

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS 114: Research Methods
Fall 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Bryce Westlake
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Office Hours:	Monday & Wednesday 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Class Days/Time:	Monday & Wednesday 4:30 pm to 5:45 pm
Classroom:	MacQuarrie Hall 235

Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

Catalog Description

Introduction to qualitative and quantitative research methods used in Justice Studies. Includes relationship of theory to empirical evidence; logic underlying methods of inquiry; ethics in conducting empirical research; and methodological design, operationalization, and data analysis.

Prerequisite: Upper Division Standing; JS10, 11, 12 or 25; 100w; Stat 95 or equivalent.

Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice studies majors.

Course Description

This course will introduce students into conducting research through a historical examination of controversial experiments, participation in conducting observational research, and creating a research study. Students will learn the importance of ethical research, how to formulate research questions and select the appropriate quantitative or qualitative methodology to correctly answer their question. Finally, students will be exposed to common statistical analyses that can be used to describe collected data and general associations between data.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

(CLO 1) Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the qualitative and quantitative research methods commonly utilized to conduct empirical research in the areas of social and criminal justice.

(CLO 2) Write a research report in the area of social or criminal justice that applies proper research methodology

(CLO 3) Understand core concepts and competencies in criminological and justice research including ethical research, empiricism, problem identification, hypothesis formation and testing, sampling, observation, measurement, data analysis, causality, and report writing.

Required Texts/Readings

Required Textbook

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D., & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research Methods in Social Sciences (8th Edition)*. New York: St. Martin's. ISBN13: 978-1429233002.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Writing Assignment #1 –Ethics in Research (15%): Ethics is an important component of conducting research. While we have made advancements in how to conduct ethical research, there are several studies from the past century that have had a profound impact on ethical standards. Students will write a 6 to 8-page paper investigating one of these studies, discussing what the purpose of the study was, what ethical considerations needed to be considered, and the important results that came from this study despite the questionable ethics. This assignment will specifically address CLO's 2 and 3.

Writing Assignment #2 –Observational Research (15%): One of the most common forms of research is observation. After completing an in-class hands-on observation study, students will reflect on the experience and how it aided in their understanding of conducting research. In a 5 to 7-page paper, students will discuss some of the problems that arose during the study and how they need to be addressed prior to the conducting of a second observation study. This assignment will specifically address CLO's 1 and 3.

Writing Assignment #3 –Research Proposal (20%): Prior to conducting any research, it is important to have a game plan for how the research will be carried out. The culminating assignment for this course will be an 8 to 10-page paper where students will propose a research project, outline how the study would be conducted, and what issues would need to be addressed. More details about the requirements of this assignment will be provided in-class. This assignment will specifically address CLO's 1, 2, and 3.

Midterm and Final Examination (50%): Students will be administered a midterm and final examination, each worth 30% of their final grade. Each exam is closed book and will cover material from lectures (including all media presented) and assigned readings. The midterm will be held during regularly scheduled class time while the final will be held during the final exam period. Each exam will be non-cumulative and comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions. These examinations will specifically address CLO's 1 and 3.

Grading Policy

In order to receive a grade for this course, all course requirements must be met and every assignment must be completed. Failure to complete any one assignment may result in a failing grade for the course. Deadlines are firm. Late assignments/papers will not be accepted for full credit (without extenuating personal circumstances due to own or family health; or other university recognized excuse). In such cases, appropriate documentation must be shown to the instructor. **Late assignments/papers will lose 10% for every calendar day that they are late**, including weekend days.

97-100%	A+	92-96%	A	87-91%	A minus
83-86%	B+	79-82%	B	75-78%	B minus
70-74%	C+	65-69%	C	60-64%	C minus
57-59%	D+	53-56%	D	50-52%	D minus
0-49%	F				

The final course grade will be based on a 100-point scale. Since the grade is based on mastery of the material, it is theoretically possible for everyone to earn an A.

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Library Liaison

Silke Higgins, silke.higgins@sjsu.edu, (408) 808-2118, <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/justicestudies>

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See [University Policy S90–5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf>. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the [SJSU catalog](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html), at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, 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>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [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.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

- It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires 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.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

RESEARCH METHODS

FALL 2017, COURSE SCHEDULE

This course schedule is subject to change with fair notice, at the instructor's discretion. All reading assignments listed should be completed prior to class on that date. Additional readings may be assigned.

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
1	08/23/17	Introduction	NO READINGS
2	08/28/17	What is Research	Chapter 1: The Scientific Approach
	08/30/17	Conducting Research	Chapter 2: Conceptual Foundations of Research
3	09/04/17	NO CLASS	NO READINGS
	09/06/17	Elements of Research	Chapter 3: Elements of Research
4	09/11/17	Ethics	Chapter 4: Ethics in Social Science Research
	09/13/17	Research Design	Chapter 5 & 6: Research Designs
09/18/17			
5	09/20/17	Measurement	Chapter 7: Measurement DUE: Writing Assignment #1 - Ethics in Research
	09/25/17		Chapter 7: Measurement
6	09/27/17	Sampling	Chapter 8: Sampling & Sampling Design
	10/02/17		
7	10/04/17	Survey Research	Chapter 10: Survey Research
	10/09/17		
8	10/11/17	MIDTERM EXAM	NO READINGS
	10/16/17	Questionnaire Research	Chapter 11: Questionnaire Construction
10/18/17			
10	10/23/17	Developing Observational Research	Chapter 9: Observational Methods
	10/25/17		

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
11	10/30/17	Data Preparation	Chapter 14: Data Preparation & Analysis
	11/01/17	Data Analysis	DUE: Writing Assignment #2 - Observational Research
12	11/06/17	Qualitative Research	Chapter 12: Qualitative Research
	11/08/17		
13	11/13/17	Presenting Research	NO READINGS
	11/15/17	Secondary Analysis	Chapter 13: Secondary Data Analysis
14	11/20/17	Content Analysis	
	11/22/17	NO CLASS	NO READINGS
15	11/27/17	Univariate Analysis	Chapter 15: The Univariate Distribution
	11/29/17	Bivariate Analysis	Chapter 16: Bivariate Analysis
16	12/04/17		
	12/06/17	Course Review	NO READINGS DUE: Writing Assignment #3 – Research Proposal
		FINAL EXAM	NO READINGS