CRIJ 4345.001 Research Methods in Criminal Justice

Course Description:
This course is designed to help students gain a working understanding of the research process with direct application to criminal justice research. Attention will focus on various aspects of the research process including quantitative and qualitative methods. Students will complete literature reviews, create research proposals, conduct observations/interviews, and construct surveys in addition to various assignments and activities. Prerequisite: CRIJ 1301 or CRIJ 1313

Learning Objectives:

1. To improve students’ basic understanding of research methods and familiarize them with key concepts and terminology in the field.
2. To provide students with an overview of the fundamentals in research methods.
3. To encourage and assist students to become competent and discerning consumers of research by expanding their interest and ability to read and fully comprehend scholarly journal articles in the field.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Enhance ability to critically analyze the criminal justice system.
2. Discuss basic concepts and terminology in research methods.
3. Explain the research process, research designs, and methods used in social sciences.
4. Process and discuss professional literature in the field of criminal justice and criminology, while identifying scholarly sources and determining the quality of the articles based on their methodology.

Major Course Requirements:

Major Assignments (500 points):
Research Methods is a labor intensive course. My goal is to help you become better researchers and better writers (as both of these skills are very important in the “real world”); therefore, the bulk of your grade is dependent on your ability to research and write. Students are responsible for the completion of five major assignments during the semester. Assignment guidelines and grading rubrics will be distributed in class and discussed in detail in Week 2. Projects 3, 4, and 5 are inter-connected. Late assignments will lose five points per day. If problems arise, they must be brought to the attention of the instructor prior to the due date, not immediately before/on/after the due date.

Comprehensive Exam (200 points):
One comprehensive exam will be administered in this course. The exam is worth up to 200 points and will be composed of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. Questions are derived from class notes and the required readings from the textbook.
Students are strongly encouraged to work together to prepare for exams and to enhance their understanding of materials. The exam will be administered in class on April 21.

**Attendance/Activities (300 points):**
Each lecture/discussion will build on previous lectures/discussions; consequently, attendance is critical for success in this course, particularly since this course only meets once per week. Leaving class early will result in an absence for that class. In addition, tardiness will not be tolerated. Participation in class/group discussions is expected and factored into your final grade. There will be a number of in-class activities and homework activities in this course including activities related to course projects, quizzes, empirical debates, article searches, APA, and peer evaluation. If students are keeping up with the readings and participating in class discussions, I will more than likely give advanced notice of quiz dates. Otherwise, quizzes will be given at random at my discretion. Homework activities will be announced in class with due dates and points assigned accordingly. Late homework activities will be penalized a 2-point deduction per day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment 1: Journal Article Critique</th>
<th>50</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE on FEB 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Interview/Observation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUE on MAR 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUE on MAR 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4: Literature Review</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUE on APR 6</td>
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<td>Assignment 5: Research Proposal</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUE on MAY 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administered on APR 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Activities</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points Possible</td>
<td>1000</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

- A = 90-100% 900-1000 points
- B = 80-89% 800-899 points
- C = 70-79% 700-799 points
- D = 60-69% 600-699 points
- F = 59% and below 599 and below

**Required Readings:**


**Website:**
Your class will be using the Blackboard platform in order to review PP slides and submit assignments. To access Blackboard and get around in the course beginning January 20, follow the steps below:
Follow the link to TAMUCC Island Online:
https://iol.tamucc.edu/

On the lower right hand side of the screen you will see a log-in for Blackboard. Click on Blackboard and then enter your log-in information. Your log-in is your Banner ID (A number) and PIN. If you have trouble with your log-in, please contact Island Online Support:

- By Phone:
  o 361-825-2825 (Local)
  o 1-866-353-2491 (Long Distance)
- By E-mail:
  o islandonline@tamucc.edu
- Hours of Operation:
  o 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. Everyday (U.S. Central)

Once in Blackboard, all of the classes you are currently taking will be listed in the middle of the screen.

Course Policies:

**Late work and Make-up Exams**
Late projects will result in an automatic 5-point reduction per day. Make-up exams will only be scheduled if I am informed in advanced of the exam date. Late assignments will result in a 2-point deduction per day.

**Extra Credit**
No extra credit will be given. No exceptions!!!

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.**
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for that assignment or test.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

**Grade Appeals**
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the
College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Syllabus
Course Outline

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to give me a call/send me an e-mail. I am available to assist you with information pertaining to this course and to the criminal justice system in general.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus throughout the semester. Students will be given advanced notice of any syllabus modifications.

Note: Assigned Readings should be completed prior to the date listed on the syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Projects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Syllabus/Research Process</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Fundamentals/Theory</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discuss Projects</td>
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<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>Chapters 4 &amp; 5</td>
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<td>Measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Measurement</td>
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<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Assignment 1 Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sampling</td>
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<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>TBD*</td>
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<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Field Research</td>
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<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Assignment 2 Due</td>
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<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Assignment 3 Due</td>
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<td>Evaluation Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Note</td>
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<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>TBD*</td>
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<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>TBD*</td>
<td>Assignment 4 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 13</td>
<td>Review for Exam</td>
<td>Chapters 1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>EXAM</td>
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<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>Discussion of Research Proposals</td>
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<tr>
<td>May (finals week)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 5 Due</td>
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* May include: guest speaker presentations, in-class activities, and/or research meetings