

CRM 705: Applied Research in Criminal Justice

Professor: Ethan Amidon, Ph.D.

Course Meets: Wednesday 6:30 – 7:45 pm

Office Hours: 10 am – 1 pm (Mon - Wed) or by appointment

Email: EthanAmidon@MissouriState.edu

Location: Strong Hall 408

Office: Strong Hall 230A

Fall 2016

Course Description

This course provides graduate students with the background and skills necessary to conduct practical research in their professional fields and to successfully navigate academic research relevant to guiding and improving criminal justice policy and practice. The applied nature of this course will require the completion of a number of hands-on and scenario-driven exercises.

Student Learning Outcomes & Methods of Assessment

The core objectives of this course are described by the following goals and learning objectives. Students who complete this course should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the core methodologies used to conduct criminal justice research.
2. Understand the processes involved with conceptualizing and operationalizing criminal justice concepts.
3. Interpret key statistical concepts when reading technical reports and academic journal articles.
4. Perform statistical techniques using SPSS to address criminal justice-based research questions.

All of these learning objectives will be assessed using course assignments and exams.

Course Materials

There is no required textbook associated with this course. All required course readings and articles will be provided by the professor on Blackboard.

As part of this course, students will be required to complete take-home assignments using SPSS software. There are two potential avenues available to students in terms of gaining access to this software. First, SPSS is available for free at computer labs located on the MSU campus. Second, SPSS is available to download through the MSU Computer Services Help Desk (<http://helpdesk.missouristate.edu/software-for-home.htm>). If students are interested in downloading the software to their personal computer, I would suggest purchasing the **Standard** Grad Pack 24 for \$60 (6 month rental). Students will need to determine which of these avenues fits best with their schedule.

Grading

Your final grade for this class will be based on your performance on two exams and eight assignments. The breakdown of your final grade is as follows:

2 Exams	120 points
8 Assignments	80 points
Total	200 points

Exams (60%): There will be two exams worth 60 points each given **in-class** during the semester. These exams will require students to apply their knowledge of the core methodological concepts and analytic procedures used in criminal justice research. Students will also be required to perform statistical analyses using SPSS and to accurately interpret the results from these procedures. The final exam **will not** be cumulative.

Exam Dates

Midterm exam: **October 19th**

Final exam: **December 14th**

Assignments (40%): There will be eight take-home assignments worth 10 points each distributed throughout the course. These assignments will require students to apply the core concepts or statistical procedures covered in-class. The purpose of these assignments is for students to strengthen their understanding of the key methodological concepts used in criminal justice research and to practice applying statistical procedures designed to address CJ related research questions.

Make-up Policy and Late Assignments: Make-up exams or the acceptance of late assignments will only be given/accepted in emergency situations and only when the student has received permission from me prior to the due date. If an emergency situation should arise, please contact me via email before the assignment/exam due date. **Students who fail to notify me before the due date will not be allowed to make-up the course work.**

The grading scale for this class is as follows:

A	= 90% - 100%
B	= 80% - 89%
C	= 70% - 79%
F	= < 69%

Course Policies and Expectations

I understand that many students will likely experience some form of anxiety about taking a graduate-level course that focuses on research methods and statistics. I have taught a number of methods and statistics oriented courses in the past, and from my experience, students who do not perform well in these classes are those who fail to regularly attend lectures and those who do not

keep up-to-date with the readings and assignments. **Therefore, I highly suggest that students attend all lectures and complete all of the assigned readings and assignments by their scheduled due dates.** Furthermore, I strongly suggest that students who experience difficulties with the course material reach out to me for assistance with these issues. I am more than happy to provide additional assistance with learning the course material either in-person or via e-mail. **Please remember, I cannot provide assistance to students who refuse to ask for help.**

All of the course readings, articles, PowerPoints, on-line tutorials, and assignments will be made available on Blackboard before we are scheduled to cover a particular topic. Please make sure you are able to consistently check Blackboard throughout the week in order to prepare appropriately for our in-class meetings.

Students will be responsible for ensuring their ability to access and complete all of the requirements associated with this course. In order to perform well in this class, students will likely need to frequently access Blackboard. **It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they will be able to access a computer with internet capabilities throughout the semester.** Furthermore, if technical difficulties should arise, students will be expected to actively address these issues by contacting the **help desk (417-836-5891)** and myself (via email, phone, or during office hours) for assistance with these problems.

Non-Discrimination Policy

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 Equity and Diversity](#), 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 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/.

Students with Disabilities

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>.

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, *Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures*, available at www.missouristate.edu/assets/provost/AcademicIntegrityPolicyRev-1-08.pdf and also available 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. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive zero points for the assignment.

Emergency Response Statement

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>.

Cell Phone Policy

Finally, 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. Other exceptions to this policy may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Outline

- WEEK 1 (8/24):** Introduction to the Course
- WEEK 2 (8/31):** Conceptualization & Operationalization
Assignment #1
- WEEK 3 (9/7):** Putting the Research Process Together
Assignment #2
- WEEK 4 (9/14):** Data Entry & Frequency Distributions
Assignment #3
- WEEK 5 (9/21):** Measures of Central Tendency, Measures of Variability, & Recoding Variables
Assignment #4
- WEEK 6 (9/28):** Statistical Significance
- WEEK 7 (10/5):** Correlation
Assignment #5
- WEEK 8 (10/12):** Review for the Midterm Exam
- WEEK 9 (10/19):** Midterm Exam
- WEEK 10 (10/26):** Cross Tabulations & the Chi-square Test of Independence
Assignment #6
- WEEK 11 (11/2):** Bivariate Regression
- WEEK 12 (11/9):** Multiple Regression
Assignment #7
- WEEK 13 (11/16):** NO CLASS: ASC MEETING
- WEEK 14 (11/23):** NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
- WEEK 15 (11/30):** Logistic Regression
Assignment #8
- WEEK 16 (12/7):** Review for the Final Exam
- WEEK 17 (12/14):** Final Exam