

San José State University
Social Sciences/Justice Studies
JS 114, Research Methods, Section 80 Spring 2023

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Allison Martin, Ph.D.
Location:	Oceanside, CA
Email:	allison.martin@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesday 9am-10am through Zoom https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/415779048
Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous online
Prerequisites:	JS 10, JS 12, JS 25, or FS 11 with a grade of “C” or better; JS 15 or STAT 95 or equivalent with a grade of “C” or better; JS 100W with a grade of “C” or better. Justice Studies Minors: Any 100W and Upper Division Standing.

Course Description

Introduction to quantitative research methods used in Justice Studies. Includes relationship of theory to empirical evidence; logic underlying methods of inquiry; ethics in conducting empirical research; and methodological design, operationalization, and data analysis.

Course Format

This is a fully online course and is designed to emphasize critical thinking to the weekly readings. The class will focus on in-depth weekly online discussion boards and two Exams. The course will use Canvas Learning Management System; the use of the internet and Microsoft Office products is a requirement for this course.

MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](http://sjsu.instructure.com) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](http://one.sjsu.edu) on [Spartan App Portal](http://one.sjsu.edu) <http://one.sjsu.edu> (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help using Canvas Resource page, visit http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources.

Program Information

Since 1930, the Department of Justice Studies has developed, promoted and fostered social justice and empowered communities. In an ever-changing social, political and economic environment, we remain committed to academic excellence, social activism and policy relevant research. We offer BS and MS degrees in justice studies, a BS in forensic science and minors in justice studies, forensic studies, an MS in Criminology, legal studies and human rights. Among other topics, our widely regarded faculty conduct research in the areas of human rights, immigration, violence against women, sex offender behavior, family violence, and DNA profiling. Student groups and clubs include Alpha Phi Sigma, Chi Pi Sigma and the Forensic Science Club. Our

graduates work in a multitude of settings including probation, parole, corrections, law enforcement, crime labs, and nonprofit agencies, or they continue their education in law school or other graduate programs.

This degree program is housed in the Department of Justice Studies. More information is available at www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

CLO 1. demonstrate a detailed understanding of the quantitative research methods commonly utilized to conduct empirical research in the areas of social and criminal justice.

CLO 2. write a research report in the area of social or criminal justice that applies proper research methodology.

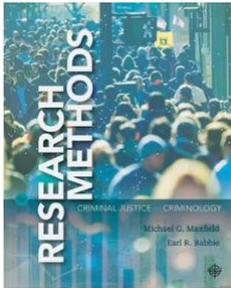
CLO 3. understand core concepts and competencies in criminological and justice research including ethical research, empiricism, problem identification, hypothesis formation and testing, sampling, observation, measurement, data analysis, causality, and report writing.

CLO 4. Students should read, write, and contribute to discussion at a skilled and capable level.

Required Texts/Readings

Required Textbook

Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. (2018). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology (8th Edition)*. Thomson/Wadsworth: Belmont, CA. ISBN-13: 9781337091824



Textbook can be purchased/rented through the University bookstore or online (e.g., Amazon or VitalSource)

Required Readings Posted to Canvas

Additional reading may be assigned based on progression of the course.

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

Internet connection and Microsoft Office access is required for this course, specifically Word and PowerPoint.

Library Liaison

For help with library resources and library research (including the use of databases and online research materials—such as journal search engines), students are strongly encouraged to contact the Justice Studies Library Liaison: Nyle Craig Monday, MLK Librarian (408) 808-2041 or Nyle.Monday@sjsu.edu

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.

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM and Friday 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. You can schedule an appointment and find more information at sjsu.edu/access.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Weekly readings and assignments can be found in the syllabus, as well as on the Modules tab on Canvas. Each module will become available on Monday at 12:00am PST and will close by Sunday at 11:59pm PST of their respective week (see course schedule below); Please take special note of assignment due dates, particularly to weekly discussion board responses, which are due mid-week. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Students are expected to log onto Canvas 3-4 times per week, or if possible, log on daily, to check for updates and announcements. You are also expected to check your university email account regularly. There will be cut-off times that will close Canvas modules. Students who anticipate missing the cut-off times are responsible for making arrangements with the instructor prior to the cut-off times.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Introduction through Google Slides

This assignment is meant for the class and the instructor, to get acquainted with you. We will all collaborate on one Google Slides Presentation to introduce ourselves and get to know one another. Further directions will be posted to Canvas. This assignment will be due before the end of the first week of class (see Course Schedule).

