

University of North Carolina
Department of Criminal Justice
Provisional Course Outline
Research Methods
CJUS 3101 (W)

Dr. Charisse T. M. Coston
Writing Intensive
Fall, 2011
Lab: Mondays 12:30-1:30

Department of Criminal Justice
Colvard 5081
687-2008; 687-3349 (fax)

Office Hours: Wednesdays from 12 noon-2pm

Graduate Assistant: to be announced

NO Required Text: Copies of my overheads and power points are available for free. Along with lectures and discussion material form the test materials. Supplementary Required Text for discussion, lab and paper: Packet of materials available at www.criminaljustice.uncc.edu for free. While on this cite, download a copy of GSS98 in preparation for lab.

Recommended Text:
APA Manual

Course Objectives:

This is a basic course in social science research methods. However, students will be expected to demonstrate a high level of ability to conceptualize and design a research proposal for investigating a particular topic. Likewise, students will also be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the most basic and important statistical techniques used in social research. Particular attention will be given to the two types of statistics--descriptive and inferential. The emphasis will be on an understanding of the methods and on the ability to interpret uses of these techniques.

Student Responsibilities

It is **imperative that you attend all classes** as this makes it easier to understand the objectives of this course. In addition you must ask questions, take copious notes, participate in discussions, take tests and submit a research paper proposal. You will get intensive writing credit for this class.. It is important for you to hand in assignments on their due date. Late papers, without prior legitimate excuse, will be penalized 2 points.

Grading

A	=	100 - 90	C	=	79 - 70
B	=	89 - 80	D	=	69 - 60
			F	=	59 & below

1. Research proposal: One major product of the semester's work will be your research proposal dealing with a criminological issue of your choice. The paper is to identify a research problem, review the literature, develop a set of hypotheses and describe how you will test your assumptions. An outline for the required research proposal as well as an outline of the criteria on which each proposal will be evaluated appears in this text and must make up your table of contents. The term paper is worth 50% (100 points) of your total grade for this course. Needless to say, cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will not be tolerated. Maximum length: 10 pages, excluding title page, bibliography, footnotes and appendices. This proposal will be handed in 5 cycles and worth 20 points each for a total of 100 points
2. Various homework exercises will be assigned and then discussed in class.
3. 2 Tests over lecture material worth 50 points each.
4. Lab quizzes-You must pass both with at least 40 points. Points below 40 will be subtracted from your total number of points towards the final grade.
5. Extra credit exercise due **on or before February 18, 2009** NO LATER THAN 12:30 PM. Worth up to 5 points. No allowable excuses for late papers. This is extra credit that can be handed in anytime before its due date. Extra credit: last page in your workbook.

Incomplete policy: I only give "I"'s in the case of a documented personal psychological or physiological health problem. Or, in the case of the death of an immediate family member (documentation required (death notice, funeral program, etc.)).

Outline for the course

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
Week 1	Introduction to the course Theory and Research
Week 2	The Nature of Causation Research Design
Week 3	Paper topic should be approved by now. Conceptualization and Measurement.
Week 4	Operationalization
Week 5	Operationalization
Week 6	Tables, Graphs Indexes, Scales & Typologies
Week 7	Indexes, Scales & Typologies
Week 8	Sampling. Test I (lecture material 10/8/11)
Week 9	Experiments Surveys
Week 10	Field Research Unobtrusive Research Evaluation Research
Week 11	Ethics and Politics
Week 12	Coding & Transformation of Data; Data Analysis Descriptive & Inferential Statistics.
Week 13	Tables and Graphs Measures of Central Tendency
Week 14	Probability; Measures of Dispersion; Measures of Association Test II (lecture material 12/5/2011)
Week 15	Review results, course summary. Student evaluations.

* Portions of the above are subject to change at my discretion.

OUTLINE FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This outline MUST make up your table of contents and organization of the paper.

COVER SHEET: Your name, title of research proposal, proposed funding source, course title and number. NO BINDERS, simply staple your paper in the upper left hand corner.-- 2 points.

TABLE OF CONTENTS: An outline of your paper following steps listed below. Do not forget to include subheadings.-- 2 points.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

-Purpose of Research

-Deductive or inductive logic?

-What is the time dimension?

-Nomothetic or idiographic model

-What is the potential importance and criminal justice implications of the proposed research? If important for theory, tell why. If significant for practice or policy, explain how.

-SUGGESTED LENGTH = 1 paragraph

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Review the most significant previous work and describe the current status of work in this field. Document your statements with references.

-You must have at least 15 references from scholarly books and/or journals. No magazine articles are allowed. Please no "Introduction to _____" or textbook cites; only the original cites. Possible source and mailing list for publications: National Criminal Justice Reference Service Bureau of Justice Statistics, Rockville, Maryland- 1-800-732-3277. Freda Mozenter; Main reference desk at the library; 2346.

-State the hypotheses to be tested or the questions to be answered. SUGGESTED LENGTH-3 pages. Individual Instruction, 9/21/2009.

DUE **September 27, 2011.**

III. CONCEPTUALIZATION

-Provide indicators for the concepts that are multidimensional

-Provide nominal definitions for the multi-dimensional concepts.

-Nominally define all other variables.

-SUGGESTED LENGTH = 1 PARAGRAPH.

