CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH METHODS  
CJUS 5700.001  
FALL 2019

Instructor: Jessica Craig, Ph.D.  
Class meeting: M 2:00 – 4:50 PM

Term: Fall 2019  
Classroom: Chilton 274

INSTRUCTOR’S CONTACT INFORMATION  
Office location: Chilton 273L  
E-mail (preferred): Jessica.Craig@unt.edu  
Phone: 940-565-3464  
Office hours: Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30AM or by appointment

Email expectations: When sending an email, please put the COURSE NUMBER (CJUS 5700) in the subject line of the mail. I can only discuss grades over email if it was sent through your Eagle Connect email account (username@unt.edu). You can expect to receive a response within 48 hours during the week and 72 hours on the weekend. If you have not received a response within that time, please email me back as it may have gotten lost.

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
The purpose of this course is to assist students in becoming both critical consumers and producers of scientific research. Through an understanding of research methodology, the student should be better prepared to determine the adequacy of findings from studies reported in both technical research reports and in academic journals. Further, students should be able to plan, implement, and assess the outcomes of studies that they might initiate. More specifically, students should be able to: (1) distinguish between the various quantitative and qualitative research designs as may be dictated by the overall research question; (2) appreciate the protection of human research subjects and other ethical issues associated with scientific research; and (3) communicate to a wide range of audiences the technical language of research. Students should come away from the course with an appreciation for the relationship between theory (the abstract) and research (the technical) and how both operate in society.

CLASS FORMAT  
Team-Based Learning, which consists of Reading Assurance Tests (RATs), facilitated discussions, team activities, and some mini-lectures.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES  
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Identify and examine the purposes and issues of conducting scientific research in criminal justice.
2. Evaluate the various forms of measurement, data collection, and sampling techniques used in criminal justice research.
3. Explain issues in research design, including criteria for causality, types of validity, units of analysis, different types of research design, and stages in the research process.
4. Find and use resources for answering real world research questions.
5. Critically evaluate research based on knowledge of the research process.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

NOTE: If a student chooses to purchase anything other than the current edition of the assigned course text, it is their responsibility to ensure access to and familiarity with the most up-to-date course materials.

**Additional materials in the forms of articles and/or book chapters will supplement this course.**

**Course Notes and Recommendations**
Please make sure to have your official UNT email forwarded to your preferred email address (if different) to receive important updates, changes, announcements, class cancellations (if applicable), and generally, so I can reach you if necessary.

**Before you email Dr. Craig with a question, make sure to review this syllabus. Most questions are answered in this document.**

The announcement board in Canvas, and email, will be used for primary communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently.

**Important:** It is your responsibility to utilize a computer system that works and is compatible with the UNT online system/Canvas.

**Team-Based Learning**
This course will use a team-based learning approach that will provide students with opportunities to regularly practice skills that are essential to a liberal arts education. 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 individuals 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 what will occur in your 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 the beginning of each unit.

b. **You will solve specific problems**, aka Team-Based Learning Activities. You will be asked to generate your own solutions, and also 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. While attendance is not taken, 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 we will start promptly at 2 PM. 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, though you will earn Team 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.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Your final grade will be determined based on your performance on a research proposal, smaller written assignments, several individual- and team RATs, group participation, and peer evaluations. There are a total of 900 points that can be earned in this class.

Research Proposal: 150 points  
Assignments: 150 points total  
Individual RAT: 6 @ 30 points each  
Team RAT: 6 @ 40 points each  
Class participation: 80 points total  
Peer evaluations: 100 points total

Grading Scale:  
810 – 900 = A  
720-809 = B  
630-719 = C  
540-629 = D  
539 or fewer points = F

**Research Proposal (150 points total)**

Each student will identify an empirical research question to be addressed by their research proposal. For this project, the research question must be causal in nature (what is the effect of X on Y?). In other words, proposals seeking to address research questions of a descriptive (e.g., characteristics of homicide offenders) or exploratory (e.g., how do prostitutes distinguish between undercover police officers and “Johns”?) nature are unacceptable. Because the proposal requires you to do a literature review, it is important that the research question be derived from an existing literature on your topic. The topic must be approved by the professor. Further details and requirements for this proposal will be forthcoming.

**Assignments (150 points total)**

In preparation for the research proposal, the students will submit four assignments throughout the course. These will be form the bulk of the research proposal due at the end of the semester. The first two (Problem Statement and Research Hypothesis) will be worth 25 points each and the other two (Sampling and Research Design) will be worth 50 points each. Further details and requirements for each of these assignments will be forthcoming. Please note the due dates for each assignment at the end of this syllabus.
**RATs:** These in-class tests 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. Make-ups for RATs will only be allowed for exceptional circumstances (see attendance policy below) upon prior approval by the professor.

**Class Participation:** As this class requires active participation, students are expected to actively contribute to all discussions and activities. Students will also present a draft of their research proposal to the class at the end of the semester. Students’ ability to effectively communicate, share their viewpoint, and engage in meaningful discussions will be evaluated by the instructor. A student can earn up to 80 points for their participation.

**Peer Evaluations:** In order to ensure that students do their share of the teamwork, each individual’s contributions to the team will be evaluated by the team members at the midpoint and end of the semester. Each evaluation is worth 50 points. The sum of these two scores will count toward each individual’s final grade and be worth 100 points.

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

**CLASS POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy**
The course is specifically designed to make the most of the time we spend together as a class. As such, students are expected to attend every class. Since this is an active-learning course, it is much more difficult to keep up with the class when you do not attend. The professor will only make accommodations for missed assignments for students under exceptional circumstances. This includes illnesses lasting over one week, illness or death of family member, or major religious observances. These will be extremely rare events and will require proper documentation.