Discussion Boards and Class Participation

Throughout this course there will be discussion boards or other weekly required class participation activities, such as collaboration on media platforms. Class participation is required in discussions and activities. For discussion boards, you are to provide thoughtful and original discussions based on the weekly readings and course material in a manner that uses critical thinking skills and is respectful to other students. Discussion boards will be heavily graded on your use of reading material and the conversations you have with other students. Each week, you must incorporate the assigned material; in other words, make reference to the textbook and supplemental readings where appropriate. When using evidence in your discussion posts, you must cite the source using APA format in-text, as well as cite at the end of your post. If you need assistance on APA format, visit <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

You are required to be an active participant in the class, which means that you are to prepare your own discussion board threads, read other students' discussion threads, and respond to other students' threads with substantive observations. This course will ask students to make a claim regarding the weekly discussion board posts, and support that claim with reason and evidence. The written work you submit will reflect your own thinking about information you obtain from the required readings, lectures, and other course-related experiences.

Students are required to first read all assigned readings and then respond to the module discussion board topic **by Wednesday at 11:59pm**. Original posts (responses to the question posed) should be approximately 1 page

in length, in a Word document equivalent. Students will then respond to **TWO** other student’s original posts, as well as any questions I may ask regarding their post **by Sunday at 11:59pm**, when the weekly topic will close. These posts should be approximately ½ page for each reply. Be sure to use references to reading material in all the posts you can, especially when agreeing with or refuting points made by your peer. Responses consisting of a lack of thought as in “I agree” or “great thought” will not count as a quality response.

If I pose a question to your post, it will be by Saturday, so be sure to check to see if I have posted on your discussion board anytime on Sunday; please keep in mind that if you do not see a post by me from that week, then I did not ask you a question and you are not required to respond. Please also regularly check your university email account, as class follow-up questions will also be asked through email. Required responses to other students must be on their original post, not on the question they pose to you. This idea here is to keep the conversation going; you will discuss with other students, as well as with the instructor.

Posts that exceed expectations (grade of an “A+”) will be reserved for those who have integrated material thoughtfully and have shown a true interest in the topic for the week (e.g., responds to other students who have commented on their original posts and checks other conversations in the discussion board thread). Please keep in mind that a grade of an “A+” is defined as “exceptional quality work.” Logging into Canvas later in the day on Sunday, will give you the best opportunity to close out any open conversations from the week. If you are unable to login on a particular Sunday, then please email me in advance.

Students are required to use grammar and sentence structure that is consistent with college level writing as well as demonstrate attentive and critical arguments. The use of APA format is required. Discussion board dates are listed in the schedule.

Weekly Discussion Board Schedule

Classes with Dr. Martin

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Quick review of material from last week	Continue reading this week’s material	Finish up with material for the week (readings, lectures and links)	Respond to TWO students – their original post	Take a break...it’s Friday!	Respond to those who commented on your post	Respond to those who commented on your post
Begin reading this week’s material	Listen and/or view the lecture	Respond to weekly DB DUE TONIGHT			Respond to my follow-up question (sent through email or on your post), if there is one.	DB TOPIC CLOSES TONIGHT
	Watch/explore links or websites posted to Canvas					Relax... the week is done!

Tips:

- Take notes while you read so you can do well on any exams or other assignments
- Always include references to reading material to support your arguments
- Check the APA quick guide to make sure you have your bases covered
- Ensure you are responding to two other students’ original posts, not just what they write on your post
- If you work ahead, then you don’t have to do work in this class every day. But, be sure to login on the weekend to see if anyone has commented on your post, so you can respond!

Examples of expectations from a discussion board topic (taken from another course):

Question: Do you believe the criminal justice system is a “system” a “process,” or neither? Defend your answer using what you have learned in previous courses, from academic sources, and/or from personal experiences. Remember that weekly reading material must be cited in your discussion board posts.

Response:

I believe that the criminal justice system is a “process.” According to Peak (2016), the criminal justice process is “the decisions and actions by an institution, offender, victim, or society that influence the offender’s movement into, through, or out of the justice system” (p. 5). Figure 1-1 depicts the criminal justice process very well. The criminal justice process begins when police make an arrest. The criminal makes their way through the police “process,” determining accusations and detention. Then, the criminal either moves on through the process and proceeds to the courts, or the process is terminated. If passed on to the courts, the criminal continues on with the criminal justice process of pleading guilty or not guilty. If found guilty, the process continues. If not, the process ends for the defendant. Finally, if found guilty, the criminal is sentenced and begins their process into corrections. Depending on the sentence, once completed, the criminal is released back into the populations, where the process begins again (p. 6). Louthan also describes a similar process of the criminal justice system. He states, “The suspect is apprehended by the police, prosecuted, acquitted or convicted, and sentenced by the courts, and removed, punished, and/or rehabilitated by correctional agencies” (Louthan, 1974, p. 30).

