Research Methods in Criminal Justice (CJUS 4700.901)
Syllabus
Fall 2022

Instructor: Jordan Russell, M.S.
Email: Jordan.Russell@unt.edu

Email expectations: When sending an email, please put the COURSE NUMBER (CJUS 4700) in the subject line of the mail. Only emails sent through your UNT email account (username@my.unt.edu) will receive a response. 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.

For questions, please first email the Teaching Assistant, Ms. Tyra Gardiner at Tyra.Gardiner@unt.edu
Email me directly do not use Canvas Inbox.

Also, to ensure that you receive timely course related correspondence, make sure your official email address at UNT is forwarded to your preferred email address.

Course Description:
Research methods is designed to help students learn the various ways in which criminal justice questions can be answered. Many of these questions can be addressed in multiple ways, with multiple techniques, each having their own advantages and disadvantages. Discussing and evaluating these techniques for criminal justice related questions is the overall focus of this course. Major topics related to this overall focus include research ethics and human participant guidelines, the nature of causation versus correlation, experimental and survey research designs, sampling, qualitative research, the advantages and disadvantages of experimental, survey, and qualitative research designs, and reliability and validity among others.

This course is primarily designed as an introduction and evaluation of several “research methods” so that students become intelligent consumers of research. It is geared toward those who desire a basis for graduate school and/or a foundation of research methods for their chosen occupation. This course covers a wide variety of topics to help illustrate the research process in the social sciences.

Student Learning Objectives/ Outcomes:
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
1. Describe the language of research.
2. Differentiate probability and non-probability sampling methods
3. Distinguish between scientific and non-scientific research
4. Differentiate between correlation and causation in research
5. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of research strategies
6. Describe various ways to gather data to answer different types of research questions
7. Describe the history of using human subjects in research and ethical guidelines
8. Discuss federal, state, and institutional requirements researchers must follow to protect human subjects involved in the research process
9. Construct a survey using skills in questionnaire construction, placement, wording, and face-to-face interview protocols
10. Discuss ways to reduce non-response associated with mail, telephone surveys, face-to-face interviews, and internet surveys
11. Describe the qualitative research process
12. Differentiate between the many types of “validity” and “reliability” checks involved in research
13. Critically evaluate research findings based on knowledge of the research process

**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, class cancellations (if applicable), and generally, so I can reach you if necessary.
The announcement board in Canvas will be used for primary communication to the class as a whole. I advise you check the announcements section frequently

Do not email me through Canvas. Utilizing a compatible computer system is especially critical during examination times. I would recommend that you take your exams on the UNT campus if possible. If that is not possible, I would recommend you avoid waiting until the last minute to take your exam in case problems arise.

**Required Materials:**
The assigned texts listed below are required for all students enrolled in this class. Reading assignments are noted in the course calendar. All students are expected to read the assigned chapters prior to the date specified in the course calendar. The assigned readings will serve as a foundation for the discussion of issues in class as well as examination material.

**Required Text:**

Additional readings may be discussed/assigned during the class and may require a visit to the university library.

**Method of Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Point Totals</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 @ 50 points each)</td>
<td>150 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions (4 @ 20 points each)</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB Assignment</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>280 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Course grades will be calculated using the following scale: Grades are based on a points total and not a percentage.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>252 – 280 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>224 – 279 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>196 – 223 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>168 – 195 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>167 pts or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exams: Each student will be required to take an exam on the material covered for that section of the course. Each exam is worth 50 points for a course total of 150 points. See the Course Calendar, in this syllabus, for dates. Each exam can consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer, or essay questions. Each exam will cover all module note material, assigned material in the classroom text, other assigned reading material, and any other material used/assigned/covered in the course. Students will receive two attempts for each Exam, with the higher of the two attempts counting towards course points. Additional instructions will be provided in Canvas.

IRB Assignment: Students will complete the Institutional Review Board training (see Course Calendar) and turn in their certificate via Canvas. This assignment will be worth 50 points and is a completion assignment (50 pts = IRB Certificate turned in; 0 pts = IRB Certificate not turned in). Additional instructions on how to complete this assignment will be provided in Canvas.

Discussions: Students will participate in assigned online discussions. Questions will be posted by your instructor and you are expected to contribute answers and discussion to the topic.

*Each discussion assignment will be eligible for a maximum of 20 points.*

There will be 4 discussion assignments for a maximum of 80 points available. You will be graded on your original content (level of critical thought/analysis, quality of factual support for your position) and quality of writing (spelling, punctuation, grammar). If any information that is not an original thought of yours is included in a discussion response, regardless of where it came from, that information needs to be cited using APA format. If you are unfamiliar with APA, please refer to the APA Writing Style Guide (located in the Modules section within the “Start Here” tab). Please make sure to proof read your work before submitting.

