

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Criminal Justice

CJ 488-01 Research Methods

Fall 2018

Tuesday/Thursday (TR) 9:25 – 10:40 AM - Room SSB 18

Instructor: Sherill V. C. Morris-Francis, Ph.D.

Office: Social Science Building Room “N”

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**Office Hours:**

Tuesday - 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Wednesday – 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Thursday – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Or by appointment

**Required Texts:**

(1) Maxfield M.G., & Babbie, E. R. (2018). Research methods for criminal justice and criminology (8<sup>th</sup> edition). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning. ISBN: 13: 978-1-337-09182-4

(2) Ferree, C. W., & Pfeifer, H. (2018). Write & Wrong: Writing within Criminal Justice (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC. ISBN: 978-1-284-11299-3

**PLEASE NOTE: The textbook(s) for this course are available on Reserve at the Circulation Desk at the James H. White Library for a 2-hour loan period (books must stay in the Library). Please take advantage of this resource, but keep in mind that copies of textbooks for each course are limited and may be in use by another student, particularly right before an assignment or reading is due, so plan your textbook use accordingly.**

**Catalog Course Description: (3 Credit hours).**

This course is an introductory course to research methods in criminal justice - Experiments, surveys, field research, unobtrusive research evaluation, and analysis are examined.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Discuss why knowledge of research methods is valuable to criminal justice professionals.
2. Compare and contrast the purposes of social science research;
3. Differentiate between quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and evaluative research method and what types of research questions can be answered with each method.
4. Differentiate between ethical and unethical research practices;

5. Interpret and critique existing criminological/social research; and
6. Prepare a scholarly research proposal.

### **Criminal Justice Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):**

Upon completion of the undergraduate program in criminal justice, the student should demonstrate understanding of the:

- Crime issues, trends, and basic legal principles in America
- The social, economic and political forces that influence the definition and response to crime in America
- The history, development and operations of the criminal justice system

### **CLASS FORMAT:**

This class will be taught using Team-Based Learning, which consists of **Reading Assurance Tests (RATs)**, facilitated discussions, team activities, and some mini-lectures.

### **Course Evaluation Methods/Teaching/Learning Strategies**

A variety of instructional techniques will be utilized in this course. The class will be taught under the philosophy of active learning and student participation utilizing a team-based learning approach. This approach will provide students with opportunities to regularly practice research skills that are essential to criminal justice practitioners. Students will be assigned to teams early in the semester and will work with those teams throughout the course. Course requirements are specifically designed to ensure that students are prepared for team work and that the team experience avoids typical problems of “group work” (e.g., free riders, dominant members, splitting up the work to avoid interaction, etc.). The responsibility for learning basic material is placed on individuals with work done outside of the class, while time in class is spent using that material in creative and sophisticated ways as both individuals and teams. All team work is done during class time. Course grades will be based on work from both individuals and teams. The following is a list of activities that will be done in the teams:

- a. You will take RATs first as an individual, then with your team, to ensure that you understand the most important information that will be applied to the Team-Based Learning Activity. These RATs will take place at strategic points throughout the semester.
- b. You will solve specific problems, or Team-Based Learning Activities. You will be asked to generate your own solutions to the problems or issues, and work with your team members to come to a consensus about the solution, which you will report and defend as a team. These will be the basis for class discussions.
- c. You will evaluate your team members in terms of preparation, flexibility, contributions and respect for the group (i.e., on-time and regular attendance). Peer evaluations are an integral part of TBL as they help to assure accountability among team members.

d. Class attendance will be taken at every session, so it is highly recommended that you attend class regularly. Failure to attend class will result in lost participation points and reduced course engagement. Please arrive early or on time, as class will start promptly at 9:25 AM. On the days that you have a RAT, the RAT will be given at the beginning of the class period and arriving late will earn you 0 points on the Individual RAT (i-RAT), though you will earn Team RAT (t-RAT) points. You may not make up that day's i-RAT.

e. If for some reason you must miss class, please notify the instructor in order to be able to make up missed work. It is not possible to make up Team Activities.

f. As a Team member, please be prepared to ask and respond to questions and participate in class discussion. Students must remember that informed and interested participation will greatly impact their final grade. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity. Thus, I cannot emphasize enough the need to have the book early in the course.

