

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH METHODS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE - CJ 300-02 3 credits
Winter 2016
Tuesday 6:00-8:50 pm, 203D

Professor: Dr. John P. Walsh
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Office Hours:
M, W, 9:00-10:15 am
M, 12:00-2:45 pm
W, 2:00-2:45 pm

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course involves an examination of basic investigatory methods in criminal justice. Focus is on the logic and theory of criminological research, the formulation and testing of hypotheses, research design, sampling, modes of data production, and the ethics of conducting research in criminology and criminal justice.

II. PREREQUISITES and/or CO-REQUISITES: Prerequisites: STA 215 Introductory to Applied Statistics, CJ/LS major and junior standing.

III. INTRODUCTORY PROSE: Criminal Justice policy and practice is based on theoretical conceptions of the nature and causes of crime and deviant behavior, as well as our social responses to these behaviors. Changing criminal justice policy and practice is a result of social science research. This course examines the purpose of research, policy and program analysis, sampling, ethics, design and experimentation as it relates to criminal justice theory and systems.

IV. OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. *Demonstrate* an understanding of the scientific method (*application*).
2. *Examine* and *apply* basic research designs and procedures used in the social sciences, with special attention to causality, validity and reliability (*application*).
3. *Discuss* ethical concerns related to quantitative research and implement necessary subject protections, including consent forms and other IRB requirements (*comprehension*).
4. *Evidence* written skills as outlined in course requirements (*application*).

V. BLOOM'S TAXONOMY LEVEL AND DOMINANT CURRICULUM "THREADS": While the current course will draw from across "Bloom's Taxonomy" of learning, it will nevertheless dominantly draw from the levels of "Comprehension" and "Application." In addition, dominant curriculum "threads" to be assessed throughout this course will be the study of ethics (special attention to research ethics) and writing.

VI. REQUIRED TEXT

Bachman, R. & Schutt, R. (2014). *The practice of research in criminology and criminal justice*, 5th Edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Mosher, C., Miethe, T., & Hart, T. (2011). *The mismeasure of crime*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Examinations

Each student is required to complete two (2) in-class examinations. The Mid-term examination will be taken during week 8 of the semester on **Tuesday March 1st**. The final exam will be taken during finals week **Tuesday April 26th**. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false and matching questions. The final examination is cumulative. Each exam is worth up to 75 points. Make-up exams will only be given in extreme circumstances (verifiable family or medical emergency, legal obligation etc.). If you miss a scheduled exam you must notify me via email within 24 hours. Make up exams will be in essay format and must be completed within 72 hours of the original exam date. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

In-Class Small Group Assignments

There will be ten (10) in-class small group assignments during the semester. These assignments are intended to spur discussion and understanding of complex issues within research methods. Grading in regard to these assignments will be based on a “good faith” effort in regard to group participation, as well as providing thoughtful and correct answers within the assignment. You must be in attendance to garner the points. Each assignment is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points.

Research Method Article Analysis

Each student is required to complete a research method article analysis. This assignment will be distributed at least one week prior to its due date during **week 12** of the semester. The assignment is intended to integrate your research method knowledge with current research within the field of criminal justice. I will not accept papers after the due date. All papers must be submitted through Blackboard (assigned drop box), in MS Word, two double spaced pages, 12 point font, free of grammar and spelling errors and cited correctly according to APA publication manual standards. Each analysis is worth up to 25 points.

Blackboard Discussion

There will be five (5) discussion questions posted on Blackboard throughout the semester. Constructive participation in the group discussion will garner a total of 5 points for each question. These discussions are meant to spur critical thinking in regard to our reading. Please refrain from abusive language and ad hominem arguments (i.e. attacking the person). Civility is the cornerstone of academic discussion within and outside of the classroom environment. Students violating this policy will receive a zero under the entire discussion section of the course. Each submission must be **at least 100 words** in length, free of grammar and spelling errors and cited according to APA standards when referring to classroom and non-classroom texts. A total of 25 points is possible for full participation.

Point Breakdown and Grading Scale

Exams (2)	150 points
In-Class Small Group Assignments	100 points
Blackboard discussion	25 points
Research Method Article Analysis	25 points
Total	300 points

* All course requirements must be completed to earn a successful grade for the course.

