

**San José State University
Justice Studies Department
Spring 2019
JS 114 Research Methods**

Contact Information

Instructor: Yue (Wilson)Yuan Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Wednesday 3:30-4:30 PM

Class Days/Time: MW, 4:30-5:45 PM MQH 523

MYSJSU Messaging

You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU. Course materials including syllabus, notes, assignment, and journal articles can be found on the Canvas website.

Course Description

Catalog Description: Introduction to quantitative research methods used in Justice Studies. Includes relationship of theory to empirical evidence; logic underlying methods of inquiry; ethics in conducting empirical research; and methodological design, operationalization, and data analysis. Prerequisite: JS 10, 12, 25, or FS 11; JS 100W with a grade of "C" or better; JS15 or Stat 95 or equivalent with a "C" or better; Upper Division Standing; Restricted to JS majors and minors. Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice Studies majors.

This course will cover philosophy of science, fundamental techniques and procedures, research ethics, and methods of data collection and data analysis in criminal justice and criminological research, with emphasis on quantitative analysis.

Course Goals

Students will leave this course with a firm understanding of different research designs in criminal justice and criminological research. In addition, students will be able to initiate and conduct an independent research project, including proposing meaning research questions, reviewing literature, and conducting data collection and analysis, etc. It is useful to think of research methods as tools that can be used to answer questions about the social world. For example, social scientists have relied on statistics to answer questions such as “Has the level of violent crime in American cities increased over the past decade?” or “Do juvenile smokers commit more delinquent acts than nonsmokers?” During this course, you will learn some of these research methods and statistical techniques and how to use them to answer questions commonly confronted by social scientists. That said, it is important that you do not fall behind in this class. As we move through the course material, you will find that an understanding of a given topic builds on what has been covered previously. Thus, it is in your best interest to stay current on the readings, take detailed notes, and ask questions if you are unsure about a topic.

Student Learning Objectives are as follows:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

SLO 1: Understand why knowledge of research methods is valuable to criminal justice professionals and how to conduct a review of research literature, write a research proposal, design a research project.

SLO 2: Summarize three fundamental features of social science: theory, data collection, and data analysis; describe how theory and public policy can be closely linked.

SLO 3: Recognize how criminal justice research is shaped by ethical considerations.

SLO 4: Understand how the logic of probability sampling makes it possible to represent large populations with small subsets of those populations.

SLO 5: Understand that survey research involves the administration of questionnaires in a systematic way to a sample of respondents selected from some population

SLO 6: Recognize when to use qualitative interviewing as a data-gathering tool.

SLO 7: Recognize that public organizations produce statistics and data that are often useful for criminal justice researchers.

SLO 8: Understand the differences between EDA and CFA. For example, descriptive statistics are used to summarize data under study.

SLO 9: Understand that tests of statistical significance make assumptions about data and methods that are rarely satisfied completely in social science research.

Required Texts

Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2014). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology*. Nelson Education.

Other Readings

- Richlin-Klonsky, J., Strenski, E., & Giarrusso, R. (2001). *A guide to writing sociology papers*. Macmillan.
- Galvan, J. L. (2006). Writing literature reviews. *A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences (3rd ed.)*. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak.
- Articles on Canvas

Required Software:

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on.

Requirements: You are required to read all books, book chapters, and articles in advance. Your grade is based on class participation (10 in-class practices), homework, midterm, research paper (see group project guideline), research presentation and final exam.

Homework: Weekly homework assignments will be posted on Canvas.

Participation: Success in this class is predicated on regular attendance. If you do not attend regularly, your grade will certainly suffer. The primary format for this course will be lecture and in class practice. Your participation grade is graded upon in-class practices. Class time will also be used to go over problem sets and to discuss the results of exams and homework problems.

Group Project: A guideline of the research project will be provided on Canvas (see Files in Canvas).

Midterm and Final Examination: Midterm is scheduled on Monday, March 18 and Final exam is scheduled on Monday, May 17.

Grading Information

You will not be able to drop the class after the official DROP Day except when you have medical emergency with your doctor’s note. There will be no make-ups for your missed exams. There will be only one exception to this polity. Those students who provide written notice in advance who must miss class for university business will have special tests arranged usually before the scheduled test. A final grade of incomplete (I) will be reserved for emergency situation only with your doctor’s note.

Final Grade (total points possible: 500 points)

The point totals break down as follows:

Homework assignments	150 points
Midterm	100 points
Final exam	100 points
Research project (Presentation 20%)	100 points
In-class practices	50 points

Total

500 points

Total Points Possible: 500 points (There is no possibility of extra credit)

Percent to Letter Grade Correspondence

A plus = 100-96%	A = 95-93%	A minus = 92-90%
B plus = 89-86%	B = 85-83%	B minus = 82-80%
C plus = 79-76%	C = 75-73%	C minus = 72-70%
D plus = 69-66%	D = 65-63%	D minus = 62-60%
F = 59-0% 0-179		

Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

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Spring 2019**

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
Monday, January 28, 2019	Chapter 1: Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry
Wednesday, January 30, 2019	Chapter 1: Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry
Monday, February 4, 2019	Chapter 2: Foundations of Criminal Justice Research
Wednesday, February 6, 2019	Chapter 2: Foundations of Criminal Justice Research
Monday, February 11, 2019	Chapter 3: Ethics and Criminal Justice Research
Wednesday, February 13, 2019	Chapter 3: Ethics and Criminal Justice Research
Monday, February 18, 2019	Chapter 4: General Issues in Research Design
Wednesday, February 20, 2019	Chapter 4: General Issues in Research Design
Monday, February 25, 2019	Chapter 5: Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement
Wednesday, February 27, 2019	Chapter 5: Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement
Monday, March 4, 2019	Chapter 6: Measuring Crime
Wednesday, March 6, 2019	Chapter 6: Measuring Crime
Monday, March 11, 2019	Chapter 7: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs
Wednesday, March 13, 2019	Chapter 7: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs
Monday, March 18, 2019	Midterm
Wednesday, March 20, 2019	Chapter 8: Sampling
Monday, March 25, 2019	Chapter 9: Survey Research
Wednesday, March 27, 2019	Chapter 9: Survey Research
Monday, April 1, 2019	Spring Break
Wednesday, April 3, 2019	Spring Break
Monday, April 8, 2019	Chapter 10: Qualitative Interviewing
Wednesday, April 10, 2019	Chapter 10: Qualitative Interviewing
Monday, April 15, 2019	Chapter 11: Field Observation
Wednesday, April 17, 2019	Chapter 11: Field Observation
Monday, April 22, 2019	Chapter 12: Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data
Wednesday, April 24, 2019	Chapter 13: Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis
Monday, April 29, 2019	Chapter 13: Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis
Wednesday, May 1, 2019	Chapter 14: Interpreting Data
Monday, May 6, 2019	Chapter 14: Interpreting Data
Wednesday, May 8, 2019	Presentation Part One
Monday, May 13, 2019	Presentation Part Two
	Final Exam Friday, May 17