

CRM 340-898 Research Methods/Fall 2016

Instructor: Caryn Saxon

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00-12:30. Also by appointment.

Course Description: As stated in the course catalog, CRM 340 is “an overview of research design as applied to research on crime and justice. Topics include hypothesis formulation, sampling techniques, reliability and validity, survey construction, field observation, and evaluation research.”

Course Objectives: Our course focuses on three of our department’s core learning outcomes. These include **written communication, research, and critical thinking**. Upon completion of this course, you will:

- Have and demonstrate an understanding of core concepts regarding research, including ethics and design
- Improve in your ability to critically read and evaluate research studies
- Sharpen important academic skills such as analytical reading, writing, and reviewing literature

Course Materials:

Required Text

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2017). *The practice of research in criminology and criminal justice* (6th edition). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Additional Materials

In addition to the required course text listed above I will ask you to read selected articles related to some of the course modules. Supplemental readings will not be assigned in every module but rather in those areas where I believe additional readings will enhance your understanding of the concepts being addressed. These supplemental readings will either be directly available from online publications, posted on our Blackboard site, or sent to you via email attachment. I will notify you in advance of these readings.

Please note that papers and assignments submitted in this course must follow APA 6th edition formatting guidelines. If you are unfamiliar with APA guidelines you must learn the specifics of this style. There are many ways to do so. You may want to purchase a copy of the 6th Edition APA Style Manual or you may want to visit a variety of websites devoted to APA, including that of the MSU Writing Center.

A Note from Caryn

It is my feeling that I can best teach you the research process by providing you with opportunities to engage with the ideas we are exploring, as well as practice the concepts we are learning. Research Methods is a class I love because it is a beautiful mix of science and creative design. For this reason I include assessments in our course that test your ability to understand and learn important concepts, as well as activities that enhance your creative and critical thinking skills. At its core, our course is about research design, which is a creative endeavor (not merely a scientific one). In that light, it is important to me that our classroom be a space where we all feel comfortable practicing, creating, making mistakes, and even failing at times. I realize a lot of you come to this class with anxiety, and I want to encourage you to jump into our class with confidence, curiosity, and a promise to ask for help and encouragement when you need it.

Communication

It is important to me that I have good communication with all of my students. Even though this is an online course, I want to encourage you to arrange times to meet with me in person or via phone to discuss any questions or concerns you may have throughout the semester. Email is also a great way to reach me and, during the work week, I typically respond very quickly. Please note, however, that I do not necessarily engage in email on Sundays. It is therefore important that you **email me questions before noon on Saturday if you need a response before a Sunday deadline.**

Expectations

I consider this course a collaborative effort. We all need to work together to make this a positive and productive experience. In other words, I expect you to be engaged in class discussion in meaningful ways that not only help you reflect on and digest the course material, but also lead your classmates to deeper connections with the material as well. I also value your feedback and encourage you to let me know how the class is meeting your needs or failing to meet your needs. Only if I have this feedback will I be able to adjust the course to better meet the needs of you as students.

Participation: I expect a high level of participation from everyone in the class. I will be sure to provide you with feedback throughout the course as to the quality and adequacy of your participation. You may also inquire about this with me at any time.

Written Assignments: You should prepare your graded written assignments

using WORD and submit these to me via email (CSaxon@MissouriState.edu).

I will always respond to you when you submit an assignment as an acknowledgment that your assignment has been received. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 24 hours you should contact me immediately and resend the assignment. Please observe the following guidelines when preparing and submitting graded work:

- Proofread your materials! I expect you to turn in work that follows basic grammatical guidelines. If this is a challenge for you, be sure to ask someone to proofread your work before submitting it, and/or visit the MSU Writing Center for assistance.
<http://writingcenter.missouristate.edu/>. I realize that writing is not everyone's strength but it is nevertheless a skill you need to exhibit at this level in your education, as well as a skill necessary to most professions in the field of criminal justice.
- Your written assignments (with the exception of online class discussion) must adhere to 6th edition APA formatting guidelines. Please visit the MSU Writing Center and/or locate online resources if you need assistance in this area.
- Get your work in to me by the specified due date and time. Assignments in this class will not be accepted after the original deadline unless you have arranged this with me ahead of time. The only exception is the CITI training which can be turned in late but, if so, the grade will be reduced by 20%.
- Pay careful attention to the requirements set forth for each written assignment. Be sure you have adhered to any requirements concerning length or necessary elements. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding a written assignment, please contact me or arrange to meet with me.

