



EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## CJCR 5850 Research Design in Criminal Justice and Criminology

### Syllabus

#### Contact Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Dustin Osborne  
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**Phone:** (423) 439-5604  
**Office:** Rogers-Stout 201-E

#### Instructor Availability

I am on campus several days each week (unless the University closes campus) and will be happy to schedule a time to meet.

I am also happy to speak over the phone or meet through Zoom. Contact me and we can find a time that works for both schedules!

#### Meetings and Location

Due to the COVID-19 situation we will be meeting virtually each week. Zoom links for these meetings can be found within each module on D2L. **The passcode for each meeting will be 423439.**

Class Meeting Schedule: Mondays 12:35-3:25

### Course Information

#### Credit Hours

This is a three (3) credit hour core course.

#### Course Description and Purpose

The course focuses on research methodology as it relates to criminological inquiry. Issues in sampling, variable operationalization and measurement and research design will be covered.

## Course Goals

This course is designed to introduce students to research design within the field of criminal justice. It covers the role of research in the field and the various techniques that are available. This is achieved through both lectures and applied assignments.

## Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete the course will be proficient in the following:

1. Conceptualizing a research study
2. Operationalizing concepts and variables
3. Determining the appropriate research strategy to explore a particular topic
4. Reviewing past literature and determining gaps in knowledge
5. Navigating the Institutional Review Board process
6. Conducting an evaluation of policies and interventions
7. Using various techniques to explore problems and perceptions, including:
  - a. Surveys
  - b. Observational studies
  - c. Interviews and focus groups
  - d. Content analyses

## Major Topics

The course will cover the following topics:

1. The purpose of research
2. Ethical considerations when conducting research
3. The various forms that research can take within the field
4. Measurement and instrumentation
5. Survey design and administration
6. Sampling
7. Quantitative research designs (including experimental research)
8. The role of qualitative research in the field
9. Content analysis
10. Observational research and ethnography
11. Interviews and focus groups
12. Evaluation research

## Course Requirements

### Textbooks and Readings

The following books are required:

Babbie, E. (2015). *The Practice of Social Research*.  
ISBN: 9781305104945

Young, J. (2011). *The criminological imagination*.  
ISBN: 9780745641072

In addition, several outside readings are incorporated over the course of the semester. These are listed within the course schedule (at the end of the syllabus) and available under the respective week's tab on the D2L site.

## Technical Requirements

Students will be required to have a basic understanding of Microsoft Office Suite and D2L (ETSU's course management platform). Weekly lectures will be paired with PowerPoint presentations that are available on the D2L platform. In addition, assignments will require the use of Microsoft Word or comparable word processing software. Please keep in mind that all assignment submissions should be in the form of a .docx file.

## Course Policies and Expectations

### Classroom and Communication Policies

#### Email Communication

All email communications should be conducted using the account provided to you by East Tennessee State University.

#### Attendance and Participation (in online meetings)

The course participation grade (30 points) is calculated based upon both attendance and participation in class discussions. Each unexcused absence will result in a five (5) point deduction from the participation grade. In addition, a five (5) point deduction will be taken if it is apparent that the student did not read the material assigned for the class meeting in question. **More than three (3) unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course.**

#### Academic Integrity

Dishonesty, cheating and/or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. The University has established a system through which students accused of these actions will be referred to the Graduate School for adjudication. Though they have the final say in these matters, I will advocate for a failing grade in the course.

### Assignments and Submission Guidelines

Students will complete seven assignments over the course of the semester:

1. CITI Training
2. Book Critique
3. Content Analysis Assignment
4. Interview Assignment
5. Survey Assignment
6. Observational Research Assignment
7. Observational Research Presentation

More information is provided under the *Assignments* tab on the course D2L site. All assignments will be submitted to Dropboxes available under the *Assignments* tab. Please see the course schedule at the end of this syllabus for due dates. Because this is a graduate course, students are expected to produce high-quality work that exhibits both strong effort and a mastery of the topics/skills associated with each assignment. I will grade these assignments based upon this expectation.

In addition, students will take two exams (a mid-term and a final). The dates for each exam are also listed in the course schedule.

