CJ575.01W: Research Methods in Criminal Justice
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Andrew M. Garcia, J.D., Ph.D.
Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences 206

Office Hours:
Tuesday/Thursdays: 9:00-11:00AM
***Additional availability by appointment

University Email Address: Andrew.Garcia@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: E-mail
Communication Response Time: 24 hours or sooner during normal M-F business hours.

COURSE INFORMATION

Schedule: Online

Textbook(s) Required

The course uses a *creative commons* textbook, meaning that it is freely available for students to use for academic purposes. A copy of it has been placed on D2L under the "content" tab.

Sheppard, Valerie. 2021. *Research Methods for the Social Sciences: An Introduction*. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Assigned readings (provided by instructor; accessible on D2L)

Software Required

Microsoft Office (or compatible) word processor

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Course Description

This course will provide students with the fundamentals of conducting and evaluating research in criminal justice. Topics include defining research problems, ethics in criminal justice research, selecting and measuring variables, stating hypotheses, sampling, and developing experimental research design.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an introspective, criminological perspective on research methods in the social sciences
2. Identify qualitative, quantitative, and mixed social science research methods
3. Critically analyze peer-reviewed research in criminal justice
4. Illustrate writing skills that communicate complex ideas succinctly

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Final course grades will be based on the criteria outlined below.

Course Evaluation (100%)

Journal Entries (2)	20% (10% for each journal)
Research Project (RP)	
RP1: Topic	5%
RP2: Research Questions	5%
RP3: Annotated Bibliography	10%
RP4: Literature Review	30%
Research Case Study	10%
Midterm Exam	20%

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Assessments

***Please check your ETAMU email account and D2L daily because important information about this class could be emailed or uploaded to you. A breakdown of course requirements and how each will contribute to your course grade is included below. *Assignments and exams may be made up without penalty if they are missed due to an excused absence*.

Research Project (40%)

Students will begin designing and developing their own research project, with topics commensurate with their own interests. The project includes four (4) component parts:

RP1: Development of research topic (5%)
RP2: Development of research questions (5%)
RP3: Annotated Bibliography (10%)
RP4: Literature Review (30%)

***Each of these components are scaffolded and built into each other. **Students must turn them in sequentially**. Students will **not** be allowed to "go back" and finish incomplete components after another section is due.

Research Case Study (10%)

Students will be presented with a peer-reviewed published paper related to criminal justice. After reading it, students will write a 2-page reflective essay, pointing out potential issues with research design, methodology, research ethics, or other salient issues discussed in class.

All course writing assignments will be submitted online through D2L and utilize TurnItIn plagiarism software. Papers should be in Times New Roman, size 11 font, one- inch margins and double-spaced. Late assignments will be accepted but will be deducted 10 points for each day (or part of the day) they are late (without approved documentation).

Midterm Exam (20%): One online exam will be administered (D2L) in this course. The midterm will be graded on a 100-point scale and include approximately 40 multiple-choice and true/false questions. The exam will cover the assigned readings, uploaded lecture videos, and assigned multimedia. Students will need access to reliable internet services and a quiet work environment conducive to test taking. **The exam and access password will be made available online on the D2L system on September 24th at 10AM and close at 11:59PM on September 28th. Once a student is ready and opens the exam, they will have one hour (60 minutes) to complete all the questions. Students will not be able to go back to it throughout the day!** More detailed information on the procedure for taking online tests can be found on D2L under ONLINE EXAMS in the CONTENT folder.

Course Journals (20%, 2 entries worth 10% each): On scheduled weeks, a journal prompt will become available under the Assignments folder in D2L. Students will have until the following Sunday at 11:59PM to write a 400–500-word response, which should incorporate both class concepts and personal experiences. Extra emphasis will be put on introspective and well-developed ideas. Each

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prompt will correspond with that week's content area (e.g., child abuse or theories of victimization) and should be completed *after* viewing the week's lecture video and/or textbook reading.

Makeup Exam Policy: I totally understand that life happens. Students that experience exceptional circumstances which cause them to miss a scheduled exam should contact me ASAP. Students that have a university approved absence or otherwise produce written documentation regarding their absence will be scheduled for a make-up time. Students that have not reported their absence or spoken to me within 2 days of the exam will be considered unexcused and receive a "0" score for that exam.