Important MSU Policies and Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Missouri State University is a community of scholars committed to developing educated persons who accept the responsibility to practice personal and academic integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following the university's student honor code which is available online, as well as at the Reserves Desk in Meyer Library. Any student participating in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions as described in this policy. Please note that any person plagiarizing will receive a "O" for the assignment and risks the possibility of an "F" or "XF" for the course. This means that you must turn in original work created by you specifically for this course, as well as cite authors that you paraphrase or quote in your papers, assignments, and in our online discussion forums. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty you need to ask me and/or refer to MSU's policy. Please note that all of your written assignments will be run through Safe Assign in

order to check for incidents of plagiarism.

Statement of Nondiscrimination: Missouri State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, and maintains a grievance procedure available to any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against. At all times, it is your right to address inquiries or concerns about possible discrimination to the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance, Park Central Office Building, 117 Park Central Square, Suite 111, (417) 836-4252. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of an academic nature) should be discussed directly with me, your instructor, and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Head. Please visit the OED website at www.missouristate.edu/equity/. It is personally important to me that we create a learning environment together where no student experiences discrimination due to sex, age, sexual and/or gender identity, race or ethnicity, religious affiliation, or economic status. Please work with me in cultivating and maintaining such an environment, and alert me (or our department head) quickly to any indication of discrimination in our class or campus.

Accommodations or Disabilities Policy: To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Director of the Disability Resource Center, Plaster Student Union, Suite 405, (417) 836-4192 or (417) 836-6792 (TTY), www.missouristate.edu/disability. Students are required to provide documentation of disability to the Disability Resource Center prior to receiving accommodations. The Disability Resource Center refers some types of accommodation requests to the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, which also provides diagnostic testing for learning and psychological disabilities. For information about testing, contact the Director of the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, (417) 836-4787, <http://psychology.missouristate.edu/ldc>.

Cell Phone Policy: As a member of the learning community, each student has a responsibility to other students who are members of the community. When cell phones or pagers ring and students respond in class or leave class to respond, it disrupts the class. Therefore, the Office of the Provost prohibits the use by students of cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or similar communication devices during scheduled classes. All such devices must be turned off or put in a silent (vibrate) mode and ordinarily should not be taken out during class. Given the fact that these same communication devices are an integral part of the University's emergency notification system, an exception to this policy would occur when numerous devices activate simultaneously. When this occurs, students may consult their devices to determine if a university emergency exists. If that is not the case, the devices should be immediately returned to silent mode and put away.

Dropping a Class: It is your responsibility to understand the university's procedure for dropping a class. If you stop participating in this class but do not follow proper procedure for dropping the class you will receive a failing grade and will also be financially obligated to pay for the class. For information about dropping a class, please see the Registrar's page on the MSU website. Please also review MSU's academic calendar for important deadline dates.

Classroom Emergencies: At the first class meeting, students should become familiar with a basic emergency response plan through a dialogue with the instructor that includes a review and awareness of exits specific to the classroom and the location of evacuation centers for the building. All instructors are provided this information specific to their classroom and/or lab assignments in an e-mail prior to the beginning of the fall semester from the Office of the Provost and Safety and Transportation. Students with disabilities impacting mobility should discuss the approved accommodations for emergency situations and additional options when applicable with the instructor. For more information, go to <http://www.missouristate.edu/safetran/51597.htm> and <http://www.missouristate.edu/safetran/erp.htm>.

Course Assignments and Grading

Participation: This course will consist of thirteen modules. These modules will include 1-3 Blackboard discussion forums devoted to specific questions relevant to the topics covered in the module. Modules may also include short written assignments in place of discussion. Participation in discussion forums, as well as completion of these short assignments, are worth 10 points for each of the modules. Please note, discussion posts may not be completed after the close of the module.

Quizzes: There will be 10 short quizzes in this course. Each will correspond with the assigned reading and lectures for the week in which is it administered. You are allowed to utilize your notes and textbook while taking these quizzes; however, you will only have a limited amount of time to complete each quiz. Please note, quizzes may not be completed after their original deadline unless you have my permission ahead of time.

CITI Training: As we explore the importance of ethical standards in research, you will need to complete the CITI Basic Course on the Protection of Human Research Subjects. You can read more about this training by linking to http://ora.missouristate.edu/IRB_Training.htm I will provide more details about this assignment as our course progresses.

Analysis Paper: Towards the middle of the semester I will give you detailed instructions as to the parameters and expectations of this assignment. In this assignment, you will be asked create a 5-7 paged written analysis of a research proposal (which I will provide for you), using concepts you have learned in class. This is the equivalent of a midterm exam and may therefore not be turned in after the original deadline.

Research Proposal Project: At the beginning of the semester I will give you detailed instructions as to the parameters and expectations of this assignment. This assignment will be broken down throughout the semester and will be a culmination of many of the concepts and skills we explore in class. This is the equivalent of a final exam and may therefore not be turned in after the original deadline.