### Late and Missing Submission Policy

Late submissions for assignments will not be accepted without prior approval. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether approval will be granted and the point deduction that will be taken as a result.

### Grading Policy

Please see the below table for a summary of the maximum points that can be earned for each grading component.

Component	Maximum Points
CITI Training	20 Points
Book Critique	50 Points
Content Analysis Assignment	50 Points
Interview Assignment	50 Points
Survey Assignment	50 Points
Observational Research Assignment	50 Points
Observational Research Presentation	30 Points
Exam One	100 Points
Exam Two	100 Points
Participation	30 Points
Total	530 Points

Final grades will be calculated based upon the following scale:

**A: 477-530**

**B: 424-476**

**C: 371-423**

**F: 0-370**

## Course Schedule

Week One: Syllabus and Course Introduction (August 24 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 1	None

Week Two: Research Design (August 31 <sup>st</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 2 Chapter 4 Chapter 17 Fox & Jennings (2014)	CITI Training Due

Week Three: Qualitative Research (September 7 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
The Criminological Imagination Chapter 13	Book Critique Due

Week Four: Content Analysis (September 14 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 11 Dixon et al. (2008) Ley, Jankowski & Brewer (2012)	None



Week Five: Observational Research and Ethnography (September 21 <sup>st</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 10 Worley, Worley & Wood (2016) Todak & James (2018)	None

Week Six: Interviews and Focus Groups (September 28 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Forsyth & Forsyth (2009) Hochstetler, Copes & Williams (2010)	Content Analysis Assignment Due

Week Seven: Quantitative Research/Measurement and Instrumentation (October 5 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 5 Chapter 6	Exam #1 Due

Week Eight: Sampling and Experimental Design (October 12 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Johnson et al. (2017) Sampson (2010)	None

Week Nine: Quantitative Research Design (October 19 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 14 Chapter 15 Lawton, Taylor & Luongo (2007)	Interview Assignment Due



Week Ten: Survey Design (October 26 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 9	None

Week Eleven: Evaluation Research (November 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 12 Mears, Scott & Bhati (2007) Collins, Lonczak & Clifasefi (2017)	Survey Assignment Due

Week Twelve: Research Ethics (November 9 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
Chapter 3 Vanderstaay (2005) Tartaro & Levy (2014)	None

Week Thirteen: Presentations (November 16 <sup>th</sup> )	
Readings	Assignments
None	Observational Research Assignment Due Presentation Due

Week Fourteen: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)	
Readings	Assignments
None	None

### Week Fifteen: Final Exam (November 30<sup>th</sup>)

Readings	Assignments
None	Exam #2 Due

## Student Services and Technical Resources

### Student Services

The [ETSU Services webpage](#) includes a comprehensive list of services available to all ETSU students.

### Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of ETSU to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law and the University's commitment to equal educational access. Any student with a disability who needs accommodations, for example arrangement for examinations or seating placement, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Faculty accommodation forms are provided to students through Disability Services in the D.P. Culp Center, Room 326, telephone 423-439-8346. [Visit the Disability Services webpage for more information.](#)

### Technical Resources

#### Help Desk

The Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk is the best resource for most technical problems. Find answers to common questions on the [Help Desk website](#), call, email, or stop in to see them on the first floor of the Sherrod Library. Phone: 423-439-4648 Email: [itshelp@etsu.edu](mailto:itshelp@etsu.edu)

#### Desire2Learn (D2L) Online Help

Many answers to D2L related questions can be found on the [D2L Help Student Home](#). If you are still having trouble finding what you need, contact the Help Desk.

#### Microsoft Office Software

Microsoft Office productivity applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, and more, are available free for students through the University's Office 365 campus agreement. For instructions on how to obtain the software, see the [Office 365 page of the ITS Help Desk website](#).

#### Turnitin Plagiarism Detection

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service available to students and faculty at ETSU. This tool compares student written work against a comprehensive database of other work as well as various internet sources. Faculty may employ this service for some or all written assignments, in order to help students learn to cite sources accurately and to ensure academic integrity. Learn more on the [Turnitin home page](#).

#### ETSU Technical Resources

Many other technical resources can be found on the [Online Help webpage](#).