### **Assignments:**

Each student is required to turn in/participate in the following assignments described below. The purpose of these assignments is simply to ensure that the students have read and understood the lecture material and the content of each chapter. No late assignment will be accepted, which means the student can get a zero for not submitting their assignment on time. Similarly, the instructor will not accept any assignment ahead of time, except in anticipation of a major bed ridden illness or some other reason. In any case, please let the instructor know ahead of time. Not turning in an assignment can be a costly decision as these assignments comprise 50% of your overall grade. This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes of the course.

### **Assignment #1 – Protecting Human Research Training – 10% (Individual Submission)**

Students are required to complete the training about protecting human research participants. This training is provided by the National Institute of Health on conducting research with human subjects.

Please follow the following instructions:

1. Go to <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>. Or Google “Protecting Human Research Participants”
2. Register to participate in the training (i.e. enter your email and create a password). Once registered, begin with the “introduction” module.
3. The training will take approximately 1-3 hours to complete.
4. After completing the training, you will receive a certificate. Please print this and turn it in to your professor (Dr. Morris-Francis) on or before September 13, 2018.

### **Assignment #2 – Write & Wrong Weekly Activities – 15% (Team Based)**

Students will be required to complete the weekly activities as outlined in the Write & Wrong Workbook. Workbook activities will be conducted on Thursday each week.

### **Assignment #3 – Quantitative/Quantitative Research Proposal – 25% - Individual**

Over the course of the semester, students will work on an individual research proposal divided into two parts. Part 1 (worth 10%) will require students to pick a contemporary criminal justice research topic, write at least 3 research questions, and discuss its importance. Part 2 (worth 15%) will require students to develop a qualitative and/or quantitative research proposal using one of the research methods covered in this course. Please discuss the topic or issue you choose with your professor (Dr. Morris-Francis). Please note that your topic must be approved by your professor, and she will limit the number of students who are writing on the same or closely related topics.

Further details for both of these assignments will be covered later in the semester. Students may discuss this assignment with one another, but the final product is graded individually and should be unique to each student. Papers are due on the date listed in the course schedule and late papers will not be accepted.

The paper is to follow the APA style and must be between four (4) to six (6) typed double spaced pages, excluding title and reference pages. For information on APA style/format, please reference the APA (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) Manual or students can access the APA website at [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org), or your workbook “Wright or Wrong”. In addition, the course paper must consist of a minimum of eight (8) different citations/sources, including peer reviewed articles, books, etc. (Note: Wikipedia sources cannot be used as a source in this project).

Also, before the instructor (Dr. Morris-Francis) grade each student/group papers, the papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com

The final course paper is due on or before December 4, 2018

Please note that plagiarism (the act of incorporating material that comes from another author without citing the source) is the most serious intellectual fraud and must be avoided. Any act of plagiarism will result in at least a failing grade for the assignment(s) and/or course. All papers will be submitted to Turn-it-in. (Please see attached term/research paper rubric)

\*Note: All papers (including projects) must be typed, double-spaced and in APA format, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

### **Exams – 30%**

**Pre-Post Test: This test will be administered on Day 1 of the Class and again before the final Exam.**

Examinations: There will be a minimum of two (2) examinations, each worth 100 points. Each exam will have approximately 70 to 90 questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, essay). It is important that students come to class and take good notes to successfully pass this class. Also, the exams are not open notes/open book; so students need to study the material and remember the important concepts. Each exam will encompass only the materials analyzed during that portion of the course.

If a student must miss a test, exam or quiz (due to an emergency), the instructor must be informed before the test is administered, via telephone or e-mail. These cases will be handled on an individual basis. Students can only miss ONE test due to an emergency. In such an event, the new test administered will be ALL essay/discussion questions.