Students that have fallen behind, are failing and/or choose to not complete the coursework for the semester are responsible for officially withdrawing themselves from the course; failure to do so will result in a performance grade of “F.” Last day to withdraw with a grade of “W” is November 22, 2019.

**Make-Up Policy**
There will be no opportunities to make up any missed coursework with the exception of authorized absences according to University policies prescribing authorized absences in certain situations. I reserve the right to consider extreme circumstances and modify this rule. Students should notify me prior to missing an assignment, if possible. Those in athletics, those who are absent for religious holidays, and/or those involved in other school supported activities that require being absent from class will be allowed to make up assignments if proper procedures are
followed in requesting an excused absence. I must have written documentation in advance that you will be away from class for the absence to be excused.

Student Behavior and University Policy
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

Additionally, disruptive behaviors such as arriving late, having a conversation while someone else is talking, profanity, sleeping, text messaging, using laptops/tablets for anything other than course related activities, cell phones going off during class, etc. are not acceptable. Students repeatedly engaging in any of these behaviors may be asked to leave the classroom.

Additional policies:
- Recording devices are not allowed in the classroom unless specifically approved by the instructor.
- Tobacco products of any kind (including e-cigs) are not allowed in the classroom.
- Cell phones, pagers, or any other electronic device that makes noise should be turned off before class.
- Due to liability concerns and the content of course discussions, children are not permitted in the classroom at any time.
- Laptops and similar devices can be used during class as long as they are used for taking notes and/or other related classroom functions. If used for surfing the web, instant messaging, sending emails or otherwise, they will not be allowed in the classroom.

To be successful at learning and understanding the material in this class, it is essential that you read and complete the assigned material and engage in thoughtful discussions both in class and online. Your active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions will be taken into account at all times during the semester.

A classroom, especially during times of discussion, is a place to express ideas, opinions, and engage in thoughtful discussions. Students will respect the views and opinions of others at all times or their status in the course will be examined. In sum, simply be appropriate during all interactions. Each student brings unique insight and perspectives, and that can make for a very interesting and lively discussion forum, but just please be appropriate and respectful of others. Please review the graduate catalog concerning conduct which adversely affects the university community.

Authorized Absences
Absences are authorized only in cases of participation in school sponsored activities and/or religious holidays. For an excused absence due to a school sponsored activity, students must be
approved in advance by the department chair and academic dean. Within three days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to instructor. Students who wish to request an excused absence for religious holidays can do so and will be excused from class as long as they make a request within the required time frame set by the University (see the most recent undergraduate catalog). Notification must be in writing so that I may have it for my records. You must arrange to make up any work missed during the excused religious absence or school sponsored activity.

**Academic Dishonesty/Integrity**
Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**Office of Disability Accommodation**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student.

Students can access resources and information regarding disability accommodations in the Academic Support tab in Canvas. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**Student Evaluation of Instruction**
Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will
be made available at the end of the semester to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught.

**Syllabus Changes**
I reserve the right and have the discretion to change this syllabus. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, it is sometimes the case that the syllabus must be modified. In the case that the syllabus needs to be adjusted, I will announce such adjustments to the class. I will make every effort to ensure that any changes to the syllabus benefit the class as a whole. It is the student’s responsibility to check announcements/email so that any and all syllabus changes are documented. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of failure to check and read announcements does not constitute a defense against missed assignments, test dates, and other applicable changes.

**Succeed at UNT**
UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grown. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go success.unt.edu/.

**Emergency Notification & Procedures**
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Retention of Student Records**
Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university’s policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html

**Miscellaneous:**
The material posted online is my personal intellectual property or that of the University of North Texas. You may not utilize the material for other than class purposes.

A variety of resources services are available to students in the Academic Support tab in Canvas.
# Academic Calendar

[NOTE: Read the assigned reading for each day prior to coming to class; additional readings may be added and these will be announced in class and on Canvas]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC, READING ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/26/19</td>
<td>Unit 1: Course Introduction; What Is Research and Why Does It Matter?</td>
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<td><em>RAT - Practice</em></td>
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<td>9/2/19</td>
<td><em>No Class- Labor Day</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/9/19</td>
<td>Unit 1: What Is Research and Why Does It Matter?</td>
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<td>Readings: Articles on Canvas about <em>Acres of Skin</em> and Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment</td>
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<td><em>Problem Statement Assignment due</em></td>
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<td>9/16/19</td>
<td>Unit 2: Measurement</td>
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<td>Readings: Ch. 4 of <em>The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice</em> and “Reliability and Validity of Self-Report Data” excerpt found on Canvas</td>
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<td><em>RAT 1</em></td>
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<td>9/23/19</td>
<td>Unit 2: Measurement</td>
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<td>Readings: Bowman &amp; Mowen (2017); Widom &amp; Shepard (1996)</td>
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<td>9/30/19</td>
<td>Unit 3: Sampling</td>
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<td><em>RAT 2</em></td>
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<td><em>Research Hypothesis &amp; Measurement Assignment due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/7/19</td>
<td>Unit 3: Sampling</td>
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<td>Readings: Ahonen et al. (2017); Farrington et al. (2015); Piquero, Schoepfer, &amp; Langton (2010)</td>
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<td><em>Midterm Peer Evaluations due</em></td>
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<td>10/14/19</td>
<td>Unit 4: Causality and Experimental Designs</td>
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<td><em>RAT 3</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/21/19</td>
<td>Unit 4: Causality and Experimental Designs</td>
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<td>Readings: Berk et al. (1988); Sampson (2010); Weisburd (2010)</td>
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<td><em>Sampling Assignment due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/28/19</td>
<td>Unit 4: Causality and Experimental Designs</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/25/19</td>
<td>Research Proposal Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/2/19</td>
<td>Unit 7: Putting It All Together: Applied vs. Basic Science</td>
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