



COURSE SYLLABUS
CJ 595.002 Research Literature & Techniques
Fall 2012

Instructor: Yvonne Villanueva-Russell, Associate Professor
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COURSE INFORMATION

Course Materials:

Books, and research articles based on the student's specific research focus and agreed on through consultation with the professor will be the expected and required reading material.

Suggested & Supplementary Readings: will be identified accordingly

Course Description:

This course is Option II for a student seeking a master's degree in criminal justice (applied criminology). This course is basically an individualized instruction which allows the student to produce a well organized and potential publishable piece of research. The student writes a formal research report based upon primary or secondary data or produces a theoretically grounded piece of original research. Emphasis is given to methods of interpretation and writing of a formal paper appropriate in the field of criminal justice. The student will employ skills learned from previous graduate level courses such as theory, research methods, and statistical analyses.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

1. utilize critical thinking skills.
2. read, analyze, develop a research project dealing with some facet of criminal justice demonstrating capabilities of conducting a research project its origin to completion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

The following assignments and requirements are outlined for the student(s) enrolled in this literature and research techniques study course:

- (1) The student is expected to read selected and assigned books and research articles for this class. With frequent discussions and interaction with the professor the student

should be able to demonstrate that he/she is most familiar with the subject material for the research project.

- (2) The student must write a graduate quality research paper on some aspect of in criminal justice or criminology. The student must share with the professor his/her idea of the focus of the paper before beginning the paper. Specific requirements and expectations of the research paper will be discussed with the student, and presented as handout or resource material.

The research project (paper) will be graded according to the following criteria (a more detailed rubric will be shared with the student to guide the research and influence the finished project), but the below areas are important and should be followed:

- The presence, strength and originality of a thesis
- The proper use of the literature search to support the developed thesis
- The degree to which the paper (research project) achieves the goal originally identified by the student
- There is evidence that the resources employed have been read and understood by the student and appropriately fit into the paper
- The organization of the paper is logical, progressive and appropriately covers the topic
- The mechanics (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) of the paper are correct and of graduate quality

*Note: Although the student does not have to have completed the research project by the time he/she takes the written comprehensive and oral examinations this project will be expected to be addressed during the oral examination. The student will be expected to inform the oral committee of his progress and experience in developing the research project.

Grading

Student performance will be evaluated as follows:

- Level of discussion with professor and degree of preparation for performing the research project (10%)
- Quality of the research project using an assortment of rubrics pointed out to the student during his/her interaction with the professor (90%)

The following letter grade scale will be used:

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 60 – 69

F = 59 or below

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

The primary form of communication with the student(s) enrolled in this course will be through email. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to this course will be disseminated to student(s) using your official University Email address available to be through MyLeo. It is your responsibility to frequently/regularly check your University Email.

Students who email me outside of office hours can expect a reply within a reasonable time,

except weekends and holidays. Weekend emails will be replied to on the first business day of returning to the campus/office.

For Library assistance – to access the Library databases and Library tutorials you must open a separate browser session. Minimize your eCollege session and open another browser window going to the Library's web site directly: <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/library> not from within ecollege.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Since this is an independent study type course, the Professor and student will decide upon dates that assignments and other work will be due. The student is expected to adhere to those agreed on dates that work is due to be turned in to the professor for grading.

There can be no late work. All work must be turned in on agreed time and date.

In this class employing research skills will be very important. The student is expected to follow all of the rules of writing research papers. In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice) the ASA (American Sociological Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) format or style of writing/citation is used. The student may use whichever one of these styles is most familiar. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people's words or when they quote other's words directly.

The student may employ the following citation web links for assistance in developing his/her research paper:

www.apastyle.org
http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/topnav/sociology_depts/quick_style_guide
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>
www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

This professor does not like the use of electronic citation. This matter will be discussed with the student.

University Specific Procedures:

This department has a strong policy and a low tolerance for cheating. Plagiarism is disliked and treated very seriously. 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 of 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. Sites that address plagiarism and how to avoid it: <http://www.plagiarism.org> or <http://www.unc.edu/depts/scweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>.

The professor will communicate with students through using the individual email address through the MyLeo system. Students should make sure they frequently check this email address.

A student may drop a course by logging into their MyLeo account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled 'Drop a Class' from among those choices found under the MyLeo section of the Web page.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the rules or policies relating to withdrawal or "X." You are encouraged to follow the appropriate procedures of the university as they relate to this matter. I will be as helpful and understanding where possible, but please be aware that this professor does not like to give an incomplete as a grade.

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
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

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*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course calendar will be setup in consultation with student(s).