### **Reading Assurance Tests - RATs: - 20%**

These in-class quizzes (minimum 7) assess students' comprehension of assigned readings to ensure that they are adequately prepared to apply the knowledge from those readings to class activities. RATs are closed-book tests that are administered twice in the same day. First students take the test individually (i-RATs). Each i-RAT is worth 30 points. Once they turn in their individual responses, then students take the test again as a team (t-RATs). Team members discuss each question to obtain consensus about the answer. Each t-RAT is worth 40 points. The lowest i-RAT and t-RAT score for each individual will be dropped at the end of the semester to allow for absences. Make-ups for RATs will only be allowed for exceptional circumstances upon prior approval by the professor.

Class participation is key!!! The instructor is interested in creating a dialogue – in which the students actively participate – as they examine key topics and issues in criminal justice.

**PLEASE NOTE: THE TOP TEAM MEMBERS WILL BE AWARDED AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER!!!!!!**

**Extra Credit:** If an opportunity for extra credit presents itself, it will be discussed in class and made available to the entire class at the discretion of the instructor. There will be no individual opportunities for extra credit.

### Grading Matrix

Instruments	Value (points or percentages)		Total
Exams 2 @ 100.	200 points	30%	30
Assignment 1	100 points	10%	10
Assignments 2	100 points	15%	15
Assignment 3	100 points	25%	25
RATs	200 points	20%	20
Class Attendance/Participation			
Total:	700 points	100%	100

### Grading Scale:

A = 100 – 90%; B = 89 – 80%; C = 79 – 70%; D = 69 – 60%; F = 59 – 0%

### Grade Appeals:

Any student who believes that s/he has been graded unfairly, even after talking with me about the grade, may appeal that grade by following University procedures as explained in the Student

Handbook. Please keep records of all graded assignments and make all appeals in writing with the proper documentation. It is the student's responsibility to prove that s/he has been graded unfairly.

### **Attendance and Participation Policy:**

Each student should be aware of Mississippi Valley State University's attendance requirements as reflected in its catalogue and that repetitive non-attendance could result in dropping the student from the course. Consistent and punctual class attendance is required. Tardiness is not acceptable unless bona fide excuses are provided.

### **Submission of Work:**

The first week begins the first day of the term. Scheduled assignments **MUST** be completed and successfully submitted when requested by instructor by the due dates and times. Assignments will be submitted in person or on line as dictated by the professor.

NO opportunities will be available for making up class activities or assignments if students do not have a bona fide excuse. All course-writing assignments have to be submitted in APA format (6<sup>th</sup> edition).

### **Make-up Examination Policy:**

Make-up examinations may be scheduled only if a student can demonstrate (with supporting documents) the occurrence of an unavoidable event (sickness, accident, death, etc.).

### **Course Drop/Incomplete:**

Students not completing the course for any reason are required to submit official drop notices to the Registrar's Office prior to the deadline date. This is your responsibility. Failure to comply with the procedure WILL result in you receiving a letter grade of "F" or "UF."

Also, if for any reason you decide to withdraw from the university at any time, please withdraw properly. Not officially withdrawing from the university may impact your financial aid and result in you owing the university.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:**

Cheating in any fashion will not be tolerated, including but not limited to plagiarizing another's words, work or ideas on individual class assignments.

To address the situation of plagiarism, the University has implemented *Turnitin* to fight plagiarism and improve reading, writing, and research skills. *Turnitin* is a comprehensive plagiarism prevention system that lets faculty quickly and effectively check all students' work. Results are based on exhaustive searches of billions of pages from both current and archived instances on the Internet. Plagiarism will result in at least a failing grade for the assignment(s) and/or course.

## **Academic Integrity:**

All acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating on exams, plagiarism, internet papers, paraphrasing internet papers, presenting someone else's work as your own, failing to meet academic and professional requirements, will result in an automatic "F". The University's academic honesty and plagiarism policies are enforced in this course. Please review these policies in the Student handbook or catalog.

