



**Instructor:** Dr. Kristen Zgoba

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**Course Information:** Ideas in Justice 202:405  
LCB 110, Tuesdays 6:40pm-8:00pm

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This class will deal with the application of criminal justice research procedures in everyday scenarios. Specifically, this class will provide the next level of knowledge of social research methods with an emphasis on law enforcement, the judicial system and the correctional system. Students will examine and critique studies that seek to change the criminal justice system landscape via treatment services or legislation. Particularly, students will propose their own hypothetical research scenarios in response to what they perceive to be a social need. This class will function as a division among lecture, group work and field work.

## **Learning Goals: A Statement of Principles**

The Program Committee for the Program in Criminal Justice at Rutgers University in New Brunswick has adopted a series of learning goals for students who complete the major. These goals represent the consensus of the faculty regarding the concepts a student should grasp and the skills a student should acquire in the course of completing the major. These goals guide the choices faculty make about the structure of the curriculum and the requirements for our majors. Moreover, they guide faculty and instructors preparing course material and teaching courses.

The Program in Criminal Justice will provide students with a rich understanding of crime and criminal justice in the United States and abroad through an interdisciplinary approach that blends a strong liberal arts educational experience with pre-professional instruction in the field of criminal justice. Graduates of the program will be well-informed citizens on the topic of crime and justice, and qualified for graduate study or for employment as practitioners in a variety of legal, policymaking, and law enforcement fields.

Criminal justice majors graduating from a research university should be able to use critical thinking, factual inquiry, and the scientific approach to solve problems related to individual and group behavior. In addition, students should have an understanding of the legal, political and policymaking processes that affect criminal justice systems in the United States and elsewhere in the world. Finally, students should be familiar with the institutional structures and latest developments in the field in order to engage in meaningful debate about current public policy issues.



## Learning Goals for Criminal Justice Majors

### 1. Competence:

- a.) **Theory.** Students who complete the major in criminal justice should understand and be able to articulate, both orally and in writing, the core theoretical concepts that form the foundation of analysis and research in criminology and criminal justice today. Core concepts are derived from explanations of crime from a variety of perspectives, including biogenic, psychological, and sociological approaches. There are myriad theories of crime that are informed by these perspectives, including, classical, control, critical, ecology, labeling, learning, strain, and trait-based approaches. Theoretical literacy should extend to multicultural and international understanding.
  - b.) **Institutions.** Students who complete the major in criminal justice should understand the special role of three types of institutions: Police, Corrections, and Courts. In addition, students should know how institutional forms vary across jurisdictions and how these institutions interact with and influence each other.
  - c.) **Research Methods.** Students who complete the criminal justice major should be familiar with the tools, techniques, and data sources necessary for empirical analysis. Students should understand the various ways that empirical analysis is used in the scientific approach: for description, for developing, and for testing theories. They should be able to analyze data using computer applications and should be familiar with basic statistical techniques and regression analysis. They should be able to read and assess research from a wide range of sources, including general interest, academic, and government publications.
2. **Critical Thinking:** Upon completion of the major students should be able to apply their understanding of core concepts and quantitative tools to analyze and research real world problems, and evaluate alternative policy proposals on a range of criminal justice issues, from micro-level analyses relevant to particular cases to management concerns to macro-level analyses of legislative and other broad-scale policies. Accomplishment of this goal will require that students can apply their literacy and numeracy skills to different institutional structures, within the U.S. and across countries.
3. **Scholarship:** Qualified majors should have an opportunity through such avenues as advanced coursework, internships, and faculty interactions to conduct independent research on matters of central relevance to the field of criminal justice.