Each student will be required to participate in 4 discussions throughout the course. These discussions will first require you to **post** an answer to the questions posed by me. Be clear and detailed in answering the questions. These posts must be at least 500 words in length. **This portion of the assignment is referred to as “Post.”**

You are also required to **appropriately and professionally respond** to at least two other student’s postings for every discussion board (i.e. one post by you and two responses from you). Your response to another student’s post must: be at least 100 words in length, relate to the subject of the initial posting and demonstrate evidence of critical thought. Consider: what makes sense about your classmate’s post? What flaws can you see in the post? A simple statement of agreement or disagreement with the initial posting is insufficient. Furnish a thoughtful response and support it. Content, structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation will be taken into consideration when awarding the grade for your discussion entries.

Students are only permitted one attempt on discussion assignments. Students are required to submit their discussion post prior to viewing the post or replies of other students. Meaning, the post must be submitted before the responses. This standard method is to ensure all students are practicing academic honesty, and not drawing their discussion post information from the work of other students. For this reason, we only grade the first discussion post submitted by students, and students cannot delete a submission from our view. If you submit a blank post or an incomplete post first, it will still be graded as your post submission regardless of subsequent posts. However, if you have any technical issues with your discussion submission, please email myself or Tyra ASAP. Do not wait until grades have been posted to notify us of technical issues.

See next page for the discussion assignments rubric.

*All citations, references and sources are to be made in APA format.*
**You must cite any sources you use when constructing your discussion board responses, whether it is the course textbook, a scholarly journal, a website, a television show, etc.**

### Rubric for Discussion Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Editing (spelling and grammar)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 5 points</td>
<td>Excellent 5 points</td>
<td>Excellent 5 points</td>
<td>Excellent 5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the required components of the post were adequately addressed</td>
<td>Student submitted 2+ substantive participation responses with full and supported explanations</td>
<td>Discussion post exceeded required length, 2 participation responses were posted that also exceeded required length</td>
<td>If there were any spelling or grammar errors they were insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 4 points</td>
<td>Good 4 points</td>
<td>Good 4 points</td>
<td>Good 4 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor required component of the post was missing, or there was not</td>
<td>Student submitted 1-2 substantive participation responses with supported explanations</td>
<td>Discussion post met required length, 2 participation responses were submitted - one response met the 100 word count requirement, one did not</td>
<td>There were a few spelling or grammar errors that were noticeable but did not detract from the discussion post/response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair 3 points</td>
<td>Fair 3 points</td>
<td>Fair 3 points</td>
<td>Fair 3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important required components of the post were missing or there were</td>
<td>Student submitted 1-2 substantive participation responses. Additional explanation or support was needed</td>
<td>Discussion post was at or right below required length, 2 responses were submitted, but neither met the 100 word count requirement or 1 response was submitted that met the 100 word count requirement</td>
<td>There were a few spelling or grammar errors that were noticeable and detracted somewhat from the discussion post/response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not all of the required components of the post were addressed, nor were</td>
<td>Students submitted 0-1 substantive participation responses</td>
<td>Discussion Post was at or below required length, 2 responses were submitted; 1 substantive response was posted that did not meet the 100 word count requirement</td>
<td>There were a number of spelling and grammar mistakes that detracted from the discussion post/response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
<td>Poor 1-2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing 0 points</td>
<td>Failing 0 points</td>
<td>Failing 0 points</td>
<td>Failing 0 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of the response was inadequate with limited coverage of</td>
<td>There were no substantive participation</td>
<td>Discussion response was at or below the required length and there were no substantive participation posts</td>
<td>There were a great number of spelling and grammar mistakes that detracted greatly from the reading of the paper, such that it was difficult to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required elements and very little if any explanation of required</td>
<td>posts submitted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>components</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Extra Credit**

There is one extra credit assignment for this course. A Comprehensive Extra Credit Exam will be available for students (See Course Calendar). This exam will cover all course material (Text, IRB, Videos, etc). Extra credit points awarded for this extra credit exam are provided below and are based on exam performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehensive Extra Credit Exam Score</th>
<th>Extra Credit Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% - 100%</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% - 89%</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% - 79%</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69% and Below</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Comprehensive Extra Credit Exam is the only extra credit offered in this course. No individual extra credit will be provided**

---

**Late Work**

Late work is not accepted. All late assignments will receive a zero. All due dates are listed in the syllabus and ample time is provided to complete the assignments.

**Makeup Policy**

There are no make-up tests/quizzes/assignments in this class 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. 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 make up 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 (e.g., traveling for a basketball game). If you were critically ill in such a way that you could not complete any required assignment or exam, you must submit a doctor’s note to me within 3 days.