## **Special Needs and Accommodations:**

Mississippi Valley State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If you feel you are eligible to receive accommodations for a covered disability (medical, physical, psychiatric, learning, vision, hearing, etc.) and would like to request it for this course, you must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) program administered by University College. It is recommended that you visit the Disabilities Office located inside the EMAP Computer Lab in the Technical Education (IT) Building to register for the program at the beginning of each semester. If you are determined to be eligible after your confidential consultation, you will be provided with a Memo of Accommodations that must be submitted to each of your instructors.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact Mr. Billy Benson, Jr. via phone or email at 662-254-3005 or [billy.benson@mvsu.edu](mailto:billy.benson@mvsu.edu).

Accommodation is not a courtesy...it's the law.

### TYPES OF DISABILITIES COVERED UNDER THE LAW

Acquired Brain Injury  
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
Blind and Low Vision  
Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing  
Learning Disabilities  
Medical Disabilities  
Mental Health Disabilities  
Mobility Impairments

Dean, University College  
Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)  
H.G. Carpenter Building  
(662) 254-8376

Course Outline: The Course outline is *subject to some changes depending on the needs and*

<i>level of the class.</i>	
WEEKS	ASSIGNMENTS
1 08/20 – 08/24	August 20: Classes Begin Introduction of Students and Professor Class requirements/course syllabus Write & Wrong and Research Proposal process explained. <b>PRE-TEST</b> Assigned Reading - Chapter 1
2 08/27 – 08/31	Part One—An Introduction to Criminal Justice Inquiry Chapter 1- Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry Assigned Reading: Chapter 2 Unit 1 – Write & Wrong: Library Research – An Overview
3 09/3 – 09/7	Chapter 2-Foundation of Criminal Justice Research Assigned Reading: Chapter 3 <b>Labor Day Holiday – September 3, 2018</b> <b>RAT #1</b>
4 09/10 – 9/14	Chapter 3—Ethics and Criminal Justice Research Assigned Reading: Chapter 3 Unit 2 – Write & Wrong – Criminal Justice Library Research <b>Last Day to Add/Drop Classes – September 10, 2018</b> <b>December Graduation Application Due – Sept. 14, 2018</b> <b>Assignment #1 Due on September 13, 2018</b>
5 09/17 – 9/21	Part Two – Structuring Criminal Justice Inquiry Chapter 4 – General Issues in Research Design Assigned Reading: Chapter 5 <b>RAT # 2</b>
6 9/24 – 9/28	Chapter 5 – Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement Submit topics for Research Paper/Proposal Assigned Reading: Chapter 6 Unit 3 – Write & Wrong – Plagiarism <b>Graduate Expo - September 27, 2018</b>
7 10/1 – 10/5	<b>MID-TERM EXAMS</b> <b>October 4, 2018 - Part 1 Research Proposal Due</b> <b>RAT # 3</b>
8 10/8 – 10/12	Chapter 6 – Measuring Crime Assigned Reading: Chapter 6 Unit – 7 – Write & Wrong – Creating a Reference List in APA Style <b>October 8: Deadline to submit Mid-Term Grades</b> <b>October 11: Online Registration begins for Spring 2019</b>



9 10/15 – 10/19	Chapter 7 – Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs  <b>RAT #4</b>
10 10/22 – 10/26	Part Three: Modes of Observation Chapter 8 – Sampling Unit 8 – Write & Wrong – Citing in the Text in APA Style
11 10/29 – 11/2	Chapter 9 – Survey Research Assigned Readings: Chapter 10 November 2, 2018 - Last Day to Withdraw from A Class <b>RAT #5</b>
12 11/5 – 11/9	Chapter 10 – Qualitative Interviewing Assigned Reading: Chapter 11 Unit 5 – Write & Wrong- Mechanics of Writing: From the First Draft to the Final Paper <b>November 9, 2018 – Last Day to Withdraw from the University</b>
13 11/12 – 11/16	Chapter 11 – Field Observation Assigned Readings: Chapter 12 <b>RAT #6</b>
14 11/19 – 11/23	<b>Fall Break</b> <b>Thanksgiving Holidays</b>
15 11/26 – 11/30	Chapter 12 – Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data Assigned Readings: Chapter 13 & 14 <b>RAT #7</b>
16 12/3 – 12/7	<b>POST-TEST</b> <b>FINAL EXAMS</b> <b>December 4, 2017 - Course Paper Due</b>
17 12/10 – 12/14	December 10, 2018 - Deadline to Submit Final Grades

