**The University of North Texas**

**Department of Criminal Justice**

**CJUS 4700-001 Criminal Justice Research Methods**

**Spring 2015**

**Instructor:** Andrekus Dixon, M.S. Criminal Justice

**Time:** Tuesday: 2:00pm – 4:50pm

**Room:** RTFP 135

**Office Hours:** Chilton Room 273 C

Monday 9:00am- 12:00pm or by appointment

**Phone:** 940-565-4475 (office)

**e-mail:** Andrekus.Dixon@unt.edu

**Course Description:**

This course examines research methodology in criminal justice. Special emphasis is placed on methods and techniques for conducting research in criminal justice, including the relationship between theory and research, the nature of causation, research designs and techniques, conceptualization and measurement, operationalization, sampling, and ethical issues.

**Goals and Objectives:**

* Inform students with the various types of data collection strategies used in the social sciences in general, and criminal justice, in particular.
* Equip students with the essential elements that are part of the research process.
* Inform students with qualitative as well as quantitative research designs.
* Acquaint students with the advantages and disadvantages of each data collection.
* Educate students on the introductory elements of statistics

**Textbook:**

The assigned text listed below is required for all students enrolled in this course. 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 the issues in class as well as test material.

*Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*, 7th Ed. Michael Maxfield, Earl Babbie: Cengage

**Grade Breakdown**

Grades are based on your earned point totals for the semester.

Exams 300 points (3 @ 100 pts each)

Human Subjects 20 points

Quizzes 30 points (3 @ 10 pts each)

Paper 50 points

**Total Points 400 points**

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| **Final Grade Scale**  360-400 = A  320-359 = B  280-319 = C  240-279 = D  239 and Below = F |

**Exam:**

There will be 3 exams given worth 100 points each. Excused make-up exams will be taken the next class day and unexcused will be taken with a 20 point deduction, to be fair to all students. See attendance policy regarding what an “excused absence” consist of. Your note for missing MUST come from a physician or employer, anything else will not be accepted.

**Quizzes:**

There will be 3 random quizzes that will be given throughout the semester. If you are absent on the day that a quiz is given you will not have a chance to retake the quiz. The quizzes will reinforce the fact that you are keeping up with the readings and lecture notes. Quizzes will come in the form of 10 possible questions, multiple choices, true/false, and fill in the blank.

**Human Subjects Certification: Due February 10, 2015**

As part of this course you will be required to undergo the human subjects certification training. Note that if you completed HSC for another class or when you took methods previously you must take it again. The date of completion must be since this course has begun. This component is part of the ethics component of this course. To complete this assignment you must do the following:

This part of the assignment will require you to:

1. Go to <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php> or google “protecting human research participants”
2. Register to participate in training. Once registered begin with the “Introduction” module.
3. Training takes approximately 1-3 hours.
4. To get credit for this training and hence this assignment, you must hand in the certificate that you will receive at the conclusion of successful training by the date indicated in the syllabus. This certificate must have your registered name on it for proper credit to be given. This training should take approximately 1-3 hours and I would advise for you to do it a couple of days or earlier before the class when we will discuss this topic (Chapter 2 discussion). I would also advise you to take a few notes during the tutorials so that you may pass the various tests which are sometimes difficult. I do not accept email submissions. Hand the certificate to me in class.
5. Failure to turn in your certification will result in forfeiture of all points associated with this assignment. I will not accept certification forms turned in by one student for another student nor will I accept late submissions (see Make-Up Policy below).

**Paper: Due April 28, 2015**

Each student will be responsible for conducting a participant observation paper. This assignment is worth 50 points and must include a 3-4 page detailed analysis **with field notes attached**. Note that the field notes do not count as pages for the assignment. At a later date, I will hand out the more specific requirements of this assignment in class and we will discuss this assignment.

**Additionally, I will require that each student submit the research question/topic/problem for approval before you conduct your observation activity.** **DO NOT SEND YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION BY EMAIL. Bring this question/topic/problem to class for discussion on the date indicated on the syllabus. This assignment is specific, and must be much more than “watching people.”** Please note the due date of your research question and the completed assignment in the syllabus.

**Extra Credit:**

There may be extra credit given but this will be at the discretion of the professor. If this opportunity presents itself, this will be for the entire class and not one individual person.