Classroom Guidelines

Electronic Device Policy: Please refrain from the use of electronic devices during class, as it is distracting to not only you, but also to your instructor and peers. Laptops should only be used for note taking unless they are part of the instructor assignment and discussion for the class day.

Classroom Civility, Respect and Tolerance: University study is largely about exposure to a diverse range of worldviews and lived experiences. **This course relies on challenging and critiquing deeply held societal beliefs over a wide range of sensitive topics**. Students should engage in discourse with other students and the instructor respectfully. **My classroom is predicated on principles of mutual respect** and students are expected to exhibit this same respect for the diversity of ideas. **Forms of incivility towards other students or the instructor will not be tolerated**.

Instructor Error: Because instructor errors can and do occur, students should keep an extra copy of any work they submit. In addition, make sure to keep and safeguard graded assignments and tests until final course grades have been posted.

Course Policies

Access to Grades: All grades will be available in D2L. Please note that I am unable to furnish any information about grades or student status via e-mail or telephone. This is considered a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), even with student permission or at student request. Verify your D2L grades often. Discuss grade posting errors/omissions with me immediately.

Borderline Grades: Students will not be awarded extra points at the discretion of the instructor. Be aware at the outset that this course has a firm policy against grade "bumping". However, students will be automatically rounded to a higher letter grade at the .5 threshold (i.e., 89.5% is an A).

Incompletes: Grades of "incomplete" are given only under rare circumstances when students provide detailed documentation of a significant crisis (e.g., serious illness of the student or death in the immediate family) near the end of the semester and which render them unable to finish the course. Incomplete grades will not be given under any other circumstances. Students with circumstances

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negatively affecting their class performance should discuss the situation with me immediately so that we can identify and implement strategies for managing the problem(s).

PowerPoint: Students with approved documentation from Student Disability Services may receive hard copies of the PowerPoint presentations used to develop the online videos. Email the instructor for more information.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:
https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements

LMS Browser Support:
https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:
https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu**.**

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport

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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.
http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.
http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03
Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf

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http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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
East Texas A&M University
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

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

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University 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 Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University 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 ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:
http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at ETAMU located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit **www.tamuc.edu/counsel**

ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center ETAMU, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

AI use policy [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

ETAMU acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

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CJ575 Tentative Course Calendar

Week (Dates)	Topics, Videos, and Activities	Readings	Assignments
1 AUG 25-AUG 29	**Video 1:** Why Research? Syllabus, course structure, and assessment	Research Methods for the Social Sciences (RMSS), Ch. 1 [pp. 2-32]	**Due 08/31 (11:59PM):** Class Introduction (D2L Discussion Board)
2 SEP 1-5	**Video 2:** Research Ethics *Special Video:* Stanford Prison Experiment (link on D2L)	RMSS, Ch. 2 [pp. 33-51] Sample List of CJ Topics	**Due 09/07 (11:59PM):** Course Journal #1 RP1 (Research Topic)
3 SEP 8-12	**Video 3:** Developing a Research Question *Special Video:* APA Citations	RMSS, Ch. 3 [pp. 55-76] OwlPurdue APA https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html	**Due 9/14:** Case Study Assignment RP2 (Research Questions)
4 SEP 15-19	**Video 4:** Writing a Literature Review **Video 5:** Measurement and Units of Analysis	RMSS, Ch. 5 [pp. 109-127] RMSS, Ch. 4 [pp. 79-106]	**Due 09/21:** APA Citation Practice
5 SEP 22-26	**Video 6:** Data Collection Strategies	RMSS, Ch. 6 [pp. 129-151]	**Due 09/28:** **MIDTERM (opens Sept. 24 at 10AM and closes Sept. 28 at 11:59PM)**
6 SEP 29-OCT 3	**Video 7:** Sampling	RMSS, Ch. 7 [pp. 155-183]	**Due 10/05:** RP3 (Annotated Bib)
7 OCT 6-10	**Video 8:** Surveys	RMSS, Ch. 8 [pp. 185-219]	**Due 10/12:** Course Journal #2
8 OCT 13-17	**LITERATURE REVIEW**	*Sample Literature Review (D2L)*	***FINAL LITERATURE REVIEW (RP4) DUE WEDNESDAY OCT. 15 AT 11:59PM***

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