In this criminal justice process, each step feeds the other. Louthan (1974) describes how each distinct function, amongst the police, courts, and corrections, interact and affect one another. Corrections would be non-existent, if not for guilty verdicts from the courts. Courts would be non-existent without arrests by police. And police would be non-existent if there were no punishments for crime. Thus, the agencies within the process are working toward a common goal. “As a process, the justice system cannot reduce crime by itself nor can any of the component parts afford to be insensitive to the needs and problems of the other parts” (Peak, 2016, p. 7). I don’t believe that fragmentation among the criminal justice system is caused because the criminal justice system is a non-system. Components of the criminal justice system are individually fragmented (p. 7). Agencies within the process are only concerned about their needs, and not considering what changes among their agency will affect other components of the process.

Because I believe that the criminal justice system is a “process,” I think that police, courts, and correctional agencies are organizations that the criminal justice processes through. Peak (2016) describes an organization as “entities of two or more people who cooperate to achieve an objective” (p. 22). Each component within the criminal justice system has their own objectives in order to obtain the common goal of the system as a whole. Each component has their own series of administration built within their entities. The criminal justice process sends criminals through these organizations, police, courts, and corrections, who each have their own set agendas (objectives) for the criminals. Once the objectives are met by the organization, the criminal moves on to complete the next set of objectives of the next organization, until all organization’s objectives are met. Once all the objectives are met amongst the organizations, the common goal is met.

The Department of Government and Justice Studies from Appalachian State University gives a clear description of the criminal justice process. What Louthan doesn’t describe clearly in his description is the concept of filtering. Some criminals won’t advance to the next step in the criminal process because they are filtered, or screened out (Appalachian State University, 2016). Peak’s (2016) Figure 1.1, shows the different ways that criminals are filtered out during the process (p. 6). Criminals are unapprehended, no complaints are filed, the accusation is dismissed, they are acquitted, or they are given an unsupervised fine (p. 6). Criminals could also be filtered from the criminal justice process by what Louthan (1974) describes as compliance and attitudes towards other components (p. 33). For example, the courts have decided that when criminals are apprehended, they are given their Miranda rights (p. 33). Police have to comply with this rule in order to successfully move criminals through the rest of the process. If they have negative attitudes towards rules and policies, they are less likely to follow through.

Appalachian State University. (2016). The criminal justice process. Retrieved from <http://gjs.appstate.edu/media-coverage-crime-and-criminal-justice/criminal-justice-process>

Louthan, W.C. (1974). Relationships among police, court, and correctional agencies. (30-37).

Peak, K. (Ed.) (2016). Justice administration: Police, courts, and corrections management, 8th edition. Hoboken, New Jersey: Pearson.

Response to another student’s post:

I too thought that the criminal justice system acts like a process. Like how you framed the criminal justice system as a “process within a system.” The system does share a common goal, however, each entity has its own set of objectives to achieve that common goal. Each entity keeps the public safe by deterring crime in their own way. Police make arrests, courts sentences, and the correctional agencies rehabilitate. I was wondering what your thoughts were on a criminal justice network? Peak (2016), defines a

criminal justice network as "a view that the justice system's components cooperate and share similar goals, but operate independently and compete for funding" (p. 7). I thought this definition could be somewhat applied to the criminal justice system, as well. Funding is limited, thus, creating competition between police, courts, and corrections. I think that the police, courts, and corrections operate independently, but also work with one another.

I like the examples that you provided in your response. I think that the criminal justice system is making advancements towards mental health awareness and education. I have to had experience with law enforcement officers recognizing and being able to respond appropriately to those with mental health issues. However, there is always room for improvements. Mental health has become an increasing public awareness, that I think will take some time for the criminal justice system to implement new strategies effectively.

Peak, K. (Ed.) (2016). Justice administration: Police, courts, and corrections management, 8th edition. Hoboken, New Jersey: Pearson.

