



**School of Criminal Justice & Criminology  
Fall 2025**

**CJ 3346: Research in Criminal Justice – CRN: 21837**

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<b>Instructor:</b>	<b>Josh Davis, M.A.</b>
<b>Class Time:</b>	Monday & Wednesday 11:00 am – 12:20 pm
<b>Class Location:</b>	Hines 103
<b>Office Location:</b>	Hines 08 (lowest level of Hines)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Mondays & Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:00 am or by Appointment
<b>Office Phone:</b>	(512) 245-2174
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:jdavis@txstate.edu">jdavis@txstate.edu</a> [preferred contact method]

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**How to use this syllabus:** This syllabus provides you with information specific to this course, and it also provides information about important university policies. *This document should be viewed as a course overview; it is not a contract and is subject to change as the semester evolves.* Any changes will be communicated in class and through Canvas.

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## **COURSE INFORMATION**

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### **Course Description**

**CJ 3346 Research in Criminal Justice (3).** This course covers the analysis of criminal justice research, survey methods, and the utilization of research in criminal justice. It provides an overview of research methods and techniques in criminal justice and criminology, to include research design, ethical issues in research, and relationships between theory, research, and practice. Topics include the nature of conceptualization, hypothesis testing, measurement, operationalization, and sampling populations to provide students with conceptual and practical foundations to develop research and program evaluation skills. *This is a writing-intensive course.*

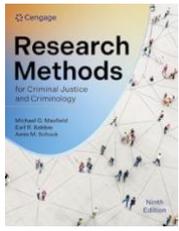
*Prerequisite:* CJ 1310: Introduction to Criminal Justice and [CJ 3347: Statistics for Criminal Justice or PSY 2301: Introduction to Statistics or SOCI 3307: Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences] all with grades of "D" or better.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Detail historical, ethical, and theoretical considerations of empirical research in criminal justice and criminology;
- Identify how conceptualization impacts operationalization, specifying the importance of measurement and variables;
- Compare and contrast data collection methods and sampling strategies;
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs;
- Understand the ethical concerns associated with conducting social science research, particularly in criminal justice;
- Differentiate between various sampling strategies; and,
- Demonstrate strong written communication and collaboration skills.

## **Required Texts/Reading**



### **Textbook:**

Maxfield, M., Babbie, E., & Schuck, A. (2025). *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9780357763735

### **Other Readings:**

Additional readings to complement your learning will also be posted in Canvas.

## **Learning Management Platform - CANVAS**

All additional readings (outside the textbook) and some PowerPoints will be posted in Canvas. All assignments must be submitted through Canvas. **Email submissions or paper copies will not be accepted.**

## **Other Equipment/Materials**

Students are required to have complete access to a functioning computer device with internet capabilities. This device must have Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. If you do not have Microsoft Word or PowerPoint on your device, Texas State does provide free access to Microsoft Office 365 for students.

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## **CLASSROOM POLICIES**

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### **Class Behavior**

To allow for orderly learning and differing discourse, students are reminded to follow the rules of courtesy during classroom discussions. This is a college course, and students' vocabulary and word choice should be appropriate for a college classroom. Students should stay on topic, handling non-class-related matters outside of class. We will be covering topics that can be socially sensitive; therefore, we must remain respectful of each other's points of view during the course.

### **Class Protocol**

Although attendance is not mandatory, in-class activities and discussions are part of the course. To have an effective learning experience and master the material, students should make every effort to attend all class sessions. If a student misses class, it is their responsibility to understand what was missed and to get notes or information from another student. It is not the instructor's responsibility to re-teach any part of the class.

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and activities. Asking questions, providing varying perspectives, and discussing the topics at hand make the course much more enjoyable and exciting for everyone.

Students will be held responsible for all assigned materials. Grades are non-negotiable and will be determined by the final point total. All scores are final and will not be rounded up. Every student will have the same opportunities to earn points. Students will receive the grade they earned.

*Please make sure all cell phones are either off or put on silent.* If a student needs to take a call, please exit quietly to avoid disrupting the class discussion or students trying to pay attention.

Furthermore, it is expected that students will:

- Prepare for class, read assigned materials before class, satisfactorily participate in class discussions, and turn in required coursework on time.
- Take responsibility for their learning. The instructor is not responsible for your learning. This requires your effort.
- Submit all assigned material, including but not limited to assignments, quizzes, exams, and Canvas discussions, on time.