There is absolutely no make-up for assignments turned in late unless authorized as a result of university related absence or through prior consultation and approval by myself. Make-up assignments as a result of authorized absences must be turned in within 3 days of returning from the authorized absence. To be excused, any authorized absence must take place over the entire submission window. That is, if a student has an authorized absence for 1 day of a 3-day submission window for an exam or any other assignment, then they will not be excused and will not be able to take a make-up. I strongly recommend not waiting until the last day to complete an assessment in case this occurs.

**Attendance Policy**

As this is an online course, it is the course expectations that you are logging in once a day, check announcements, and are aware of all due dates listed in this syllabus.
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".

**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](http://www.unt.edu/csrr).

**Participation and Online Behavior**

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 online discussions. Your active participation, along with your willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions regarding criminological theory will be taken into account at all times during the semester.

An online classroom, at least during times of online 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 online 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 undergraduate catalog concerning conduct which adversely affects the university community.

**Academic Integrity**

Standards of academic integrity are expected with regard to any course related work or submission. Students should consult the UNT website for questions, guidelines, appeals, and other information related to these policies:

[http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf)

Academic violation of UNT policy consists of the following:

**A. Cheating.** The use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to:

1. use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes or other assessments;
2. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments;
3. acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic materials belonging to a faculty or staff member of the University;
4. dual submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor;
5. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment.

**B. Plagiarism.** Use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:

1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.
2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.

**C. Forgery.** Altering a score, grade or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student.
D. Fabrication. Falsifying or inventing any information, data or research as part of an academic exercise.

E. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty. Helping or assisting another in the commission of academic dishonesty.

F. Sabotage. Acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others.

Any violation of academic integrity will be handled on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, the student will receive a zero on the assignment in question, but more serious academic violations may be subject to the assignment of a failing grade for the course. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor with questions related to citations or other academic integrity concerns.

Student Evaluation of Instructor (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Student feedback is very important to UNT, please complete your SPOT (Student Perceptions of Teaching) survey during the open evaluation time.

ADA Statement and Disabled Student Policy

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking 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 an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of 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 accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.
Course Calendar and Topics

Dates, topics, and exams are listed below. Students are responsible for keeping up with the schedule, any schedule changes as well as the assigned readings as we progress through the course. This is a tentative schedule and the instructor reserves the right to modify any part of the schedule at any time throughout the semester.

Assignments & Academic Calendar:

**The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor**

Week 1 (8/29 – 9/4)

    Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry

Reading: Chapter 1

Assignments due: None

Week 2 (9/5 – 9/11)

Topic: Foundations of Criminal Justice Research

Reading: Chapters 2

Assignments due: None

Week 3 (9/12 – 9/18)

9/6: Labor Day – No Class – University Closed

Topic: Ethics and Criminal Justice Research

Reading: Chapters 3

Videos: 5 Psychology Experiments You Couldn’t Do Today
    The Stanford Prison Experiment: Quiet Rage
    The Milgram Experiment 1962 Full Documentary
    ABC Channel’s Milgram Experiment Remake

Assignments due: IRB Training and Certificate turn-in due 9/18 @ 11:59pm

Week 4 (9/19 – 9/25)

Exam I ( Chapters 1 – 3, Videos, and IRB) Due 9/25 at 11:59pm

Week 5 (9/26 – 10/2)

Topic: General Issues in Research Design

Reading: Chapter 4

Assignments due: Discussion 1 due 10/2 @ 11:59pm

Week 6 (10/3 – 10/9)

Topic: Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement

Reading: Chapter 5

Assignments due: None

Week 7 (10/10 – 10/16)

Topic: Measuring Crime

Reading: Chapter 6

Assignments due: Discussion 2 due 10/16 @ 11:59pm

Week 8 (10/17 – 10/23)

Topic: Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs

Reading: Chapter 7

Assignments due: Discussion 3 due 10/23 @ 11:59pm
Week 9 (10/24 – 10/30)
Exam II (Chapters 4 – 7) Due 10/30 @ 11:59pm

Week 10 (10/31 – 11/6)
Topic: Sampling and Survey Research
Reading: Chapter 8 & 9
Assignments due: None

Week 11 (11/7 – 11/13)
Topic: Qualitative Interviewing and Field Research
Reading: Chapters 10 & 11
Assignments due: Discussion 4 due 11/13 @ 11:59pm

Week 12 (11/14 – 11/22) TUESDAY
Topic: Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data; Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis and Interpreting Data
Reading: Chapters 12, 13, and 14
Assignments due: None

Thanksgiving – No Class – University Closed

Week 14 (11/28 – 12/4)
Exam III (Chapters 8 – 14) Due 11/22 @ 11:59pm

Week 15 (11/28 – 12/8) THURSDAY
Comprehensive Extra Credit Exam due 12/6 @ 11:59pm

Week 16 (12/10 – 12/16)
University Finals Week