

**San José State University
Justice Studies Department
Fall 2017
JS 202 Research Methods**

Contact Information

Instructor: Yue Yuan Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Monday/Tuesday 2:30-3:30 p.m.
Class Days/Time: Monday 4:30-7:15 PM
Classroom: MacQuarrie Hall 526

MYSJSU Messaging

You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU. Course materials including syllabus, notes, assignment, and journal articles can be found on the Canvas website.

Course Description

Examination of research methods applied to solving problems and resolving issues in justice-related agencies, organizations and processes. Focuses on the application of the scientific method to problem-solving and program evaluation.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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.

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

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methodology used in criminology and justice related fields.
2. Design and implement the appropriate research methodologies for different research question(s).
3. Use statistical software to conduct analyses on collected data.
4. Present and critically discuss research findings, through written and oral techniques.

Course Format

I will utilize the Canvas Learning Management System as a means for distributing course materials such as syllabus, handouts, lecture slides, assignment instructions, and communications about changes to the course. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of updates.

The course will require students to obtain a copy of the statistics program SPSS. A license can be acquired and installed on to your computer via the Academic Technology Computer Center, located on the first floor of Clark Hall (room 102). Bring a flash drive and they will provide you with the installer files.

Required Texts/Readings

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D., & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research Methods in Social Sciences* (8th Edition). New York, NY: St. Martin's. ISBN13: 978-1429233992.

Fink, A.G. (2016). *How to Conduct Surveys* (6th Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Jacqueline Collier (2010) *Using SPSS Syntax* (2010): A Beginner's Guide

Other Readings: Additional readings will be provided via Canvas.

Library Liaison

Silke Higgins (silke.higgins@sjsu.edu), (408) 808.2118. <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/justicestudies>

Course Requirements and Assignments

Critical Discussion (10%): All students are expected to take an active role in each class as both learners and teachers. You are expected to complete the weekly required readings prior to each class. You are going to benefit the most from class discussions, explanations, and activities if you have some knowledge about the concepts studied each week. In each class you should demonstrate that you have read the assigned materials ahead of time, raise and discuss issues, and fully engage with the class. Discussion will focus on both the readings and on your research projects.

Survey Design (10%): Students will have the opportunity to design a survey, to be administered through a convenience sampling method, on a topic of their choice. Your topic does not need to be explicitly "criminological"; the important thing is to find a research phenomenon that interests you, and about which/whom you would like to know more. The more you are sincerely curious about your research, the more enjoyable it will be for you, and the better your eventual report will be for those who read it. However, your topic, and line of questioning, must be approved by me prior to beginning to design your survey. Options for projects will be discussed in class.

You can include previously validated questionnaires to supplement your survey, however, you will be required to design your own set of questions aimed at answering a specific research question. You will be graded on the proper format and construction of your survey, based on our class and textbook discussions of what makes an effective survey and what you should avoid. Several examples will be provided.

Observational Study Reflection (20%): One of the most common forms of research is observation. In a 6 to 8-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. More details will be provided on Canvas.

Data Analysis Assignment (20%): After view a demonstration of, and completing readings about, SPSS, students will be provided with a dataset and be required to complete several data analyses. Students will submit the syntax and edited dataset, along with the answers to several questions only able to be obtained by correctly completing the data analysis.

Oral Presentation (10%): Students will be required to present the findings of their survey to the class, and department, at the end of the semester (see schedule). The oral presentation provides you with a chance to discuss their projects with the rest of the class and practice public speaking skills. The length of the presentation will be determined later (expect approximately 20 minutes).

Final Examination or Evaluation

University Policy S06-4 states that ‘there shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless specifically exempted by the college dean who has curricular responsibility for the course’.

Final Paper (30%): Conducting research is an active process, one that is learned through “doing”. For this reason, students will design and administer their own survey. After collecting and analyzing (univariate and bivariate) data, you will complete a final paper, due during the scheduled final exam period. The paper will be 20-25 pages (excludes appendices, references, figures, and tables), double-spaced, in 12-point font Times New Roman OR 11-point font Arial. The paper is to follow APA format, including bibliography, abstract, cover page, etc. The purpose of this assignment is to learn how to design, administer, analyze, and report a survey. Therefore, your final grade will be based on these factors and NOT on the findings.

Grading Information

- 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 this course.
- Late assignments/papers will not be accepted.
- There are no extra credit options available in the course.

Percent to Letter Grade Correspondence

A plus = 100-96%	A = 95-93%	A minus = 92-90%
B plus = 89-86%	B = 85-83%	B minus = 82-80%
C plus = 79-76%	C = 75-73%	C minus = 72-70%
D plus = 69-66%	D = 65-63%	D minus = 62-60%
F = 59-0% 0-179		

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.

University Policies

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/>.

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 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/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for

another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

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 (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

In 2013, the Disability Resource Center changed its name to be known as the Accessible Education Center, to incorporate a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities. The new name change reflects the broad scope of attention and support to SJSU students with disabilities and the University's continued advocacy and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus.

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.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

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](#) 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](#) 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. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)



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](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

Fall 2017
Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	August 28	Introduction
2	September 11	Research Problem (Scientific Approach, Conceptual Foundation, and Elements of Research). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 1 and 2</i>
3	September 18	Elements of Research (Literature and Hypothesis Development) & Ethics (IRB). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 3, 4, and 5</i>
4	September 25	Measurement (Conceptualize, Operationalize, Validity, and Reliability) & Sampling (Strategies and Generalizability). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 6, 7 and 8; Fink, Chapter 4</i> Research Proposal Due
5	October 2	Survey Methodology (Survey Types and Questionnaire Construction). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 10 and 11; Fink, Chapters 1 and 5</i>
6	October 9	The Survey (Writing Questions and Practical Concerns). <i>Fink, Chapters 2 and 3</i> Qualtrics Introduction <i>Class Feedback on Draft Survey</i>
7	October 16	Quantitative Research Design (Experiments and Cross-Sectional). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 5 and 6</i> Final Survey Due
8	October 23	Observational Research. <i>Nachmias, Chapter 9</i>
9	October 30	Qualitative Research Design (Field Research, Ethnography, Secondary Data, and Content Analysis). <i>Nachmias, Chapters 12 and 13</i> Observational Study Reflection Due
10	November 6	Learning SPSS (PART 1). <i>Nachmias, Chapter 14; Jacqueline's Book</i>
11	November 13	Learning SPSS (PART 2); <i>Jacqueline's Book and Canvas Materials</i>
12	November 20	Conducting Data Analysis. <i>Nachmias, Chapters 15, and 16; Fink, Chapter 6</i>
13	November 27	Academic Writing. <i>Nachmias Appendix A; Canvas Readings 1 and 2</i>

14	December 4	Data Analysis Presentation. <i>Fink Chapter 7; Canvas Readings 3 and 4</i>
15	December 11	Oral Presentations
16	December 19	Final Paper Due