### **Grading Scale**

*At the end of the semester, your grade will be determined by the total number of points earned, not by the percentage. Also, no grades of Incomplete will be awarded.*

Points (Percentage)		Letter Grade	Grade Points
566 - 632	(90% and above)	A	4.00
503 - 565	(80 - 89.9%)	B	3.00
440 - 502	(70 - 79.9%)	C	2.00
377 - 439	(60 - 69.9%)	D	1.00
0 - 376	(0 - 59.9%)	F	0.00

### **Contact Policy**

Although you may attempt to reach me by phone, ***email communication is always preferred*** and has a faster response rate as I am not always in the office. Feel free to email me any questions or concerns following these guidelines:

- Always use the course number (CJ 3346) in the subject line of the email
- Remember to sign your name.
- **Always** email me from your Texas State email address. Email sent from personal email servers like Gmail, Yahoo, etc., tend to end up in my spam folder, and I never see them. You may also email me through Canvas via the Inbox.
- You should NOT contact me for tech support.

### **Response Times**

#### **To Email and Canvas Inbox:**

Please include CJ 3346 and topic in your email subject line, as this helps me prioritize a response to you. I will respond to you within 48 hours, generally within 24 hours. Weekends and official University breaks may delay this period. Students are always welcome to schedule an in-person meeting if they would like.

#### **Feedback on Assignments:**

Feedback on Assignments and Exams will happen within one week; this may happen sooner or be slightly delayed based on the requirements of the courses I am taking. Students worried about feedback should email the instructor to set up a meeting.

### **In-Person Meetings:**

While I am not always in the Criminal Justice Office, I will be more than happy to meet with you outside of class. To request an In-Person Meeting, please notify me via email with some dates and times you are available. Please put "CJ 3346- In-Person Meeting Request" in the subject line. I will respond within 24 hours to these requests, excluding weekends and official University breaks.

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## **WHAT IS MY GRADE BASED ON?**

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### **Assignments**

<b>2 Guest Speakers</b> (25 points each)	50 points
<b>Survey Questions Assignment</b>	20 Points
<b>9 Research Proposals Assignments</b> (20-50 points each)	350 Points
<b>4 Research Proposal In-Class Workshops</b> (20 points each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction &amp; Research Questions</li><li>• Literature Review</li><li>• Methods/Limitations</li><li>• Full Research Proposal Draft</li></ul>	80 points
<b>Final Research Proposal</b>	100 points
<b>SONA Undergraduate Research Experience</b>	32 points
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>632 Points</b>

### **Guest Speakers**

There will be 2 required classes for guest speakers. These people are leaving their workday to speak to you about their experience of criminal justice research they use in the professional world. As these speakers are active professionals in the criminal justice field, classes may need to be rescheduled due to emergencies. As much advance notice will be given in the event of these emergencies. If a student is not in classes, they will not earn the points. If a student misses the guest speaker and provides a doctor's note, they will be excused from the assignment. Each required class is worth 25 points for a **total of 50 points**.

### **Survey Questions Assignment**

Students will write 10 survey questions about a topic that is presented in class. Students will then critique and evaluate each other's questions, before submitting the assignment. Students will submit both versions of their questions (their original list and edits after class peer-review). This assignment is worth a **total of 20 points**.

### **Research Proposal Assignments**

The Research Proposal Assignments (**Research Proposal**) are a series of 9 interconnected assignments that, when completed, will produce a viable research proposal. These assignments must be completed in the order in which they are assigned. The objective of this graded activity

is to learn the research process. **THIS ASSIGNMENT IS NOT A TRADITIONAL RESEARCH PAPER.** The assignments are listed in Canvas. Each individual assignment outlines the scoring criteria and is worth between 20 and 50 points, **totaling 350 points.**

### **Research Proposal In-Class Workshops**

During the semester, 4 In-class workshops will be held during class sessions, allowing your classmates to peer-review the elements of your proposal and provide feedback. The instructor will also be circulating the room to provide input at this time. Four workshops will be held throughout the semester on (1) introduction & research questions; (2) literature review; (3) methods/limitations of your study; and (4) your full research proposal draft. You must attend class to earn these points, bring the required draft materials for review, and participate in the review process. Students who present a doctor's note for a missed class will be excused from the assignment. You will earn up to 20 points per workshop, **totaling 80 points.**