A	94-100%	C+	78-79%	F	< 60%
A-	90-93%	C	74-77%		
B+	88-89%	C-	70-73%		
B	84-87%	D+	68-69%		
B-	80-83%	D	60-67%		

VI. STUDENT RESOURCES

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing:

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale, Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids, and Meijer/Holland campuses, is available to help you with writing in any of your classes. Writing consultants, who are fellow GVSU students, are trained to help you with all stages of your writing process, from brainstorming to organizing to editing your papers. The Center's services are free and appointments are available. Simply bring a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns to the writing center in Allendale or the downtown campus.

- Allendale, LOH 120, 331-2922
- Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids, 101B DeVos, 331-7220

Knowledge Market

Both the Mary Idema Pew Library and the Steelcase Library will house a Knowledge Market. The Knowledge Market is a place where students can engage in in-depth conversations with a peer consultant at any stage of their library research, writing, or oral presentation process. They are staffed with highly-trained student peer consultants who are undergraduate and graduate students studying in a wide variety of disciplines. Any undergraduate or graduate GVSU student can make an appointment via the Web at: www.gvsu.edu/library/km or can simply come into the Knowledge Market as a walk-in. Assistance with oral presentations is limited to undergraduate students at this time and is also only occurring at the Mary Idema Pew Library. On the Grand Rapids campus, the Knowledge Market is located at Steelcase Library (Building A). Please check the above listed web-link for the current hours of both locations.

Patricia Bravender is the criminal justice librarian and she can provide you with individualized research assistance for all of your classes. Her office is in the Steelcase Library on the downtown campus and she can be reached at bravendp@gvsu.edu or 331-7338. Her criminal justice library subject guide (<http://libguides.gvsu.edu/cj>) contains links to all of the criminal justice databases and other specific resources for criminal justice students, including crime statistics.

IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Assumed by GVSU and this professor, is that each student possesses an exceptional level of academic integrity. Section 223.00 & 223.01 of the *Student Code* are reproduced below for your reference.

SECTION 223.00 INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES: Truth and Honesty. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind. Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged. Compliance shall include compliance with the following specific rules:

- a) No student shall knowingly, without authorization, procure, provide or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.
- b) No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.
- c) No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.
- d) No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own.
- e) No student shall submit work that has been previously graded, or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it .

SECTION 223.01 PLAGIARISM: Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches or the writings of others students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have a need for disability-related accommodations, please inform me and the Office of Disability Support Services at 200 STU (331-2490). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if the requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation in accordance with federal, state, and university guidelines.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE: Immediately proceed to the nearest exit during a fire alarm. Do not use elevators. Further information is available on the University's Emergency website located at <http://www.gvsu.edu/emergency>

THE LAST DAY STUDENTS MAY WITHDRAW FROM THIS COURSE WITH A GRADE OF "W" IS March 11th, 2016

Winter 2016 Course/Topic Outline
CJ 300
Research Methods

Week 1 (week of January 10th): **Science, Society and Criminological Research**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 1

Week 2 (week of January 17th): **The Process and Problems of Criminological Research**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 2; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 1

Week 3 (week of January 24th): **Research Ethics and Philosophies**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 3; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 2

Week 4 (week of January 31st): **Conceptualization and Measurement**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 4

Week 5 (week of February 7th): **Sampling**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 5; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 3

Week 6 (week of February 14th): **Causation and Research Design**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 6

Week 7 (week of February 21st): **Experimental Designs**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 7

Week 8 (week of February 28th): **Mid-Term Examination, Tuesday March 1st**

Week 9 (week of March 6th): **Spring Break**

Week 10 (week of March 13th): **Survey Research**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 8 and Appendix A; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 4

Week 11 (week of March 20th): **Qualitative Methods and Analysis: Observing, Participating, and Listening**
Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 9 and Appendix B

Week 12 (week of March 27th): **Analyzing Content: Historical, Secondary, and Content Analysis and Crime Mapping**

Readings: Bachman and Schutt. Chapter 10; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 5

Week 13 (week of April 3rd): **Evaluation and Policy Analysis; Mixing and Comparing Methods**

Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 11 and Chapter 12

Week 14 (week of April 10th): **Quantitative Data Analysis**

Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 13

Week 15 (week of April 17th): **Reporting Research Results**

Readings: Bachman and Schutt.. Chapter 14; Mosher, Miethe and Hart. Chapter 6

Week 16 (week of April 24th): **FINAL EXAM:**

Tuesday, April 26th

***I reserve the right to change reading assignments. Any changes will be announced in class. All in-class assignments, blackboard discussion assignments, research assignments and critical thinking papers are due on their assigned dates. No late assignments will be accepted without prior approval by Dr. Walsh. Syllabi, announcements, assignments, optional reading material, exam reviews etc. will be posted on Blackboard. While there is no formal attendance policy, failure to attend class will result in missed opportunities for lecture, discussion, film viewing and in-class assignment points. If you do miss a class it is your responsibility to garner missed notes from fellow students. Periodic emails and announcements may be sent to you via Blackboard.**

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain*
(In other words, a level-by-level approach to understanding how you think!)

Benjamin Bloom created this taxonomy (organization of categories) to understand the level of abstract thinking required in various educational settings. *During the course of the semester, course content, exercises, assignments and tests will move through these levels from knowledge to analysis.* In other words, this class is structured to develop and test your critical thinking skills about the material. (Note that the taxonomy works from the bottom up. That is, the higher you go on the chart, the more developed the level of critical thinking.)

What does this mean for you as a student in this course? (1) *It is very important that you gain the foundational knowledge for the course. Each unit will build on old knowledge and introduce new knowledge. If you don't understand a core concept, see me! Don't get lost or left behind because you were afraid to ask. There are no stupid questions in this class!* (2) *Participate in the class exercises and assignments.* I develop these to help you use your knowledge and develop your thinking skills through case scenarios, problems, and focused activities. *This isn't just busy work!* Believe it or not, there's a method to the madness! (3) *Review the test study guides to see what level of thinking I will expect on each topic.* If I ask you to identify something, I will be asking you to tell me what you know. If I ask you to define something, I will be asking you to show me what you comprehend (understand). If I ask you to compare and contrast two ideas, I am asking you to analyze the material in terms of similarities and/or differences. If I am asking you to integrate or assess, I am asking you to synthesize and evaluate. *As you will see, test questions often are similar to in-class activities or assignments, another good reason to make sure that you participate and ask if you have questions!*

Bloom's Taxonomy

6. EVALUATION	Students can use previously learned standards/criteria to determine the worth or merit of a complex product.	Compare and discriminate between ideas, Assess value of theories, presentations, Make choices based on reasoned argument, Verify value of evidence, Recognize subjectivity	Assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize
5. SYNTHESIS	Students can create an original and complex product out of a set of simpler components.	Use old ideas to create new ones, Generalize from given facts, Relate knowledge from several areas, Predict, draw conclusions	Combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, build, solve, perform, establish, predict, produce, modify, plan, formulate, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite
4. ANALYSIS	Students can take a complex set of material and break it down into its component parts and/or explain why a complex set of relationships is organized as it is or what caused it to be or predict from the present to the future.	Seeing patterns, Organization of parts, Recognition of hidden meanings, Identification of components	Analyze, breakdown, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare and contrast, select, explain, infer, show how, draw a diagram, deduce
3. APPLICATION	Students can apply previously learned material such as concepts, rules or generalizations to newly taught material.	Use information, Use methods, concepts, theories in new situations, Solve problems using required skills or knowledge	Apply, classify, find, choose, compute, sort, generalize, organize, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover
2. COMPREHENSION	Students can express previously learned material in their own way.	Understanding information, Grasp meaning, Translate knowledge into new context, Interpret facts, Compare, Contrast, Order, Group, Infer causes, Predict consequences	Summarize, define, put in your own words, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend, summarize, translate, illustrate, restate, demonstrate
1. KNOWLEDGE	Students can recall, reproduce or recognize previously learned information as it was taught to them.	Observation and recall of information, Knowledge of dates, events, places, Knowledge of major ideas Mastery of subject matter	List, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, underline, place in order, reproduce, recognize, recall, name, who, when, where, etc.
LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	GOAL	SUGGESTED ACTION VERBS/QUESTION CUES

Adapted from Bloom, Benjamin S. 1984. *Taxonomy of educational objectives*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Pearson Education