

San José State University
Justice Studies
JS 114, Research Methods, Fall 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	(Sambuddha Ghatak, Ph.D.)
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Office Hours:	Mondays 1:00-3:00 pm
Class Hours:	Monday & Wednesday: 3 pm-4:15 pm
Classroom	Hugh Gillis Hall 122

Course Description (Required)

Introduction to research methods used in Justice Studies includes exploring relationship of theory to empirical evidence and logic underlying methods of inquiry and ethics in conducting empirical research. Methodological design, operationalization, and data analysis are integral parts of this course.

Prerequisite: JS 10, 12, 25, or FS 11; JS 100W with a grade of "C" or better; JS15 or Stat 95 or equivalent with a "C" or better; Upper Division Standing; Restricted to JS majors and minors. Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice Studies majors. Note that SJSU classes are designed in a way that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours a unit per week), including preparation for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments and so on.

This course will cover philosophy of science, fundamental techniques and procedures, research ethics, and methods of data collection and data analysis in criminal justice and criminological research, with emphasis on quantitative analysis.

Students will leave this course with a firm understanding of different research designs in criminal justice and criminological research. In addition, students will be able to initiate and conduct an independent research project, including proposing meaningful research questions, reviewing literature, and conducting data collection and basic analysis. It is useful to think of research methods as tools that can be used to answer questions about the social world. For example, social scientists have relied on statistics to answer questions such as “Do juvenile smokers commit more delinquent acts than nonsmokers?” or “Do higher levels of patrols by law enforcement officials decrease crime?” During this course, you will learn some of these research methods and statistical techniques and how to use them to answer questions commonly confronted by social scientists. As we move through the course material, you will find that an understanding of a given topic builds on what has been

covered previously. Thus, it is in your best interest to stay current on the readings, follow power-point slides, and ask questions through email if you are unsure about a topic.

Please note that this is an online course in which students will 1) watch videos of my course lectures that have been posted on Canvas, and 2) take online quiz, submit paper critiques and research note, and complete assignments that, as noted above, will also be posted on Canvas. Hence this course is essentially located on Canvas, to which enrolled students automatically have access through their SJSUOne account. All course material, except for the course book, will be available through Canvas. (A word to the wise: Students who do not watch the course lectures in sequential order as the semester progresses, or do not take notes on the contents, or do not do the required course readings will find it impossible to get a good grade and may well end up failing this course. Cutting corners, which is never a good idea for students who are serious about learning, is likely to lead to disaster in an online course!) To reiterate, course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc., can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) (Required)

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

SLO 1: Understand why knowledge of research methods is valuable to criminal justice professionals and how to conduct a review of research literature, write a research proposal, design a research project.

SLO 2: Identify and frame a meaningful research question.

SLO 3: Understand causality as opposed to correlation.

SLO 4: Summarize three fundamental features of social science: theory, data collection, and data analysis; describe how theory and public policy can be closely linked.

SLO 5: Recognize how criminal justice research is shaped by ethical considerations.

SLO 6: Understand how the logic of probability sampling makes it possible to represent large populations with small subsets of those populations.

SLO 7: Recognize that public organizations produce statistics and data that are often useful for criminal justice researchers.

SLO 8: Understand the differences between descriptive and inferential statistics. For example, descriptive statistics are used to summarize data under study.

Required Texts/Readings (Required)

Textbook

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020). *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. ISBN: 9781544374055.

Other Readings

Other required readings will be posted on Canvas. The readings are subject to change by instructor.

Course Requirements and Assignments (Required)

Homework: You will be assigned about 10 homework over the semester. The homework will open on Fridays at 11:59 pm and the answers will be due on Mondays at 11:59 pm. The dates are given in the schedule below.

Midterm Exam: The exam will cover the topics covered before the exam. The exam will include short as well as essay questions.

Final Exam: The final will follow the format of midterm.

Research Paper: Writing a research paper is a major part of this class. The students are required to select a topic in consultation with the instructor and write a research paper on a topic of his/her interest. The research paper should include among others a research question, literature review, theory and hypothesis/ hypotheses. The final draft paper is due on **Dec. 6**.

Exam dates will be announced soon.

Other Readings

Other required readings will be posted on Canvas. The readings are subject to change by instructor.

Grading Information (Required)

Percent to Letter Grade Correspondence

A plus = 100 to 96%	A = 95 to 93%	A minus = 92 to 90%	B plus = 89 to 86%	B = 85 to 83%	B minus = 82 to 80%	C plus = 79 to 76%
C = 75 to 73%	C minus = 72 to 70%	D plus = 69 to 66%	D = 65- 63%	D minus = 62 to 60%	F = 59-0%	

Determination of Grades

Homework: 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 30%

Research Paper: 25%

Participation: 5%

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully

in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

ACCESS Success Center

The Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences (ACCESS) provides General Education advising for undergraduate students majoring or intending to major in any of the departments in the College of Social Sciences (CoSS). ACCESS Academic Advisors are committed to helping you develop a clear path to graduation and supporting your academic success. You can schedule an appointment and find more information at sjsu.edu/access.

JS 114-01, Research Methods, FA 2022, Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice and the notice will be made available by email.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	August 22	Introduction Collect the textbook and read the syllabus carefully
2	August 24 & 29	Social Science Research: The basics Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 1: Science, Society, and Criminological Research Homework 1
3	August 31 & Sept. 7	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 2: The Process and Problems of Criminological Research
4	Sept. 12 & 14	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 3: Ethical Guidelines for Research Homework 2
5	Sept. 19 & 21	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 4: Conceptualization and Measurement
6	Sept. 26 & 28	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 4: Conceptualization and Measurement (cont.) Homework 3
7	Oct. 3 & 5	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. Chapter 6: Causation and Experimentation Homework 4
8	Oct. 10 & 12	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 6: Causation and Experimentation

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	Oct. 17 & 19	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020). Chapter 5: Sampling Midterm Exam: October 17
10	Oct. 24 & 26	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 7: Survey Research Homework 5
11	Oct. 31 & Nov. 2	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 8: Qualitative Methods and Analysis Homework 6
12	Nov. 7 & 9	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 9: Analyzing Content and Police Data Homework 7
13	Nov. 14 & 16	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 9: Analyzing Content and Police Data Homework 8
14	Nov. 21 & 28	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 12: Reporting Research Homework 9
15	Nov. 30 & Dec. 5	Bachman, R., & Schutt, R.K. (2020) Chapter 12: Reporting Research Homework 10
		Final Exam: December 12