

**COURSE SYLLABUS**
**CRJ 310: CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH METHODS**

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**
Spring Semester (Session 1): January 8th - March 3rd, 2024

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**
This course is an introduction to basic research methods applied in the study of criminal justice and the social sciences. This course emphasizes the understanding of research methodology, ethics in social science research, statistics, and application of the scientific method. Students will review and critique research on crime causation, issues in law enforcement, courts, and corrections.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**
Hagan, F.E. (2018). *Research methods in criminal justice and criminology* (10th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**REQUIRED RESOURCES**

* Access to a computer
* Reliable internet access with a recommended to minimum Internet speed of 512kbps.
* Web camera, microphone, and audio
* The Canvas Learning Management System should be used on the current or first previous major release of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari. Because it's built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with a modern web browser.
* Canvas only requires an operating system that can run the latest compatible web browsers. Your computer operating system should be kept up to date with the latest recommended security updates and upgrades.

**TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES**

The Canvas Learning Management System maintains 24-hour, 7-day support. You may access technical support by selecting the help icon located in the left-side navigation menu within the Canvas course room.  Otherwise, call 762-499-0185.

Students experiencing issues with Reinhardt University email or Eagle Web should first visit the Reinhardt University Self-Help Desk at [https://reinhardtkb.blackbelthelp.com/Links to an external site.](https://reinhardtkb.blackbelthelp.com/)

The site features trouble shooting tips for common issues and a 24 hour, 7-day technical support chat feature.

You may also contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@reinhardt.edu or by phone at 1-877-447-2001.

**CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT**
Courses offered in a 8-week session are twice as intensive as those held during a traditional full semester. Each week students should expect to spend 14 hours interacting with course content through a combination of direct instruction and out of class student work.

Examples of direct instruction may include viewing, engaging in class forum discussions with the course instructor and other students, viewing or reading supplementary online content required by the instructor, completing course quizzes and/or examinations, and reading instructor announcements related to course material and instructor feedback on assignments.

Examples of out of class student work may include reading the assigned course textbook, doing independent library research, completing essay assignments, developing more extensive research papers, and studying in preparation for exams and quizzes.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After completing this course, the student will be able to:

* Demonstrate skills necessary to become an effective consumer of social science research.

* Evaluate academic and scientific research critically.

* Perform academic literature searches and use library resources in the compilation of peer reviewed journals articles.

* Explain the application and goals of qualitative and quantitative research.
Identify, explain, and apply the terms validity and reliability in the assessment of research quality.

* Demonstrate the ability to create a working research proposal.

**COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
All assignments must be completed by the learner. Learners are expected to read and adhere to the Academic Integrity section of Reinhardt University’s Academic Catalog. Cases of academic dishonesty may result in expulsion from the University, a failing grade for the course, or a failing grade for the assignment.

The following are recognized as unacceptable forms of academic behavior at Reinhardt University:

* Plagiarizing, that is presenting words or ideas not your own as if they were your own. The words of others must be enclosed in quotation marks and documented. The source of the distinctive ideas must also be acknowledged through appropriate documentation. (NOTE: Strictly adhere to APA citation and referencing guidelines to avoid this).

* Submitting a paper written by another student or another person as if it were your own.
Submitting a paper containing sentences, paragraphs, or sections lifted from another student’s work or other publication; there must be written documentation.

* Submitting a paper written by you for another course or occasion without the explicit knowledge and consent of the instructor.

* Fabricating evidence or statistics that supposedly represent your original research.
Cheating of any sort on tests, papers, projects, reports, etc.

* Using the internet inappropriately as a resource. See 3 above.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS**
Knowledge of the material presented in this course will be evaluated based on the satisfactory completion of all coursework. Methods of instruction and learning include unit reading assignments, discussion postings, individual research, and essay assignments. Learners are expected to complete all course activities during the week they are assigned, and in the manner prescribed.

**Reading Assignments**

Learners are expected to complete the assigned textbook readings for each module prior to participating in discussions.

**Discussion Assignments**

Each module discussion posting must contain a minimum of a 200 wordinitial response. The deadline for postings shall be published in Module Academic Requirements. Learners will be penalized 10 points for each day he/she is late on an initial posting. Initial postings will not be accepted after 11:59 PM (EST) on Friday.

