catalog. Use those rules and definitions to guide your conduct in this class.

Your final grade for the course will be based upon your performances on the quiz, exams, the assignments, and in-class participation, as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Quiz: | 100 points maximum |
| Midterm: | 200 points maximum |
| Final: | 200 points maximum |
| Assignments: | 200 points maximum (4 assignments x 50 pts.) |
| Participation | 100 points maximum |
| Total possible: | 800 points |

A range = 720 points or above

B range = 640-719 points

C range = 560-639 points

D range = 480-559 points

F = 479 points or below

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS / ASSIGNMENTS / DUE DATES (subject to change if necessary):

WEEK 1 (January 27): Introduction to course.

WEEK 2 (February 1-3): Asking and answering research questions; reading social science research. **NOTE: NO CLASS MEETING ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3!**

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 1.

WEEK 3 (February 8-10): Theory and causation.

NOTE: CLASS MEETS THIS WEEK IN COMPUTER LAB: MH 321

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 2.

WEEK 4 (February 15-17): Introduction to research design.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 4 (note switch in chapter order).

Assignment #1 is due Thursday, February 17

WEEK 5 (February 22-24): From concepts to measures.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 5.

Quiz: Thursday, February 24.

WEEK 6 (March 1-3): Measurement issues in criminal justice research.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 6.

WEEK 7 (March 8-10): Ethics and research.

Read: By Thursday: **Textbook:** Chapter 3 (note switch in chapter order).

BRING ONE RESEARCH ARTICLE TO CLASS, Tuesday, 3-8

WEEK 8 (March 15-17): Introduction to data collection and experimental designs.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 8 up to section on sampling (note switch in chapter order).

Assignment #2 is due Tuesday, March 15

WEEK 9 (March 22-24): Experimental designs.

Read: By Thursday: **Textbook:** Chapter 7 (note switch in chapter order) & **Article:** Bradfield, Amy and Dawn McQuiston (2004) When does evidence of eyewitness confidence inflation affect judgments in a criminal trial? *Law and Human Behavior*, 28, 369-387. Available through PsycINFO on SJ library databases.

MIDTERM: Tuesday, March 22

WEEK 10 (March 29-31): SPRING BREAK!

WEEK 11 (April 5-7) Probability sampling; survey research.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** section on probability sampling in ch. 8 & Chapter 9.

WEEK 12 (April 12-14): Finish survey research; nonprobability sampling

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** section on nonprobability sampling in ch. 8 &

Article: Wilson, G. and R. Dunham. (2001). Race, class, and attitudes toward crime control: The views of the African American middle class. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 28, 259-279. Available through Expanded Academic Index on SJ Library databases.

Assignment #3 is due Thursday, April 14.

WEEK 13 (April 19-21): Field research.

READ: By Thursday: **Textbook:** Chapter 10 &

Article: Lynch Mona (2000). Rehabilitation as rhetoric: The ideal of reformation in contemporary parole discourse and practices, *Punishment and Society*, 2, 40-65. Available through Sociological Abstracts in SJ Library databases.

WEEK 14 (April 26-28): Unobtrusive methods

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 11 &

Article: Haney Craig, and Greene Susan (2004). Capital constructions: Newspaper reporting in death penalty cases. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 4, 129-151. Available through Expanded Academic Index on SJ Library databases.

WEEK 15 (May 3-5): Program evaluation and policy analysis.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 12 &

Article: Spohn, C., et. al. (2001) Drug courts and recidivism: the results of an evaluation using two comparison groups and multiple indicators of recidivism. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 31,149-76. Available through Social Science Fulltext on SJ Library databases.

WEEK 16 (May 10-12): Making sense of findings.

Read: By Tuesday: **Textbook:** Chapter 13.

Assignment #4 is due Thursday, May 12.

WEEK 17 (May 17): QUIZ/MIDTERM MAKE-UPS

Final exam during scheduled exam period: Friday, May 20, 10:45 AM-12:00 NOON. NOTE LATER STARTING TIME!