



**Soc 331-71W Introduction to Social Research
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2016**

Instructor: Dr. Monica Castator, PhD

Office Location: AB 211 – Corsicana Campus of Navarro College

Office Hours: Mon 10:00-12:30 p.m, Tues – 2:00-5:00 p.m., Wed 10:00-12:30 p.m.

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

- ◆ *Textbook(s) Required:* **The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice**

6th Edition – Sage Publications

By **Ronet Bachman** & **Russell K. Schutt**

ISBN:

9781506306810

- ◆ Library Books, Journals, etc. as assigned (many of which may be online)
- ◆ Other resources provided by the instructor
- ◆ Handout materials related to specific topics.
- ◆ Scannable Test Answer forms: You will need a total of 7 for this course and they are available in the book store, the deli, and in a vending machine outside the bookstore.

Course Description:

All of science is built upon research. Whether one conducts it or merely consumes it, understanding how to critically evaluate the methodology used and the generalizability of the findings is fundamentally important. This course is intended to provide an overview of basic quantitative and qualitative research methodologies used in the study of human society and social behavior. Students will gain fundamental knowledge of the issues involved in research design, conceptualization, measurement, sampling, data collection techniques, and data analysis through reading, discussion, illustration and practice.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Successful students will demonstrate understanding of basic quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
2. Successful students will demonstrate fundamental knowledge of the issues involved in research design, conceptualization, measurement, sampling, data collection techniques,

- and data analysis.
3. Successful students will demonstrate the ability to match appropriate research methods with a wide variety of research designs.
 4. Successful students will write a research proposal demonstrating knowledge of issues related to research design, generalizability, data collection, and analysis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

The method of instruction for this course will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, films and group activities. The specific activities used to engage students in mastering chapter material will be three quizzes, three unit exams, a final exam and a research proposal as assigned.

Grading

Grades on final grade report will be based on the total number of points accumulated. Students may accumulate points through the following activities:

1. Three unit exams and the final exam (70% of overall grade): The exams questions will be a combination of objective (multiple choice), short answer and essay questions. The questions will be taken from assigned readings in the textbook and other materials, lecture notes, and class discussions. The exams will be announced no less than one week prior to the scheduled date.
2. A series of quizzes (10% of overall grade) over the assigned materials will be given on a periodic, announced or unannounced basis. Students are strongly encouraged to read assigned course material and come prepared.
3. Research Proposal (20% of overall grade). Students will be required to complete a research proposal as part of the course. Specific details of this assignment will be given at a later date.

The following point system will be used to determine the final course grade. These percentage reference the weighted average of assignments.

% of Total	Grade
90%+	A
80%	B
70%	C
60%	D
<60%	F

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following technology is required to be successful in this course.

*Word Processor (Microsoft Office Word)
Access to University Library site
Access to Email*

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Participation & Communication: I expect each of you to be active and thoughtful participants within the learning environment. This includes completing readings and other assignments on time and contributing to discussions in class. If you need to contact me outside of class, use one of the following methods.

1. Email is the best way to reach me as I check it daily. A reply will be sent within 24 hours.
2. Urgent matters may be handled by phone. My office number is (903) 875-7405.
3. I also maintain office hours on campus. These hours vary by semester but are always posted on my office door. In general, I will always be in my office at least one hour prior to class.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies:

Attendance and Preparation: Attendance and preparation for class are important. Each student is expected to be present, on time, and prepared for all class meetings unless other arrangements have been made in advance. Absence is defined as not being present when the roll is called. If you must be late to class due to extraordinary circumstances, please quietly enter the room and take your seat. However, if roll call has already been conducted, you will remain on the roll of absentees for the day despite your late arrival.

If you are unable to complete the course, you should withdraw from it formally in accordance with University policy to you wish to avoid receiving a failing grade. College transcripts are a lifelong attachment!

- Failure to withdraw may result in your name remaining on the class roll and you will receive an 'F' at the end of the semester.
- Deadlines for withdrawing from the course and their associated consequences to your college transcript are recorded in the course bulletin.
- If you experience difficulty in this course or in meeting the class schedule, contact the instructor immediately to discuss your options. Note that you may also be withdrawn from the course at the instructor's discretion, for excessive absences (defined as more than 1/8 of the term or 3 weeks).

General Policies and Procedures:

- Students are required to read the syllabus and course outline and be familiar with the policies contained therein.
- Students are required to complete all assigned reading on time and all written assignments.
- Students are required to take all exams as scheduled. If a student misses a scheduled exam and the absence is deemed excused by the instructor, s/he may request a make-up test. The student will have one week to make up the exam. If the student must miss an exam due to illness or family emergency, the student must contact the instructor IMMEDIATELY to let the instructor know of the impending absence. Makeup exams will be given only if the student has previously cleared the absence with the instructor and are by appointment only.
- Students are required to attend all class meetings, arrive on time and actively participate in class discussions and activities.
- Students are required to pass all exams and complete all writing assignments with a final average grade of 60% or better in order to pass the course.

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as

academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

Disciplinary action for these offenses may include any combination of the following:

1. Point deduction on an assignment.
2. Failure for an assignment.
3. A grade of zero for an assignment.
4. Failure for the course.
5. Referral to the Academic Integrity Committee or department head for further action.
6. Referral to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, Business and Technology, Arts and Sciences, or Graduate School as appropriate.
7. Referral to the University Discipline Committee.
8. Communication of student's behavior to the Teacher Certification Office and/or Dean of the College of Education as constituting a reason to bar student from entering into or continuing in a teacher certification program. Procedures, A 13.04, 13.12, 13.31, and 13.32

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEm>

[ployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf](#)) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook). Note that behavior deemed by the instructor to be disruptive may result in the student being dropped from the course.

Disclaimer:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule of the class. Any alterations will be announced by the instructor in class or via email. Students who do not attend class, or check their email assume full responsibility for missing changes to the course.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Soc 331: Introduction to Social Research		
Begin Assignment	Assignment	Notes
8/30/2016	1. Science, Society, and Criminological Research	You will be given a copy of my lecture note handout each evening in class. Make sure you use my notes to focus your study... great companion to your textbook reading.
	Appendix A: Finding Information Appendix B: Questions to Ask About a Research Article Appendix C: How to Read a Research Article	This section of the course will help you prepare for researching the proposal you will write in this class.
9/6/2016	2. The Process and Problems of Criminological Research	
9/13/2016	3. Research Ethics and Philosophies	Section 1 of Research Proposal Due
9/20/2016	Test 1: Ch 1-3	
9/27/2016	4. Conceptualization and Measurement	Evaluate your testing experience critically. Were you prepared? Should you make any changes before the next exam?
10/4/2016	5. Sampling	
10/11/2016	6. Causation and Research Design	
10/18/2016	7. Experimental Designs	Section 2 of Research Proposal Due
10/25/2016	8. Survey Research	
11/1/2016	Test 2: Ch 5, 6, 7, 8	
11/1/2016	9. Qualitative, Crime Mapping & Historical Analysis Methods, 11. Evaluation and Policy Analysis	
11/1/2016	12. Quantitative Data Analysis	
11/08/2016	13. Reporting Research Results	
11/15/2016	Test 3: Ch 9, 10, 11, 12, 13	
11/22/2016	Thanksgiving Break	
11/29/2016	Due date! Submit Your Final Research Proposal	
12/6/2016	Review for Final Exam	
12/13/2016	Final Exam – Comprehensive	