Initial postings must be the learner’s original thoughts, ideas, and writing. Postings must be YOUR own work. See the notes above about Academic Integrity. If a learner wants to reference or cite material from the course textbook and/or outside scholarly resources, then s/he must use proper documentation and citations. As well, reference citations must be in accordance with APA guidelines.

Learners must reply to THREE DIFFERENT students in the class with a minimum of a 100 word response for each. The responses must be substantive in nature by adding additional knowledge to the conversation. Responses are due no later than 11:59 PM (EST) on Saturday.

Learners must also respond to any questions posed by the instructor. All postings and replies must adhere to APA 6th Edition guidelines regarding citations and referencing. Learners must also employ proper grammar, punctuation, and correct spelling.

**Essay Assignments**

Learners must complete all essay assignments no later than 11:59 PM (EST) on Sunday. Essay assignments often have more than one part. Be sure to answer each part of each question. Learners must adhere to the minimum word count specified for each assignment and cite textbook and/or scholarly works to support their answers. Assignments must adhere to the citation and referencing guidelines contained in the 6th Edition APA Manual. Learners must also employ proper grammar, punctuation, and correct spelling in all submissions.

**Research Design Paper**
Learners will write an eight (8)-page research design paper, focusing on a practical policy issue facing the criminal justice system. Once, you have selected your topic, you will write a research design paper or research proposal where you present a research question, research hypotheses, research theory, and how you will develop a test of these hypotheses and offer possible solutions (the research methodology) and the data analysis.

This research paper involves two distinctive components:
(1) Identifying and evaluating scholarly research and
(2) Original Research Design.

SEE THE RESEARCH COMPONENT SECTION FOUND AT THE END OF THIS SYLLABUS FOR SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS.

**EVALUATION & GRADING**
The following grading scale will be utilized in the determination of the student’s course grade:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Percentage** | **Corresponding Letter Grade** |
| 90% to 100% | A |
| 80% to 89% | B |
| 70% to 79% | C |
| 60% to 69% | D |
| 0% to 59% | F |

***Criminal Justice majors must earn a final grade of "C" or higher.***

**FINAL AVERAGE BREAKDOWN**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignment Category** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| Discussion Assignments | 30% |
| Essay Assignments | 30% |
| Research Design Paper | 20% |
| Research Article Critique | 10% |
| Research Bibliography | 10% |

**PROJECTED LEARNING SCHEDULE**

**Module #1: Monday, January 8th - Sunday, January 14th (1 Week)**
• Chapter 1: Introduction to Criminal Justice Research Methods
• Chapter 2: Ethics in Criminal Justice Research

**Module #2: Monday, Monday, January 15th – Sunday, January 21st (1 Week)**
• Chapter 3: Research Design: The Experimental Model & Its Variations

**Module #3:  Monday, January 22nd – Sunday, January 28th (1 Week)**
• Chapter 4: The Uniform Crime Reports & Sampling

**Module #4:  Monday, January 29th – Sunday, February 4th (1 Week)**
• Chapter 5: Survey Research: Questionnaires
• Chapter 6: Survey Research: Interviews & Telephone Surveys
• Chapter 7: Participant Observation & Case Studies

**Module #5: Monday, February 5th – Sunday, February 11th (1 Week)**
• Chapter 9: Validity, Reliability & Triangulation Strategies
• Chapter 10: Scaling & Index Construction

**Module #6: Monday, February 12th – Sunday, February 18th  (1 Week)**
• Chapter 13: Data Analysis: A User’s Guide to Statistics

**Module #7: Monday, February 19th – Sunday, March 3rd (2 Weeks)**
• Chapter 11: Policy Analysis & Evaluation Research

**ONLINE ATTENDANCE AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Students are accountable for all required work in each of their courses. They must assume full responsibility for class attendance in a way satisfactory to the instructor and for work missed because of absence. Since class sessions function not merely for individual learning but also for group interaction, absences can become a serious problem both for the individual and for the group.

Online courses are generally delivered over a period of 8 weeks with activities and assignments specified for each week. An online week is defined as being Monday 12:00 AM (EST) through Sunday at 11:59 PM (EST). Deadlines for attendance are based on Eastern Standard Time.