### REQUIRED READING (Books are not optional)

Thistlewaite & Wooldredge (2010) Forty Studies that Changed Criminal Justice. Prentice Hall, ISBN: 978-0-13-234975-8

Bachman & Schutt (2011). The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Sage Publications, ISBN: 978-1-4129-7875-0

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2) Throughout the course you may also be required to read journal or newspaper articles, for which you will be responsible. These will be uploaded and are mandatory and if I believe students are not reading the articles, there will be quizzes on the material.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### *1) Attendance & Participation*

This is a hybrid class, which means we only meet on Tuesdays from 6:40pm- 8:00pm. After that Tuesday class I will post an online assignment through sakai for you to complete, you will have until that following Sunday at 8pm to complete it. It will range from quizzes which you can use your book with, discussion forums, article postings and questions and essay or opinion questions. You will also be designing your own study based on a topic relevant to criminal justice. Because we ONLY see each other ONCE a week, participation and attendance are required and mandatory, as they accrue toward your grade. An absence will only be excused with the proper documentation (hospital stay, death in family, etc.) and participation will be assessed after each class. If you do have one of the approved reasons for an absence just listed, there will be an additional assignment to make-up for the time missed in-class. Roll will be taken during each class. You are expected to have the material read for the respective class and potentially to do a posted assignment. Failing to provide sufficient answers to posed questions will result in a score of zero for that day's participation. Students are expected to fully participate in the lectures and will be called on regularly. No amendments will be made to grades after the class is complete. Do not ask for extra credit beyond what I allow for and I will not change grades at the end of the course.

### *2) Reading Material*

Readings are assigned for every Tuesday and some may be necessary to complete the subsequent online assignment. If participation and feedback on readings suffers, pop quizzes will be given sporadically. Bachman & Schutt is listed in the course schedule at the end and I will assign Thistlewaite & Wooldredge as we go along.

### *3) Research Design Presentation*

One grade will be a write-up and presentation of research study designed by the student. You will then sign-up early in the semester to discuss your study. I will review these specifics in class and will also issue the first two weeks of school a detailed guide/description. This is worth 20% of your grade.

### *4) Weekly Online Assignments*

After that Tuesday class I will post an online assignment through sakai for you to complete, you will have until that following Sunday at 8pm to complete it. It will range from quizzes (which you can use your book), discussion forums, article postings and questions and essay or opinion questions. You must become familiar with sakai if you are not already, and can sign up for training if you choose. That assignment will "open", which means become available for you to complete at any point, from the Wednesday following our class session to the following Sunday at 8pm. You can complete it at any point within those 5 days, however, it may be timed. If it is timed, you will know how long you have. You MAY use your books but are NOT allowed to cut and paste from online sources. Please note that I will use Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism and you will fail the course if caught cheating. Because you are allowed to use your book, I expect quality work. This responsibility is worth 40% of your grade.

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## 5) *Final Exam*

There is no midterm exam, only a final exam. It is going to be either a mix of multiple choice or essay, or just essay, depending on the size of the class. You will know this within the first few weeks of class. The final exam will include material from the whole semester because there is no midterm. This is worth 40% of your grade.

## **COURSE GRADING**

Study Design 20%

Online Assignments 40%

Final Exam 40%

## **GRADING SCALE**

**A** 100--90

**B+** 89-- 87

**B** 86-- 80

**C+** 79-- 77

**C** 76-- 70

**D** 69-- 60

**F** 59 and below

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and any violation will be reported to the Dean of Students. No excuse will ever be tolerated for academic dishonesty, but it is even more important that students understand the repercussions of this unethical behavior. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, the fabrication or invention of information used in an assignment, plagiarism, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others or denying access to materials and resources.

<b>CLASS SCHEDULE*</b>	
January 22, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 1 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
January 29, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 2 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
February 5, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 3 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
February 12, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 4 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
February 19, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 5 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
February 26, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 6 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
March 5, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 7 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
March 12, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 8 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT

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March 16-March 24	SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS
March 26, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 9 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
April 2, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 10 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
April 9, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 11 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
April 16, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 12 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
April 23, 2013 WEEK	B&S, Chapter 13 ONLINE ASSIGNMENT
April 30, 2013 WEEK	Catch up week- exam review
May 7 & 8 READING DAY	NO CLASS WILL ANNOUNCE EXAM DATE

\*This is subject to modification based on our progress