### **Final Research Proposal**

The final written research proposal will include an introduction, a literature review, a proposed plan for collecting data responsive to the research question, the study's limitations, and a references page. Students will not be required to collect data or complete a final research project or report. The final written proposal should be 10 -15 pages in length, double-spaced in Times New Roman font, size 12, with one-inch margins, and follow APA citation guidelines. The final paper should incorporate all feedback given from peers and the instructor in the course. This assignment is **due to Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**, and will be worth a **total of 100 points.**

### **SONA Research Experience**

Every student enrolled in this course participates in a research experience for a total of 4 credits. You may do this in one of two ways:

1. As a research participant in two hours' worth of research studies being conducted by Texas State faculty or graduate students.
2. Summarizing research articles published in Volume 63 (any issue) of the journal *Criminology* or Volume 21 (any issue) of *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. Each 500-word written summary is worth 2 credits.

Please see the SONA Handout in Canvas for more information about this assignment. You must have 4 credits to receive the points for this assignment. No half points will be given. This assignment is worth **32 points** and **due to the SONA system no later than Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup> by 5 pm.**

### **Extra Credit**

Extra credit opportunities may be offered to the entire class if an opportunity arises during the semester. These opportunities will be announced in class and/or on Canvas, along with information on how extra points can be earned. Extra credit is not intended to replace regular course credit, and students should prioritize class assignments over extra credit opportunities. No other extra credit opportunities will be provided.

### **Late Assignments**

Assignments, except the in-class workshops and guest speakers, may be handed in **TWO WEEKS LATE without penalty**. After this point, the assignment will NOT be accepted. The **final research proposal will NOT be accepted late** due to the university's final grade submission deadline.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence**

Students may (and sometimes will be asked to) use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this class for idea generation and to enhance their work. However, students must generate a substantial amount of the work (over 80%) on any assignment, or it will be considered Academic Dishonesty. See the Academic Dishonesty section for the consequences of its use.

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## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

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### **Academic Honesty Policy**

Students at Texas State University are expected to uphold high academic standards. Texas State will not tolerate a lack of academic integrity. Submission of any work for a grade for which unauthorized help has been received is termed academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a failing grade in the course. "Unauthorized" is a term used here to designate stealing, copying (with or without permission), or collaboration with other individuals. Furthermore, acts of cheating, collaboration and collusion, plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty as defined in UPPS No. 07.10.01 are also strictly prohibited (<https://policies.txst.edu/university-policies/07-10-01.html>). Students are strongly encouraged to refer to the Texas State's student handbook for policies related to academic dishonesty.

***Engaging in Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated! Students must work independently unless specified by the instructor. The first violation will result in an "F" for the assignment or exam. The second violation will result in an "F" in the class.***

### **Honor Code**

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our university live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

If you have read this far, thank you. Please send an email with your favorite candy or candy bar, and I will bring it to class for you. Please note I must receive this email before class starts on Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Be smart and do not tell your classmates about this; that would spoil the fun. Now, back to the Honor Code....

**WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS.** We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

**WE ARE RESPECTFUL.** We act civilly toward one another, and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

**WE ARE HONEST.** We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

**THE PLEDGE FOR STUDENTS.** Students at our university recognize that, to ensure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation:

*I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.*

**THE PLEDGE FOR FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION.** Faculty at our university recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place:

*I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.*

**ADDRESSING ACTS OF DISHONESTY.** Students accused of dishonest conduct may have their cases heard by the faculty member. The student may also appeal the faculty member's decision to the Honor Code Council. Students and faculty will have the option of having an advocate present to ensure their rights. Possible actions that may be taken range from exoneration to expulsion.

See ([www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html)) for more information.

**Students with Disabilities**

A student with a disability may require an accommodation(s) to participate in the course. They must contact the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. They will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at that time. Failure to contact the instructor in a timely manner will delay any accommodations they may be seeking. Ongoing care by a physician does not automatically qualify you as an ODS special needs student. Students are required to file paperwork for accommodations with ODS each semester. Accommodations granted one semester do not automatically carry forward to the next.

**Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)**

Week	Day	Date	Topic/Reading	Assignment	Important Dates
1	M	8.25	Course Overview; Syllabus & Picking a Research Area <b>Read Syllabus</b>		
	W	8.27	Library Database Overview, The Research Proposal & How to Read a Research Article <b>Carey et al. (2023); Overview of the Research Proposal</b>	<b>Research Area Topic Due in Class</b>	

2	M	9.1	No Class: Labor Day		
	W	9.3	What is Research? (1) Read Chapter 1 Reisig & Parks (2006)	Research Proposal #1 Due 9.3 by 11am Research Proposal #2 Due 9.7 by 11:59 pm	9.3 - Last Day to Add the Course
3	M	9.8	Theory & Social Science Research (2) Read Chapter 2 Williams (2007)		
	W	9.10	Theory & Social Science Research		
4	M	9.15	Workshop #1 Introduction & Research Questions	Bring a copy of Research Question and Introduction Outline Due in Class	
	W	9.17	Ethics & Research (3) Read Chapter 3 Sexton, Jenness & Summer (2009)	Research Proposal #3 Due 9.21 by 11:59 pm	
5	M	9.22	Qualitative & Quantitative Research (4) Chapter 4 Paternoster (2006)		
	W	9.24	Guest Speaker: Dr. Melissa Swauncy- Coleman, DePaul University		
6	M	9.29	Measurement & Scales (5) Read Chapters 5 & 6 Krohn et al. (2011)		
	W	10.1	Sampling Techniques (6) Read Chapter 8	Research Proposal #4 Due 9.30 by 11:59 pm	
7	M	10.6	Sampling Techniques		
	W	10.8	Survey Research (7) Read Chapter 9		

8	M	10.13	Survey Research	<b>Survey Question Due in Class</b>	
	W	10.15	Survey Research <b>Durham, Elrod &amp; Kinkade (2006)</b>	<b>Research Proposal #5 Due 10.19 by 11:59 pm</b>	
9	M	10.20	<b>Workshop #2 Literature Review</b>	<b>Bring a copy of full Methods Section Due in Class</b>  <b>Final Survey Questions Due 10.20 by 11:59pm</b>	
	W	10.22	Unobtrusive & Non-Reactive Research Design (8) <b>Wells (2006)</b>	<b>Research Proposal #6 Due 10.26 by 11:59 pm</b>	
10	M	10.27	Experimental Design (9) <b>Read Chapter 7 Feder &amp; Dugan (2006)</b>		<b>10.27 - Last Day to drop with a "W"</b>
	W	10.29	Quantitative Data Analysis (10) <b>Chapters 10 &amp; 11</b>		
11	M	11.3	Qualitative Field Work (11) <b>Davis &amp; Birzer (2024)</b>		
	W	11.5	Qualitative Data Analysis (12)	<b>Research Proposal #7 Due 11.9 by 11:59 pm</b>	
12	M	11.10	Writing a Research Report (13)		
	W	11.12	<b>No Class: American Society of Criminology Conference</b>	<b>Research Proposal #8 Due 11.16 by 11:59 pm</b>	

13	M	11.17	<b>Workshop #3 Methods Section</b>	<b>Bring a copy of full Methods Section Due in Class</b>	
	W	11.19	<b>Guest Speaker:</b> TBD		<b>11.21</b> – Last Day to Withdrawal from the University
14	M	11.24	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Week</b>	Work on your Proposals	
	W	11.26	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Break</b>	<b>Research Proposal #9 Due 11.30 by 11:59 pm</b>	
15	M	12.1	<b>Workshop #4 Proposal Draft</b>	<b>Bring a copy of Full Research Proposal Due in Class</b>	
	W	12.3	<b>Catch-up/ Weather Make-up Day</b>	<b>4 SONA Credits in the SONA System Due 12.5 by 5pm</b>	
FINAL	M	12.8	<b>Final Exam Time 11:00 am to 1:30 pm</b>	<b>Final Research Proposal Due Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 pm</b>	

*\*Our Guest Speakers may need to reschedule their visits based on their work demands. If this happens, a new date will be communicated as soon as possible in class and via Canvas.*