

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS 114: Research Methods
Spring 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Bryce Westlake
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Office Hours:	Monday & Wednesday 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm
Class Days/Time:	Monday & Wednesday 10:30 am to 11:45 am
Classroom:	Boccardo Business Center 205

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

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

David L. Streiner & Souraya Sidani. (2010). *When Research Goes Off the Rails*. New York: The Guilford Press. ISBN13: 978-1606234105.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Online Discussion (10%): Each lecture I will post at a discussion question, through Canvas, focusing on an element of that lecture that may be useful for your final written assignment (research proposal). Students are expected to contribute to *all* discussion questions throughout the semester. This involves providing an answer to the question, as outlined, and providing feedback, suggestions, and recommendations to classmates' answers. This assignment will specifically address CLO's 1 and 3.

In-Class Assignments (10%): Throughout the semester there will be various in-class assignments that students will conduct independently or in groups. These assignments will go more in-depth on what is covered in the lecture slides, providing students with the opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts learned. This assignment will specifically address CLO's 2 and 3.

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.

Midterms and Final Examination (50%): Students will be administered two midterms (each worth 15%) and final examination worth 20% of their final grade. Each exam is closed book and will cover material from lectures (including all media presented) and assigned readings. The midterms 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

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

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

SPRING 2018, 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	01/24/18	Introduction	NO READINGS
2	01/29/18	What is Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 1: The Scientific Approach <i>Off the Rails</i> : Introduction (pg. 1-15)
	01/31/18	Conducting Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 2: Conceptual Foundations of Research <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 25 & 29
3	02/05/18		
	02/07/18	Elements of Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 3: Elements of Research <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapter 17
4	02/12/18	Ethics	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 4: Ethics in Social Science Research <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 2 & 3
	02/14/18	Research Design	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 5 & 6: Research Designs <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 11 & 27
5	02/19/18		
	02/21/18	MIDTERM EXAM I	NO READINGS
6	02/26/18	Measurement	<i>Research Methods</i> Chapter 7: Measurement <i>Off the Rails</i> : Accessing Participants (pg. 53-55), Chapter 32
	02/28/18		DUE: Writing Assignment #1 - Ethics in Research
7	03/05/18	Sampling	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 8: Sampling & Sampling Design <i>Off the Rails</i> : Recruitment & Retention (pg. 97-99), Chapters 12 & 31
	03/07/18		
8	03/12/18	Survey Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 10: Survey Research <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 19 & 24
	03/14/18		
9	03/19/18	Questionnaire Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 11: Questionnaire Construction <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapter 32
	03/21/18		
10	03/26/18	SPRING BREAK	NO READINGS
	03/28/18		
11	04/02/18	MIDTERM EXAM 2	NO READINGS

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
11	04/04/18	Observational Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 9: Observational Methods <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapter 28
12	04/09/18		<i>In-class Assignment</i>
	04/11/18	Data Preparation	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 14: Data Preparation & Analysis <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 26 & 38
13	04/16/18	Data Analysis	DUE: Writing Assignment #2 - Observational Research
	04/18/18	Qualitative Research	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 12: Qualitative Research <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 7, 30, & 37
14	04/23/18		Secondary Analysis
	04/25/18		
15	04/30/18	Content Analysis	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 15: The Univariate Distribution <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapters 33 & 34
	05/02/18	Univariate Analysis	
16	05/07/18	Bivariate Analysis	<i>Research Methods</i> : Chapter 16: Bivariate Analysis <i>Off the Rails</i> : Chapter 36
	05/09/18		
17	05/14/18	Course Review	NO READINGS
FINAL EXAM			NO READINGS