

Spring 2005
Justice Studies 105
Thursdays 5:30-8-PM
MH 520

Dr. Karen Peifer
Office: Mac Quarrie Hall Rm 529
Message Phone: 408-289-9817
kpeifer@sbcglobal.net
Office Hours: Thurs. 4 - 5:15 PM or by
appointment

JS 105
Research Methods

Course Description: This course will cover basic elements of social science research and methodology. The objective of the course is to provide a basic understanding of research and evaluation, to become an educated consumer of research literature, and to be able to write a proposal for a research study.

Course Structure and Requirements: This course will be an interactive learning experience where both students and instructor share responsibility for learning. Full participation in the class is required. The final paper requires that sections are submitted throughout the class for comment and review. There will be 4 topics to choose from: Domestic violence, police activities, homeland security, substance abuse/mental health and crime. You can choose the topic you have the most interest in and develop your proposal within those areas. You can work together but individual papers are required.

Course Requirements and Grading:

To receive an A in the class you need to complete the following:

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| ○ Student participation in class discussion | 10 points |
| ○ Class presentation of a research article x 2 | 20 points (10 points each) |
| ○ 2 Quizzes on reading material | 30 points (15 points each) |
| ○ Submit drafts of sections I-II of final paper | 30 total (10 points for 3 sections) |
| ○ Meet with instructor 2 times | 20 points (10 points each) |
| ○ Midterm exam | 30 points |
| ○ Final Paper | 20 points (On top of 20 points for
previous sections) |

Total 160 points

*Bring a scantron form for quizzes and midterm exam. Failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in a "zero" unless there are exceptional circumstances. Students will only be able to take a make-up exam with a legitimate excuse given **BEFORE** the exam. This requirement is suspended only in cases of sudden illness or death in the family. Written documentation of the emergency **is required.***

Important: If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of disability, if you have a medical condition you need to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building is evacuated, please see me during office hours.

Class rules:

- No cell phones during class period
- No conversations during class
- Be respectful and listen to each other
- SJSU has a clearly defined consequence for academic integrity. SJSU Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as: “Presenting someone else’s work as your own. This includes copying from sources without citing and claiming someone else’s original work or ideas as your own.” This includes cutting and pasting sections of text or entire articles from one document to another and turning it in as your own work. This includes using material from previously submitted papers for other classes. Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated in this class. There are serious consequences for your grade, for your degree, and for your career in law enforcement for doing so. Please be advised.

Required Texts:

Fitzgerald, J.D., Cox, SM, (2002) Research Methods and Statistics in Criminal Justice. Wadsworth Group.

Class reader- TBA

Content of Final Paper- Approximately 10 pages, double spaced, 12 fonts, 1 inch margins. APA Format is required by the Justice Studies Department and must be used.

- Section I Introduction to the problem - Hypothesis statement -1-2 pages
- Section II. Background information: Literature review that supports your hypothesis (at least 5 academic references required) 1-2 pages
- Section III. Proposed Study design: Method of collecting data, sampling strategy, Inclusion, Human Subjects- 3-5 pages
- Section IV Sample survey or questions- 1-3 pages
- Section V References

Course Outline and Required Reading:

Jan. 27 Introduction to course content and expectations;

Sign up for 2 article presentations and 2 meetings **Reader: Sample Presentations**

The first article presentation should include: Title of article, author's names, what the study found and why you choose this article.

The second article presentation should include: Title of article, author's names, the hypothesis, the study design and the findings. I also want your comments on the quality of the study.

Feb. 3rd History of Social Science Research **Fitzgerald Chapter 1**

1. Discussion questions: How is scientific research similar to criminal investigation and how is it different?
2. Discuss: article selection, presentation and first assignment

Feb. 10th Perspectives on Research **Fitzgerald Chapter 2**

1. Discussion questions: What is your perspective and how will it influence your work?
2. Also, what does the concept of "theory" mean and how theories evolve?
3. Presentation of articles

Feb. 17th Beginning study design and methodology **Fitzgerald Chapter 3 Reader: Study designs**

1. Discussion question: How do you choose a research topic given the class parameters (Domestic violence, police activities, homeland security, substance abuse/mental health and crime)?
2. Submit a draft of Section I - make an attempt to state your hypothesis.
3. Presentation of articles

Feb. 23rd Study design and sampling **Fitzgerald Chapter 5, 7**

1. Discussion questions: What are the advantages and disadvantages of panel, cross sectional and longitudinal study designs? Why is random sampling considered the most basic type of probability sampling?
2. Review draft of section I
3. Presentation of articles

March 3rd More on sampling, bias and strategies **Reader: Fitzgerald Chapter 5**

1. Quiz 1
2. Presentation of articles

March 10th Research tools: Survey research and research process

Fitzgerald Chapter 5 and 6 Reader: Sample Surveys

1. Discussion questions: What are the advantages and disadvantages of mailed surveys, telephone surveys, in person surveys and internet surveys? Please bring examples of 5 survey questions that could be used to describe the population being surveyed.
2. Review quiz 1 and submit Section II- Literature review
3. Presentation of articles

March 17th **Mid-term exam** last part of class

1. Presentation of articles

March 24th Spring Break No class

March 31st Ethics in research

Reader: The Belmont Report

1. Video: "The Deadly Deception"
2. Discussion questions: Why is it important to adhere to the principles outlined in the Belmont Report in doing research or evaluation?
3. Presentations of articles
4. Review mid-term exam

April 7th Analysis of Data

Fitzgerald Chapter 7

1. **Submit Section III draft** Presentation of articles
2. Presentation of articles

April 14th Interpretation and Reports

Fitzgerald Chapter 8, 9

1. **Quiz 2**
2. Presentation of article

April 20th Inferential Statistics Overview

Fitzgerald 10, 11

1. Discussion question: What measures of central tendency and dispersion are appropriate? for distributions of nominal data, ordinal data, or ratio data?
2. Presentation of article

April 28th Statistics reviewed

Fitzgerald 12 &13

1. Discussion questions: What are the common measures of association and how are they used to make statistical inference?
2. Presentation of article

May 5th Review of final paper outline, how to present information and catch-up

1. Presentation of articles

May 12th Final Class: Paper due in class - Catch-up presentation of articles