A student will be considered in attendance for a given week of online instruction if he or she participates in the course. Participation is defined as posting a response to a discussion assignment or submitting a completed course room activity/assignment during the online week prior to Sunday at 11:59 PM (EST).

**Initial Course Participation**
A student who fails to participate during the first 8 calendar days of a course shall be administratively dropped from the course.

**Ongoing Course Participation**
Ongoing course participation is satisfied through the continued completion of course room activities, such as written assignments, quizzes, or discussion question responses. Students who do not participate in a course for 7 or more consecutive days are not satisfying ongoing course participation.

Students who are not satisfying the ongoing course participation requirement shall be notified by a University representative via University email. The learner must resume participation in the course within 3 calendar days of the absence.

Students who do not resume participation in the course will be administratively withdrawn from the course and be issued a grade of “W” or “F”.

A grade of “W’ will be issued if an administrative or voluntary withdrawal occurs before 11:59 PM (EST) on Monday of the fifth week of the course.

A grade of “F” will be issued if an administrative or voluntary withdrawal occurs after 11:59 PM (EST) on Monday of the fifth week of the course.

Students may be impacted academically and financially in the case of voluntary and administrative withdrawals. It is the student’s responsibility to understand these implications.

**Online Academic Support Services**
Reinhardt University offers academic support services for online students through BrainFuse HelpNow. Services include access to live tutors, writing lab assistance, and study center resources. These resources are offered at no additional charge and are available on demand through [Course Resources](https://reinhardtuniversity.instructure.com/courses/9920/pages/course-resources).

**NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**
Reinhardt University does not discriminate in any of its policies, programs, or activities on the basis of race, color, age, culture, national origin, socioeconomic status, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation, physical (dis)ability or genetic information.

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 documented disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Academic Support Office (ASO).

Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. Phone is 770-720-5567. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters/forms.

**RESEARCH COMPONENT DIRECTIONS**
Research Design Paper

Each student will be responsible for a research design paper, focusing on an aspect of the police use of lethal or non-lethal force. Importantly, this research paper IS NOT a literature review where you summarize key findings and scholarship within the field, but this is an assignment where you critique current scholarly research and provide your own original RESEARCH ideas and methodology design. You are preparing a research paper, not an essay, and not a summary of a book or articles. As the term implies, you are expected to do research.

Your research paper should address a practical policy issue facing the criminal justice system.
This research paper involves two distinctive components:

(I) Identifying and evaluating scholarly research and (II) Original Research Design.

For the first part, you will identify a social science research question related to criminal justice and submit an annotated bibliography consisting of four scholarly articles that address that question. The due date for part I (a) of this assignment is Thursday, January 18th, 2024. Upload the assignment within Module #2 of the course room.

Next, after receiving feedback from me on your submission, you will select an article from that list and write a two-page summary and critique of the research design used by the scholars in that article. The due date for part I(b) of this is Thursday, February 1st, 2024. Upload the assignment within Module #4 in the course room.

(II) Secondly, based on the critique you have written regarding the chosen topic and scholarly article, you will write your own original research design paper. You are using your ideas from the critique to improve the research; thus, you will be formulating your own methods for analyzing this research.

What would you do differently to conduct this research and find answers (results) to the research question? How would you use different methods to test the research? You will write an eight-page research design paper where you will discuss your original ideas (your proposed research methodology) for testing the selected hypotheses and theory.

You will decide what is needed to improve this particular research and/or what new hypotheses, theory and/or strategy (methods) for conducting the research will be.
Your paper should include the following (consider using these as headings):

(1) Identification of the Research Topic/Problem
(2) Review of the Current Literature on the topic
(3) Summary of the research critique
(4) Reasons for why you see a need to improve the research
(5) Your proposed theory and hypotheses
(6) Your proposed strategy (the research methods) for analyzing the data and finding new or more conclusive results, (i.e. how you will conduct the research?)
(7) What your expectations are (what you expect to find when you evaluate the data with the new hypotheses, theory and methods?).

You are required to use three outside scholarly references along with your textbook to support your methodology and expectations. This paper is to be presented in the APA format.