**Attendance Policy:**

I expect every student to attend class regularly and promptly. Attendance will be taken at some point throughout each class meeting. Students are allowed a maximum of **two** absences during the semester. **There are no excused /unexcused (with the exception of exams): you are allowed two, use them for whatever you deem necessary. Remember, however, if you are absent on the day an assignment or extra credit is given, you forfeit those points as they cannot be made up.**

If you have more than two absences, the professor reserves the right to reduce your final grade by ten points for every absence after the three allowed. A student who is absent from a class session is responsible for the subject matter discussed during that particular session. **I do not give out my lecture notes.** Notes missed (from lecture, guest speaker, presentations, etc.) will need to be obtained from a fellow classmate. It will be extremely difficult for you to obtain an acceptable grade in this course if you miss class consistently. Excused make-up exams will be taken the next class day and unexcused will be taken with a 20 point deduction, to be fair to all students.

**ADA Statement**

The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.

**Academic Honesty**

I regret that I should even have to mention the issue of cheating, but here it is: If I catch you, the very least you can expect is an F. Honor and integrity is the very core of Criminal Justice and I value my profession and its reputation very highly. Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education.  You are expected to abide by the University’s code of conduct and Academic Dishonesty policy.  Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University’s policies and procedures.  Refer to the Student Code of Conduct at <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html> for complete provisions of this code.

**Course Evaluations:**

Instead of in-class evaluations of the course, students are now asked to complete the Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) which will be made available on-line. Towards the end of the semester, I will make an announcement as to when the SETE will be available to access. I would like to encourage you to complete these evaluations as they often provide useful feedback.

**Classroom Policy:**

It is very important that students show respect and remain orderly while in class. Incivility is prohibited. Conduct that is considered disorderly is: **talking while someone else is talking, profanity, sleeping, and any other type of disruptive noise. Cell phones must be away during class time. NO TEXTING DURING CLASS TIME.**  If a student is found guilty of any of the following misconducts, he/she will be asked to leave the class and will be considered absent for that particular day. If the conduct is persistent, students will be reported to the Dean of Student Services to receive appropriate disciplinary action.

All **cell phones and any other electronic device** must be turned off or on a silent mode prior to entering the classroom. You may use your laptop for note taking. However if, you are caught doing anything that is not related to the course or the lecture notes you will not be allowed to use your computer for the duration of the semester.

**Children in the Classroom:**

Due to the University policy, liability concerns, and the course material, children are not permitted in this class, no exceptions.

**Final Points**

Please do not hesitate to come to the professor with any questions, problems, or issues you may have. Do not wait to address these issues until it is too late for you to receive an acceptable grade. You will find the professor to be very approachable and eager to address any problems with you in a professional manner.

**Course Calendar and Topics**

Although we will attempt to adhere to the schedule of topics listed and described below, the course schedule should be viewed as highly flexible. Consequently, it is your responsibility to come to class, know where we are in the listing of assigned readings irrespective of this schedule, and know the material that we have covered prior to any reading assessment, examination, and/or presentation. Further, there may be additional items added to the calendar throughout the course of the semester.

**Course Calendar**

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| **DATE** | **Topics to be Covered** | **Corresponding Readings** |
| January 20 | Cover Syllabus  Course Overview |  |
| January 27 | Crime, Criminal Justice and Scientific Inquiry | Chapter 1 |
| February 3 | Foundations of Criminal justice Research | Chapter2 |
| February 10 | Ethics and Criminal Justice Research | Chapter 3**; Paper Topic Due in writing in class; Human Subjects Certification Due** |
| February 17 | General Issues in Research Design/Review | Chapter 4 |
| February 24 | **Exam #1** | **Chapters (1-4)** |
| March 3 | Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement | Chapter 5 |
| March 10 | Measuring Crime | Chapter 6 |
| March 16-22 | **Spring Break** |  |
| March 24 | Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs | Chapter 7 |
| March 31 | Sampling/Review | Chapter 8 |
| April 7 | **Exam #2** | **Chapters (5-8)** |
| April 14 | Survey Research | Chapter 9 |
| April 21 | Qualitative Interviewing | Chapter 10 |
| April 28 | Field Research/**Paper Due** | Chapter 11/ **Paper Due** |
| May 5 | Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data/ Review for Exam #3 | Chapter 12 |
| May 12 | **Exam #3 (May 12 @ 1:30pm – 3:30pm)** | **Chapters (9-12)** |

**Last day to withdraw with a W is March 2, 2015**

**Note:** The syllabus is a tentative calendar and I reserve the right to make any changes throughout the semester. I will try my best to ensure that the schedule remains intact however if changes are made, they will be announced in class and it is the responsibility of the student to make sure they make the appropriate changes. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of missing class does not constitute a defense against missed assignments and other applicable changes.