Please see the rubric below for discussion board grading:

Discussion Board Rubric				
Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Acceptable (5-6 point)	Poor (3-4 points)	Very Poor (0-2 points)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully understands significant ideas and responds to all parts of the prompt - Uses course reading material to support arguments in APA format - Responds to two other students' original posts with course concepts used correctly - Responds to those who commented on their post - If applicable, answers the follow-up question posed by the instructor - Meets all deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Almost fully understands ideas and responds to all parts of the prompt - Uses course reading material to support arguments with some APA errors - Responds to one or two other students' original posts with most course concepts used correctly - May or may not respond to those who commented on their post - If applicable, may or may not answer the follow-up question posed by the instructor - Meets all deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant ideas are misunderstood or response is incomplete - Support with course reading material is lacking or has many APA errors - Responds to two other students' posts, but lack thoughtfulness (e.g., "I agree") - OR Responds to only one student's original post. - Does not respond to those who commented on their post - If applicable, follow-up question is not answered - Meets all deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundational knowledge or terminology used incorrectly - Support with course reading material is lacking or has many APA errors - No responses to other students' original posts - May or may not respond to those who commented on their post - If applicable, follow-up question is not answered - May or may not meet deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundational knowledge or terminology used incorrectly - No citations to reading material - No responses to other students - Post is incomplete or past due date.

Exams

In this course there is a Midterm and Final Exam. Exams will cover course reading and discussion material from the weeks leading up to the exam; understanding and implementing the research process is essential knowledge for this course. See the Course Schedule for due dates of each exam. Details will be provided on Canvas.

Grading Information

This class uses weighted grades. Your grade in the class will be based on the following:

Discussion Boards/Class Participation	50% of overall grade
Exams (Midterm and Final)	50% of overall grade
Total	100%

Your overall grade is based on the Total percentage earned in the course.

A plus = 98 to 100%	A = 93 to 97.9%	A minus = 90 to 92.9%
B plus = 88 to 89.9%	B = 83 to 87.9%	B minus = 80 to 82.9%
C plus = 78 to 79.9%	C = 73 to 77.9%	C minus = 70 to 72.9%
D plus = 68 to 69.9%	D = 63 to 67.9%	D minus = 60 to 62.9%
F = 0-59.9%		

Note: Must achieve a grade of "C" or better to fulfill Justice Studies major requirements.

“Classroom” Protocol

Mutual respect and civility will be the foundation in this course. Every student will have an optimum opportunity for learning and gaining knowledge; differences of opinion are welcomed in a positive and encouraging manner. Some topics covered in this course may be considered sensitive, so please be respectful of all students’ backgrounds and personal opinions.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

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.

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*The instructor reserves the right to alter this schedule at any time during the semester. Logging into Canvas multiple times a week will ensure that you are aware of any changes that are made.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Course Assignments
1/25 – 1/29	Module 1: Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the syllabus Carefully read discussion board requirements Introduction through Google Slides

1/30 – 2/5	Module 2: Crime, Criminal Justice, & Scientific Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 1 • Hartley (2011) • Discussion Board #1
2/6 – 2/12	Module 3: Foundations of Criminal Justice Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 2 • Votaw (2020) • Discussion Board #2
2/13 – 2/19	Module 4: Ethics and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 3 • Watch: Do you have to be a criminal to study crime? • Listen: Ethics of studying crime • Discussion Board #3
2/20 – 2/26	Module 5: General Issues in Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 4 • Rennison and Hart (2023) • Kansas City Gun Experiment • Discussion Board #4
2/27 – 3/5	Module 6: Concepts, Operationalization and Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 5 • Batton and Kadleck (2004) • Discussion Board #5
3/6 – 3/12	Module 7: Measuring Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 6 • Explore: NCVS • Discussion Board #6
3/13 – 3/19	Module 8: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 7 • Carson and Wellman (2017) • Discussion Board #7
3/20 – 3/26	Module 9:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIDTERM EXAM

3/27 – 4/2	Spring Break!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assignments!
4/3 – 4/9	Module 10: Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 8 • Russell et al. (2021) • Discussion Board #8
4/10 – 4/16	Module 11: Survey Research & Qualitative Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 9 & 10 • Wulf and Trammell (2021) • TedTalk: How do Focus Groups Work? • Discussion Board #9
4/17 – 4/23	Module 12: Field Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 11 • Contreras (2009) • Watch: Gang Leader for a Day • Discussion Board #10
4/24 – 4/30	Module 13: Agency Records, Content Analysis, Secondary Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 12 • Leavy and Maloney (2009) • Discussion Board #11
5/1 – 5/7	Module 14: Evaluation Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 13 • Braga et al. (2001) • Discussion Board #12
5/8 – 5/14	Module 15: Interpreting Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxfield and Babbie (2018) Chapter 14 • Discussion Board #13
5/15 – 5/19	Module 16: Final Week	FINAL EXAM