The due date for this assignment is Tuesday, February 27th, 2024. Upload your completed research design paper to Module #7 in the course room.

Your papers must meet the following requirements:

* Written in APA 6th Edition format.
* Part I must be a minimum of 2 pages excluding cover page and reference page.
* Part II must be a minimum 8 pages including cover page and reference page.
* Must be on a pre-approved topic related to the police use of lethal and non-lethal force.
* Must have a title page in APA format.
* Must have a reference page in APA format.
* Must have a minimum of 3 acceptable references listedand cited in the body of the work. You are highly encouraged to exceed the minimum reference count.
* You may not use web pages as sources or references. You are allowed to use your course text as a source and scholarly sources found through GALILEO or the University’s electronic library.
* Double spacing is required between sentences and paragraphs per APA guidelines.
* Use Times New Roman 12 font when preparing your paper.
* Must demonstrate the ability to utilize short quotes, and summary/paraphrase in APA format.
* Plagiarism will not be tolerated…your paper must properly document all ideas and information not your own. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for this course. Other sanctions may be imposed based on University policy. See your syllabus and the University’s Academic Catalog for additional information.
* Do not attempt to copy and paste your research paper from research papers or essays available online. The instructor will diligently check all papers for plagiarism.
* Use of proper grammar, correct spelling, and writing principles are expected in all work.
* Full credit will not be granted for work that contains grammatical or spelling errors. In the event a student does not feel competent in this area he/she should discuss the matter with their instructor or advisor.

**Instructions for Research Paper Preparation (General Notes)**

Read the following instructions carefully. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a lower grade on the paper.

The purpose of a term paper is to convey the results of the research you have conducted.
Consequently the clearer the paper is in conveying information the more successful it will be.

Below are some suggestions. Failure to follow these directions will lower your grade.
The first step for a successful paper is to have a title. The title gives the reader an immediate idea as to what is likely to be encountered.

A second component is an introduction in which the author lays out the topics to be covered in the course of the paper. The introduction should be concise and the objectives of the paper clearly articulated.

A third component is a conclusion that recapitulates the major points made in the body of the paper.

In the body of the paper, the author should be careful to lead the reader along. Often this can be done successfully by the use of headings and subheadings to alert the reader that the author is moving on to a new topic. If headings and subheadings are not used, then it is imperative that proper transitions be used as new topics are introduced.

There is generally no place in a term paper for an encyclopedia. Researchers should be especially careful not to rely upon internet sources such as Wikipedia which can be accessed and modified by anyone as was revealed in late April of 2006 when gubernatorial candidate Cathy Cox fired her campaign manager for having posted negative information into the biography of her opponent Mark Taylor.

Remember the rule that you undoubtedly encountered in one or more high school English classes. Each major idea gets its own paragraph. A paragraph should consist of a topic sentence and then supporting sentences. Stringing together multiple ideas in a single paragraph simply causes confusion to the reader.

Long quotes should be indented and indented quotes do not need to be set off with quotation marks.

**References**
Documentation plays a critical role when sharing the results of a research effort. Research papers must indicate the sources of the information on which the writer has relied. Since this is a research paper, there must be documentation for information that is not generally known. A paper without citations has serious flaws.

Each documentation style requires full information. That is, you should provide the name or names of the authors, the title of the work and the publication in which the work is found. Items from scholarly journals, newspapers or magazines should include the date of the publication and the page numbers. LOOK at the APA guidelines!

When referencing articles collected in anthologies, the proper approach is to reference the author of the article and the article title and then indicate the title of the volume in which it appeared and the editors of the volume.

For items having more than one author it is incorrect to cite only the lead author. For items with two authors the citation should include both. For works having three or more authors either list each author or give the name of the first author followed by “et al.”

Newspapers, magazines, and book titles should be italicized.

For your reference page, items must be arranged alphabetically by the first letter in the last name of the first author. Articles for which the identity of the author is not provided should be alphabetized by the first letter in the first major word in the title.

The internet is a remarkably useful resource however in many instances to rely exclusively on internet sources will result in an inadequate research effort. Especially if you chose not to do original research it is likely that some of the relevant materials will appear in books and therefore not accessible on the internet.