Points Breakdown

Participation: 13 modules @ 10 points per module	130 Points
Quizzes: 10 quizzes @ 5 points per quiz	50 Points
CITI Training	30 Points
Analysis Paper	100 Points
Phase I	5 Points
Phase II	25 Points
Phase IV	10 Points
Research Proposal Project	150 Points

Total **500 Points**

Grading Structure

A= 90%-100%

B= 80%-89.9%

C= 70%-79.9%

D= 60%-69.9%

F= Below 60%

A Note about Final Grades

It is important to me that all of my students are treated equally, fairly, and given the same opportunities to earn points and achieve the grade that reflects their ability and effort. I therefore do not adjust final grades by curving, rounding up or down, or offering certain students extra credit opportunities that are not offered to all students. Once your final grade is accurately calculated, it is final and will not be adjusted or changed.

Blackboard Course Site

Not all online courses are structured in the same way. Below I provide explicit directions on how to navigate the course site for CRM 340 and where you will find the course information that you need. Please read this information carefully and refer to it often!

There are 13 separate learning modules for the course. Each module focuses on a specific topic or issue related to research methods. We will move through the modules sequentially and the folder for each module will be available in the **Weekly Modules** section of the Blackboard course site no later than the Monday of the beginning date of

the module. The folder for each module will contain an overview of the module, required readings for the module (including supplemental readings), discussion forums, lectures, the weekly quiz, and details on any assignments due during the module. The **Discussions** section of the course site includes the discussion forums for each module, as well as two ongoing forums which are “Ask the Instructor” and “Bulletin Board.” The **Assignments** section of the course site includes details on each of the formal assignments you will be asked to complete as part of the course. Finally, the **Syllabus & Guidelines** section includes our course syllabus, Discussion Forum Guidelines, and information on APA formatting.

To view your grade for an assignment, click **My Grades** in the course menu of our Blackboard site. You will see a list of assignments along with your grades for those assignments. I will also send you your grades with feedback via email for each formal written assignment.

Trust me when I say I won't be any help to you if you are experiencing technological difficulties using Blackboard. I encourage you to let me know if you are having trouble so that I know why you might be absent from the discussion board, but for assistance you need to contact the MSU Computers Services Help Desk by calling (417) 836-5891.

Course Schedule

Below is a projected schedule for our course together; however, we may make adjustments as needed throughout the semester. **Please note that in each module I may assign additional supplemental reading not listed on this schedule.** Please note that participation requirements (such as discussion forums and weekly requirements) are not listed here as assignments. You will need to log onto to our Blackboard course site regularly to find weekly participation requirements.

Module	Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Module 1	Monday August 22 – Sunday August 28	The Research Process	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 1	Student Profile Sheet & Quiz #1 due Sunday August 28
Module 2	Monday August 29 – Sunday September 4	Questions, Strategies, and Goals	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 2	Quiz #2 & Phase I due Sunday September 4
Module 3	Monday September 5 – Sunday September 11	Reviewing Literature & Research Ethics	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 3	CITI Training due Sunday September 11

Module 4	Monday September 12 – Sunday September 18	Conceptualization & Measurement	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 4	Quiz #3 due Sunday September 18
Module 5	Monday September 19 – Sunday September 25	Sampling	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 5	Quiz #4 due Sunday September 25
	Monday September 26 – Sunday October 2	Project Work Week	(none)	Phase II due Sunday October 2
Module 6	Monday October 3 – Sunday October 9	Causation	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 6	Quiz #5 due Sunday October 9
Module 7	Monday October 10 – Sunday October 16	Experimental Designs	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 7	Quiz #6 due Sunday October 16
Module 8	Monday October 17 – Sunday October 23	Survey Research	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 8	Quiz #7 due Sunday October 23
	Monday October 24 – Sunday October 30	Progress Meetings & Analysis Paper	(none)	Phase III & Analysis Paper due Sunday Sunday October 30
Module 9	Monday October 31 – Wednesday November 6	Qualitative Methods	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 9	Quiz #8 & Phase IV due Sunday November 6

Module 10	Monday November 7 – Sunday November 13	Evaluation, Policy Analysis, Secondary Data Analysis	Bachman & Schutt Chapters 10 & 11	Quiz #9 due Sunday November 13
Module 11	Monday November 14 – Friday November 18	Mixing Methods	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 12	Quiz #10 due Friday November 18
	Saturday November 19 – Sunday November 27 Thanksgiving Holiday			
Module 12	Monday November 28 – Sunday December 4	Data Analysis	Bachman & Schutt Chapters 13 & 14	
Module 13	Monday December 5 – Thursday December 8	Reporting & Course Wrap-up	Bachman & Schutt Chapter 15	
				Research Proposal Project due Sunday December 11