IV. OPERATIONALIZATION

1. Describe the level of measurement for each of your variables.

2. Appendix A should contain your sample questionnaire or coding scheme.

3. Discuss the issues of reliability and validity of the measurements that are involved.

4. Mention the possibility of conducting a pilot test? Why?

SUGGESTED LENGTH = 5 sentences. With what results? Individual

Instruction, 10/3/11. DUE: **October 5, 2011.**

V. RESEARCH METHOD

--Give details of the research plan; type of research method and its advantages and disadvantages; triangulation
--Describe the facilities needed for the project; Provide a budget (Appendix B)
--If the proposed project requires collaboration with other institutions, describe it and indicate how you expect it could be obtained.
--Address "Human Subjects" concerns (Appendix C); and describe at least 2 ethical and/or political issues associated with your project. SUGGESTED LENGTH=3/4 of the page. Individual Instruction. 10/26/11. DUE: **October 31, 2011.**

VI. SAMPLING

-Random/non-random
--Explain and justify any methods of sample selection
-SUGGESTED LENGTH= 5 sentences

VII. OBSERVATIONS

Discuss your plan for collecting data in the field; provide a time frame for proposed activities. (Appendix D)
Use of journal notes...tape recorder?
Training Interviewers
Observer role(s)
SUGGESTED LENGTH = 1 sentence

VIII. DATA PROCESSING

Coding schemes
Computer packages
Codebook
Cleaning of the data
SUGGESTED LENGTH = 5 sentences
Individual Instruction, October 9, 2011
Due: **October 16, 2011**

IX. DATA ANALYSIS

Which descriptive and inferential statistics will you use? Why? With what results? Tables or graphs (Appendix E)
You need at least 2 descriptive tables or graphs and 1 inferential table
SUGGESTED LENGTH = 2 paragraphs and
E1a (pie chart)
E1b (pie chart)
E2 (inferential table)

X. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

Discuss any pitfalls you may encounter.
Point out the limitations of your study.
Identify any procedures or situations that may be hazardous and discuss the precautions to be taken. SUGGESTED LENGTH=1paragraph
Individual Instruction 11/28/11
DUE: November 30, 2011

BIBLIOGRAPHY (handed in with Part 1)

APPENDICES A-E (handed in along with parts of the paper)

APPENDIX F:

Contains your approval sheet with my signature & your signed plagiarism

document (worth 5 points each).
ENTIRE PAPER DUE: **December 5, 2011**

Grading for the Research Proposal: 10 points for each of the 10 sections. Ten points will be taken off for no bibliography. One point per cite short. Paper topics must be approved and the approval sheet with my signature as well as the plagiarism form must accompany every assignment making up your proposal. All assignments will be returned with the exception of the final paper proposal.

TEST 1 - 10/8/11

TEST 2 - 12/5/11

Test 2 is not cumulative. There is not a final examination in this class

By December 5, 2011 at 1:30, you must have handed in entire paper with cover sheet, table of contents, bibliography, Appendices A-F.

APPROVAL SHEET FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Name: _____

TITLE OF THE PROJECT:

ALL VARIABLES:

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES (YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST 5):

MAIN RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS (MRH):

MAIN NULL OR ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS (MNH):

SUBSET OF HYPOTHESES:

H1

H0

H2

H0

H3

H0

H4

H0

H5

H0

INCLUDE ANY ADDITIONAL HYPOTHESIS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR PROJECT ON THE BACK PAGE.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary as follows: "To steal and use the ideas of writings of another as one's own...; to take and use as one's own the writings of another."

Plagiarism is theft. It leads the reader to believe that what he is reading is the original thought of the writer when this is not true. Plagiarism is a serious offense in the academic world and carries appropriate punishment.

We wish to remind you of the common forms of plagiarism often used in term papers and provide examples of both acceptable and unacceptable research practices.

Direct Quotations: "This is an exact copy of a portion of the original; it may be a single word, phrase, sentence fragment, complete sentence or one or more paragraphs. If you quote directly, place the portion in quotation marks and cite the source in your footnotes." To do otherwise is plagiarism.

Paraphrase: Paraphrasing means expressing the author's idea in your own words and style. Merely changing or re-arranging the original by a word or two or reversing the order or phrases is still plagiarism. To avoid unintentional plagiarism, re-phrase the statement in your own words without looking at the original.

rule of Thumb: If you use three or more words in sequence the way the author wrote them, put them in quotes and cite the source; otherwise, paraphrase and cite the source. It's easy, honest and demonstrates truthful and commendable research practice.

"I have read and understand the meaning of plagiarism."

Name _____

ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENT:

Using the world wide web, your e-mail account, and the Criminal Justice Department's home page. **Required** up to 5 points added to Assignment number 5.

RESEARCH METHODS

After assessing and carefully reading a research articles, please answer the following 10 questions and send (via e-mail) me a copy of your answers. **DUE NO LATER THAN November 9, 2011**

1. Give a full citation of the study: Author'(s), "Title of the paper," Name of the Journal, Vol. No. (Month, Year), pp.

Example: David de Vaus and Ian McAllister, "Gender Differences in Religion: A Test of the Structural Location Theory," American Sociological Review, Vol. 52, No 4 (August, 1987): 472-481.
2. What is the paper all about? What is the theoretical issue?
3. How did the author(s) arrive at the hypotheses?
4. What main concepts are treated in the study?
5. How did the author(s) operationalize the concepts?
6. What is the unit of analysis in this study?
7. In doing the empirical study how was the sample drawn?
8. How were the hypotheses tested?
9. What did the study find?
10. Comment critically on the paper, and tell me what you have learned from this exercise.