

**CCJ 4701 – Criminal Justice Research Methods**  
**Fall 2008**  
**Monday 6:00 – 8:50 pm**

**Dr. Applegate**  
**407-823-3739**

**360 HPA1**

**Office hours:**

**Mon, Tue & Wed 1:30-3:30 pm**

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**Course Description**

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with sufficient skills to understand, interpret, and critically evaluate research studies and findings in the field of criminal justice. As secondary objectives, this course seeks to prepare students to conduct their own basic research and to provide a basis for understanding more advanced topics in research methodology. Knowledge about research methodology is essential to assessing the quality and usefulness of information in criminal justice.

**Text and Materials**

Maxfield, Michael G. & Earl R. Babbie. (2005). *Basics of Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. (ISBN: 0534615678)

Additional readings will be available from the reserve desk at the main UCF library and on my website under the “classes” section.

Students are also encouraged to have a pocket calculator. It should have a memory and square root key.

**Requirements**

There will be three exams. Each of the first two tests will cover only the material presented since the previous exam. The final exam, however, is comprehensive. Material for the exams will be taken from course lectures and assigned readings.

At the end of the term, we will dedicate one class period to a “research showcase.” During this class, each student will display a poster relating the design and results of a research study completed during the course. We will mingle and discuss all projects. I will provide details about the research projects on a separate sheet.

There will also be in-class and homework assignments. They will be distributed occasionally throughout the term. When each homework assignment is handed out, students will be provided with detailed instructions and a due date.

**Grading**

The final course grade will be based on the above requirements as follows, and will reflect the grading scale established below:

<u>Weighting of Requirements</u>		<u>Grading Scale</u>			
Exam 1	20%	A	90 - 100%	C	70 - 77%
Exam 2	20%	B+	88 - 89%	D+	68 - 69%
Final Exam	30%	B	80 - 87%	D	60 - 67%
Research Showcase Project	20%	C+	78 - 79%	F	0 - 59%
In-class & Homework Assignments	10%				

### Academic Honesty

I expect that each of the exams and assignments will reflect your own work (or group work when assigned). In particular, you should not copy someone else's work or allow them to copy yours. When you are reporting ideas from something you have read, you must cite the source. Finally, if you draw any direct quotes from someone else, you must put them in quotation marks and cite the original author (direct quotes should be used only when you cannot adequately restate the idea in your own words). For details on the consequences of academic dishonesty see UCF's Golden Rule.

### Make-Up Policy

Students will be allowed to make up exams or hand in homework assignments late without penalty only in the event of an emergency. Written verification that you could not meet the deadline or attend class (e.g., emergency room receipt, arrest report) must be provided.

If you do not have a valid emergency excuse, you may still make up exams or hand in homework assignments late, but you will lose 10 percent of the total possible points for each week that you are late. The count begins as soon as the class is over on the original date. Also, make-ups will only be accepted within two weeks of the original due date.

In-class assignments cannot be made up.

<b>Course Outline</b>		
<u>Week of</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
Aug 25	Introduction, The Scientific Perspective	M&B 1, 2
Sept 1	Labor Day – no class	
Sept 8	Discussion of Sample Study, Causation and Research Design, Conceptualization	Weiss & Chermak, M&B 3, M&B pp. 91-96
Sept 15	Operationalization	M&B 4
Sept 22	Experimental Designs	M&B 5, Pate & Hamilton
Sept 29	<b>Exam #1</b>	
Oct 6	Overview of Data Collection and Sampling	M&B 6
Oct 13	Survey Research	M&B 7, Garcia & Cao
Oct 20	Field Research	M&B 8, Marquart
Oct 27	Agency Data, Unobtrusive Research	M&B 9
Nov 3	Evaluation Research	M&B 10
Nov 10	<b>Exam #2</b>	
Nov 17	Descriptive Statistics	M&B pp. 307-316
Nov 24	Inferential Statistics	M&B pp. 316-333
Dec 1	Research Showcase	
Dec 8	<b>Comprehensive Final Exam 7:00 - 9:50 pm</b>	

(M&B refers to chapters or pages in the textbook, Maxfield & Babbie; all other readings, which are listed by authors' names, are available at the UCF Library Reserve Desk and on my personal website under "classes")