

Research Methods

CJ 280-920 | Summer 2019 | 3 Credit Hours

Lecture

Dr. Erin Kearns

Contact Information

UA Campus Directory:

- Dr. Erin Kearns (<https://www.ua.edu/directory/?i=emkearns#listing>)

Prerequisites

UA Course Catalog Prerequisites:

CJ 100

Course Description

Course Description and Credit Hours

Theoretical and specific instruction in both the conduct and application of research methods in criminal justice settings. Includes problem of research and policy dimensions of both direct and applied approaches.

Required Texts

Required Texts from UA Supply Store:

- ACCESS GRANTED DIGITAL MATERIALS / CJ 280 ACCESS GRANTED PROGRAM (REID) (**Required**)

There is a required textbook for this course. It is:

Bachman, R.D. and Schutt, R.K. (2018). Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice, 4th Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

However, this course is part of the University's Access Granted Program. This means that you will have immediate access to the online textbook on the first day of class through Blackboard. Your student account will be billed for the access once the drop/add period ends. You have up until the end of the drop/add period to opt out of the Access Granted Program. Login and opt out instructions are both available on Blackboard. If you receive Alabama GI benefits, the process will be slightly different for you. Please contact the SupeStore for specific information if you are an Alabama GI Bill student.

If you opt out of the Access Granted Program, you will have to purchase the book from another source. The readings are required. The class assignments assume a mastery of the reading material and exam questions will come from the readings.

Course Objectives

Our society is tremendously complex and navigating it requires accurate information about the social world in which we live.

Unfortunately, much of the information we are bombarded with on a daily basis is not accurate. The aim of this course is to provide you with the tools to be a critical consumer of this information by teaching you the basic methods of sociological research. This is a hands-on course. It requires you to read and evaluate research, as well as work through the process of conceptualizing and planning a research project, an important exercise for future producers, consumers, and subjects of research.

Assessments

There are two required components to your grade in this course: Module Exams & Journal Article Reviews.

Module Exams

There are four module exams administered in this course. Things to know about the exams:

- You will take the exam online via Blackboard.
- You are limited to one attempt at taking the exam during a 1.5 hour sitting. In other words, the exam must be completed in one sitting (no logging out and back in).
- Each exam is comprised of 50 multiple choice questions worth five points apiece.
- The exams are not cumulative.
- You **may** use your book and/or notes. You **may not** collaborate with others. You **may not** give to or receive help from anyone inside or outside of the class.
- All exams close exactly at 11:59 pm CT on the date due, no exceptions.
- If you begin the exam, or request a reset, after 10:29 pm CT on the date due, you will not have the full 1.5 hours to take it.

Since you are given a broad window within which to take your exams, **your instructor does not extend deadlines or allow for makeup exams for any reason.**

Journal Article Reviews

One of the best ways to learn how to conduct research is to read about completed research. In each module, you will complete a Journal Article Review. This assignment requires that you (1) select one article from a set of options, (2) read the article, and (3) answer a series of questions about the article. The article options that are given address concepts introduced in textbook readings for one of the chapters in the module. In answering the assignment questions, you are expected to refer back explicitly to the textbook to demonstrate your mastery of the material in that chapter. There is no minimum or maximum page limit for your responses, but fully answering all of the questions should require in the range of two type-written pages, double-spaced and in a 12-point font. The number of questions does not change the expected length of the finished assignment (some questions will require more effort). These assignments are completed independently. You **may not** collaborate with others.

You will submit your review via Blackboard. You must submit your review by 11:59 pm CT on the date due. **10 points (out of 100) will be deducted for Journal Article Reviews submitted after 11:59 pm CT on the date due. An additional 10 points will be deducted for each 24 hours a review is late.**

Grading Policy

| Item | Percentage of Final Grade |
|--|---------------------------|
| Module Exams (four exams, one each per full module) | 70% |
| Journal Article Reviews (four reviews, one each per full module) | 30% |
| Total | 100% |

Grade Ranges

Your final letter grade, as well as all of your exam and assignment grades, will be calculated on the following scale:

| Letter Grade | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| A+ | 97-100% |

| | |
|----|--------|
| A | 93-96% |
| A- | 90-92% |
| B+ | 87-89% |
| B | 83-86% |
| B- | 80-82% |
| C+ | 77-79% |
| C | 73-76% |
| C- | 70-72% |
| D+ | 67-69% |
| D | 63-66% |
| D- | 60-62% |
| F | 0-59% |

Incompletes are only given with my prior approval and only in cases when extreme hardship cause a student to miss a small number of key assignments at the very end of the semester.

Policy on Missed Assessments

Do not wait until the last few hours to submit your assignments or complete your exams.

I do not provide opportunities to make up exams because you have a long window within which to complete them. I do allow you to submit assignments late, but with a significant penalty of 10 points per each 24 hours after the deadline. I am absolutely firm on this policy. Due dates and times are listed on the Outline of Topics & Course Schedule on Blackboard and in this syllabus. All assignments and exams are due at 11:59 pm CT on the date due. No due dates will be extended because your computer crashed, your internet connection wasn't working properly, or you ran into any other technical problems right before the work was due. It is your responsibility to make sure you have adequate equipment and Internet access to complete the coursework by the required deadline.

Notification of Changes

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Elasticity Clause

Please note that your instructor reserves the right to change anything listed on this syllabus by advance notification via Blackboard and/or Crimson email.

Email

Communicate with your instructor using the contact information at the beginning of this syllabus. It is crucial that you monitor the Blackboard Mail on the Course Menu, as well as your Crimson Mail, regularly, as you will be responsible for both.

Technical Requirements

This course requires a high-speed internet connection, a compatible browser, and speakers or headphones. It is your responsibility to make sure you have adequate equipment and internet access to complete the required work. Courses may also require these free tools:

- Java
- Adobe Reader
- Flash Player
- Microsoft Silverlight
- QuickTime
- Windows Media Player (or Flip4Mac)

Participation in an online course requires knowledge of computer technology. In order to participate successfully in an online course, you should already be able to:

- Access and use Blackboard Learn (review the Blackboard Learn Tutorials (<http://aohs.ua.edu/cm/general/bblearn/tutorials/learn/index.html>) for assistance).
- Use a word processing program to: (1) Create, format, edit, spell check, save, and print a document. (2) Cut, copy, and paste information. (3) Save a word processing document in txt, rtf, doc, or docx format as requested.
- Use a spreadsheet program to: (1) Create, format, edit, spell check, save, and print a spreadsheet. (2) Cut, copy, and paste information. (3) Create graphs.
- Use a web browser to view, navigate, and search for information on the Internet.
- Use your Crimson email account and the Blackboard Learn Mail tool to send and receive messages and file attachments.

Supplemental Information on Academic Dishonesty

While I do not ask that you sign the pledge referenced in the Online Catalog (see below), I expect you to adhere to it. I take issues of academic integrity very seriously; I will report every violation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the determination of an academic and/or disciplinary penalty. Avoid any temptation to violate the university policy on academic misconduct. If you are having any problems completing course requirements or preparing for exams, please see me immediately. Here are some violations that should go without saying, but I will say them anyway... Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, submitting any online exams or assignments for another student; providing or receiving assistance on any online exams or individual assignments; and cheating in any way on any online exams or assignments. This policy holds for all course requirements. If you have any questions as to whether or not a certain action is in violation of the academic misconduct policy, ask me about it. This is not a situation in which it is better to beg forgiveness than ask permission.

Course Presentation

The course content is divided into units called learning modules, which are accessible via the Course Menu. The learning modules contain the content of the course.

Course Schedule

The Course Schedule is a tool that will help you organize and track the completion of required course activities. It provides a list of all activities and due dates for this course. You can access it at any time by selecting Course Schedule on the Course Menu. Please refer to the [UA Academic Calendar](https://registrar.ua.edu/academiccalendar/) (<https://registrar.ua.edu/academiccalendar/>) for other important dates.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- Differentiate empirical social research from other, non-empirical forms of inquiry, such as journalism and historical research.

- Craft testable research questions and hypotheses.
- Develop valid and reliable measures of criminological phenomena.
- Design a quantitative, survey-based study.
- Design a qualitative, interview- or observation-based study.
- Use probability and nonprobability sampling methods in data collection.
- Design a study from the articulation of research questions to the final data analysis.

Testing Resources

Find information here: <http://bamabydistance.ua.edu/testing> (http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001vBfC7WSIZ6UqBauebVR-WptHaJeATry6BkZFdXmADJCl5FIRQQ_MoOyD4UvO5-qHVAbavMMqAtVj7qWooHGpt6ULVRVXNPh5PytB1wN2PnQQ4EkEp4VRj1WJ1oTBe2lQr_CKPZ3BlipdykjOdeiqVUcLxiCYK_MY&c=Xyw6XPwqeHaYysglMRD3Vh4DK9ckElattR9JvjApKuo-BAMZuNHvyg==&ch=JXNEV4I-ixwY5UReKEel-NIiyGoUeN6gnq7VLrzs6Eu_tVJT7VMtGA==).

Technical Support

To obtain assistance with technical issues (removing pop-up blockers, opening pages or quizzes, etc.) or if you are unable to see the course content or have other questions regarding the course itself, please visit the College of Continuing Studies Online Course Technical Support Site (<http://ccs-aohelpdesk.ccs.ua-net.ua.edu/index.php?pg=request>) to submit a request, or call 205-348-9157 (Toll Free: 1-866-205-1011) during their regular business hours (<https://itas.ua.edu/about-us/technical-support.php>).

System Requirements

This online course requires a modern Mac or PC computer and high-speed internet connection. Your computer must also have a compatible browser (<http://ccs-aohelpdesk.ccs.ua-net.ua.edu/index.php?pg=kb.page&id=218>), PDF viewer, speakers or headphones, microphone, and productivity software such as Office.

Minimum Student Technical Skills

Taking an online course requires a general computer literacy. Students are expected to be able to use Crimson email, Blackboard, web browsers, and general word processing programs prior to enrolling in an online course. Student needing assistance using Blackboard are encouraged to visit the UA Blackboard support site (<http://ccs-aohelpdesk.ccs.ua-net.ua.edu/index.php?pg=kb.book&id=14>).

Turnitin

The University of Alabama is committed to helping students uphold the ethical standards of academic integrity in all areas of study. Students agree that their enrollment in this course allows the instructor the right to use electronic devices to help prevent plagiarism. All course materials are subject to submission to TurnItIn.com for the purpose of detecting textual similarities. Assignments submitted to TurnItIn.com will be included as source documents in TurnItIn.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. TurnItIn.com will be used as a source document to help students avoid plagiarism in written documents.

The Capstone Creed

The Capstone Creed was created by the Student Leaders Council. In the spring of 2000, a discussion of campus culture among student leaders led to an effort to identify the core values that sustain us as members of the University community. The Student Leaders Council recognized that the Capstone experience is not limited to our formal affiliation with the University during enrollment and that the University community does not end at the geographic boundaries of campus. As members of the Capstone community, there is a common thread that unites us all, and the Student Leaders Council has endeavored to make those core values manifest through the implementation of a campus-wide creed with which all Capstone stakeholders can identify.

The Capstone Creed reads: *As a member of The University of Alabama community, I will pursue knowledge; act with fairness, integrity and*

respect; promote equity and inclusion; foster individual and civic responsibility; and strive for excellence in all I do.

Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Code of Academic Conduct (<http://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/academic-regulations/student-expectations/code-academic-conduct/>) provided in the Online Catalog.

Statement On Disability Accommodations

Contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (<http://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/support-programs/disability-services/>) as detailed in the Online Catalog.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest Severe Weather Guidelines (<http://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/support-programs/severe-weather-guidelines/>) in the Online Catalog.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website (<https://www.ua.edu/campuslife/uact/information/pregnancy>).

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines (http://provost.ua.edu/uploads/3/9/7/6/39760652/oa_guidelines_for_religious_holiday_observance.pdf).

UAct Statement

The UAct website (<https://www.ua.edu/campuslife/uact/>) provides an overview of The University's expectations regarding respect and civility.