

CRJ 635
Research Methods
Fall 2005
Wednesday Nights

Instructor: Bobby Moore, Ph.D.
Office: 202B Kethley Hall
Phone: (662) 846-4073
Email: bemoore@deltastate.edu
Webpage: http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/bmoore
Office Hours: Monday: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Other times by appointment.

Textbook: *The Practice of Research in Criminal Justice and Criminology* by Ronet Bachman and Russell Schutt (2nd Edition)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the process of social science research. More specifically, the course will introduce participants to the specific methods and techniques of research related to the field of criminal justice and criminology. Topics to be covered include:

- Basics of theory and research
- The types of research applied in criminal justice and criminology
- The methodology employed in criminal justice and criminology research
- Introduction to research design and sampling
- Preparing and administering a survey instrument
- How to locate criminal justice and criminology related data on the Internet
- Ethical issues in research and handling the human subjects review board

Special emphasis will be placed upon understanding the basics of the aforementioned issues, and providing information to assist students in their own current research endeavors. An understanding of these materials will also allow students to better understand the literature of criminal justice and criminology.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

This is a graduate level course, and as such there should be little need to discuss the importance of attendance. Students who are not in class will find they have difficulty in managing the coursework and the examinations. Any student who misses more than 2 classes will be penalized two letter grades for each subsequent absence. Any student who misses more than 4 classes will receive an automatic grade of “F” for the class. Also, arriving late to class on a regular basis will not be tolerated. If you have a situation that will result in your continued tardiness, then you need to speak with the professor as soon as possible.

Each class meeting will consist of a presentation of materials, as well as a discussion of assigned readings. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings and come to

class prepared to discuss the materials. Failure to participate in class, as noted by an apparent lack of participation on the student's part, will result in a one letter grade penalty.

GRADING

Examinations:

There will be a minimum of two examinations and a maximum of three examinations. One (or two) regular exams and then a final examination. While the examinations themselves are not comprehensive in nature, the materials are rather comprehensive. Students are encouraged to keep up with assignments and be prepared for examinations. These examinations will consist of a combination of short answer (10) and essay questions (4 or 5). The examination will account for 40% of the participant's final grade.

Research Project:

Students will be divided into three research groups (groups will be selected by the professor). Each group will be assigned a research project the second week of class. Groups will be required to complete a research proposal on a selected topic (topics will be discussed during week two and settled upon). This research proposal will consist of the following three components: 1) introduction (5 to 10 pages), 2) literature review (see paper requirements below) and 3) methodology (5 to 10 pages). Each of these components will be discussed in detail during class.

Upon completion of these research endeavors, each group will be responsible for preparing a thought-provoking and engaging presentation to the other members of the class. While the format of the presentation is up to the group, the group's grade will be based upon the creativity of the presentation, the presenters' familiarity with the materials, and the presenters' ability to answer questions related to the topic in question. The research project itself will account for 15% of the student's final grade. The presentation component will then also account for 15% of the student's final grade.

Paper:

Each student will also prepare an individual paper on their associated topic. These papers are not group projects and should be independent of the group's work. For example, the three students in group (a) could write three independent research reports on the following: 1) the history and development of the death penalty, 2) the historical view many other countries have on the death penalty, and 3) the legality of the death penalty in regards to the mentally ill or children. Students who are having trouble thinking of a topic are welcome to approach the professor for additional guidance. These papers must meet the following guidelines: All papers will be 15 to 20 pages in length, acceptable margins will be either [1.5 inches on the left, 1 inch on the top, right, and bottom] or [1.25 inches on the left, 1 inch on the top and bottom, and 1.25 inches on the right], the acceptable font for this paper will be Times New Roman [10 point or 12 point – students electing to use another font must complete a minimum of 20 pages], spacing is to be no greater than 2.0, all citations are to be APA format [if you are unfamiliar with the APA format of citation, then it is strongly recommended that you purchase a copy of the APA writing guide], and page counts do not include title page and reference page [abstract is included in the page count].

References for the paper must meet the following guidelines: students must have a minimum of 15 sources for their paper. Of this fifteen, no more than 5 may be electronic based. The 5 that may be electronic may not come from websites that are not official organizations or

government websites. For example, the website for the American Correctional Association may be used, but John's Criminal Justice Page on AOL Hometown may not. Journal articles that are located through the university's EBSCOHost or Full-text database do not count as electronic sources, and therefore must be correctly cited as if they were in print. Citations to webpages must be so complete that the professor may view the actual reference material by typing in the URL (uniform resource locator). Failure to follow these guidelines will result in an automatic one letter grade reduction. The paper will be graded on organization, content, grammar, and adherence to APA guidelines. Any student who is caught plagiarizing will receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course, and will face possible removal from Delta State University. If you are unsure of what plagiarism is, then you need to contact the professor as soon as possible. The paper will account for 30% of the student's final grade.

Grading Scale:

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

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.