Disclaimer:	<i>I reserve the right to change anything in this syllabus. All changes will be announced in class or via Blackboard mail, if necessary. Be aware that if I feel readings are not being completed, I will give unannounced quizzes. If I feel class participation is lackluster, I may grade it more heavily. Any changes will count towards your grade in addition to the grading structure described above.</i>
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	<i>Realistically, these options create more work for both you and I. So, let's not have to resort to them.</i>
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**Course Procedures**

Students are expected to be civil – respect for themselves, other students, and the instructor at all times. Talking while the class is in session, without being called on by the instructor, is very disruptive. Students who are disruptive will be asked to vacate the classroom and have a conference with the instructor prior to returning to the classroom. Please note that cell phones should be turned off and no children, or persons not registered for the course are allowed in the classroom. Continued disruption in this regard can result in a deduction of 10 points from your grade.

**THIS CLASS REQUIRES REGULAR ATTENDANCE.**

Attendance will be taken each lecture. Absences, tardiness and leaving the classroom before class is dismissed are hereby discouraged, since both can have a negative effect on your grades. In signing up the honor system will be used. Students will legibly sign their names on the roll sheet. You are not allowed to sign up a friend, even when asked by that friend. In cases where the honor system is not observed, the situation will be brought up to the Program Coordinator, and if necessary to the attention of Judicial Services (in writing). This letter will be kept in the files of all students involved until they graduate (Note: employers do check school records!)

**RUBRIC FOR TERM/RESEARCH PAPER**

<b>Category/Criteria</b> <b>(75 total points)</b>	<b>Excellent</b> <b>A/B (4)</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> <b>(3)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b> <b>D/F</b> <b>(2)</b>
<b>Mechanics</b> <b>(15 points)</b>	<b>12-15 points:</b> Paper has no to a few (0 to two) spelling, grammatical or sentence structure errors.	<b>11 points:</b> Paper has some (3 to 5) spelling, punctuation, grammatical and sentence structure errors, but not enough to detract from the content.	<b>0-10 points:</b> An abundance of spelling, grammatical, punctuation, and sentence structure errors that detracts from the content.
<b>Organization</b> <b>(20 points)</b>	<b>15-20 points:</b> Paper follows the APA 6 <sup>th</sup> ed. format, progresses in a logical manner, and has appropriate transitions.	<b>13-14 points:</b> Paper has some problems with format, logic and transitions, but not enough to detract from the content.	<b>0-12 points:</b> An abundance of format, logic and transition issues that detracts from the content.
<b>Citations/Sources</b> <b>(10 points)</b>	<b>8-10 points:</b> All sources are properly cited both in-text and in the reference page.	<b>7 points:</b> Only minor issues with citation placement and reference page.	<b>0-6 points:</b> An abundance of citation errors in-text or in the reference page.
<b>Content.</b> <b>(30 points)</b>	<b>22-30 points:</b> Author addresses all aspects of the assignment, has fully developed ideas, uses description and analysis appropriately, demonstrates critical thinking skills and uses appropriate sources.	<b>19-21 points:</b> Author needs to make minor improvements to addressing, developing ideas, describing/analyzing, demonstrating critical thinking skills and using appropriate sources.	<b>0-18 points:</b> Author fails to address the assignment, develop ideas completely, describe or analyze appropriately, use critical thinking skills and use appropriate sources.

Source: (Lenning & Quinn, 2011)

**If student/learner submits a paper with more than 9% commonalities of published information (according to turnitin.com), then, the student will obtain a total of 0 points for his or her submission/submittal.**

**Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_/75**

General Comments: