Syllabus

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Term and Year	Spring 2020
Course Prefix and Number; CRN	CJ488_01/20152
Course Title	Research Methods
Days, Time and Location of Class Meeting	TR: 9:25 a.m.-10:40 a.m., Social Science Bldg., Room 18
Instructor's Contact Information	
Name:	Rochelle Cobbs, Ph.D.
Office Location:	Social Science Building—Office "Research"
Office Hours:	M: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. T: 11:00 a.m. to noon; 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. R: 11:00 a.m. to noon; 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Office Phone Number:	662.254.3133/3364
E-Mail Address:	recobbs@mvsu.edu
Course Prerequisites	None
Catalog Course Description	This course is an introductory course to research methods in criminal justice. Experiments, surveys, field research, unobtrusive research evaluation, and analysis are examined. **(3 credit hours)**
Course Learning Objectives [CLO]	Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to: 1. Discuss why knowledge of research methods is valuable to criminal justice professionals; 2. Evaluate the characteristics, purposes, benefits, strengths and weaknesses of research methods; 3. Differentiate between quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and evaluative research methods and what types of research questions can be answered with each method; 4. Differentiate between ethical and unethical research practices; 5. Evaluate data collection and analysis strategies based on the characteristics of the research design; 6. Interpret and critique existing criminological/social research; and 7. Prepare a scholarly research proposal.
Program Learning Outcomes [PLO]	Upon completion of the undergraduate program in criminal justice, the student should demonstrate understanding of the: 1. Crime issues, trends, and basic legal principles in America; 2. The social, economic and political forces that influence the definition and response to crime in

	America; and 3. The history, development and operations of the criminal justice system.
Required textbook(s):	Required Text(s): Maxfield, M.G., & Babbie, E.R. (2018). Research methods for criminal justice and criminology (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN: 13: 978-1-337-09182-4 Feree, C.W., & Pfeifer, H. (2018). Write & Wrong: Writing within criminal justice (2nd ed.). Jones & Bartlett Learning. ISBN: 978-1-284-112993
Course Requirements	A. Examinations: There will be a minimum of three (3) examinations, each worth 100 points. Overall, the three exams account for 45% of the final grade. Each exam will have approximately 50 questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, essay). Each exam will encompass only the materials analyzed during that portion of the course. If a student finds it unavoidable to be absent from an examination, makeup exams are to be scheduled with the instructor and will only be given to students with excused absences (i.e., death of someone close, hospitalization of oneself or one's child, or a spouse, etc.) Expect such tests to be more challenging than regularly scheduled exams. B. Projects/Quizzes (1-5): There will be a total of 5 projects/quizzes in line with the course objectives/lectures that will be completed by students throughout the semester. Each worth 2 percent of the overall grade for the course (totaling 10% of the final grade for the course). C. Assignments: Students will have four (4) Assignments. 1. **Assignment 1**. Assignment 1 consists of students completing training about protecting human research participants. Students are responsible for completing the online training provided by the Department of Criminal Justice on conducting research with human subjects. Students will have to complete a test and make at least 70%. (Please note that if a student has to retake the exam (due to

earning less than 70%), both scores will be averaged for this assignment).

This assignment is worth up to 100 points and due **February 6, 2020. This assignment accounts for 5% o**f the final grade.

Instructions will be provided in class by Dr. Rochelle McGee-Cobbs.

2. **Assignment 2.** Assignment 2 consists of students critiquing criminological/statistical peer reviewed article (2 page critique/summary). **This assignment is worth up to 100 points and is due March 5, 2020.** Assignment 2 accounts as 10% of the final grade.

3. Assignment 3: This assignment (Peer-Review Project) is a peer review process among students enrolled in the course. (Please refer to the peer review project-grading rubric of the course syllabus for more information). **The due date for this project is April 14, 2010. This project is worth up to 100 points.** The peer review project/assessment accounts for 5% of the final grade.

Students are to exchange papers and provide feedback to two other classmates' projects.

When giving feedback, use the following Criteria (Please refer to the grading rubric for Peer Review Project):
- Identify the strengths of the work first. Comment on the linkage of the topic to the course, the method of applying coursework to practice, and the use of research and theory to form the scaffolding for the work.
- If indicated in your opinion, identify an area or areas that would benefit from expansion or clarification. When doing this, use the "I" viewpoint. For example, "I believe that you can also think about cyber crime by distinguishing applicable

substantive law, procedural law, and jurisdictional law, and to distinguish between reactive, preemptive, and preventative strategies. I understand what you have stated about the two types of substantive cyber crime law: computer misuse and traditional crime. However, can you please elaborate on the two and provide examples. In addition, I believe that a recent article will be of interest to you (i.e., Kerr, 2005), please see attachment. Note: This critique is positive, professional, and identifies what the learner would like to learn about in greater depth. The author of the work, however, has options when responding to this feedback. For example, he or she may say, "Thanks for the insights. I really did not think about distinguishing applicable substantive law, procedural law, and jurisdictional law concerning cyber crime. Therefore, I think I will take a look to see how to weave that into the material." Or, the author may reply with something like, "I see your point. I have to say, though, that my whole focus for this paper is to … Thanks for your input."

With this peer feedback, the objectivity that comes with "fresh eyes" viewing one's work can add clarity to the next step in completing the work. Remember, all written work is in draft form. It can be revised and strengthened, and this is an important element of the self-reflection process. In addition, the instructor will also provide feedback to learners' paper.

4. Assignment 4 (Research Proposal): Students are required to write a research proposal on any contemporary criminal justice topic. Such topics must first be discussed with the instructor for approval. Note that the professor (Dr. Cobbs) must approve your topic before you proceed. Please note that Dr. Cobbs may limit the number of students who are writing on the same or closely related topics.

The paper is to follow the APA style and

| | must be between eight (8) to ten (10) typed double spaced pages, excluding title page, an abstract and reference pages. For information on APA style/format, please reference the APA (6th ed.) Manual or students can the APA website at www.apa.org. In addition, the course paper must consist of a minimum of eight (8) different citations/sources, including peer reviewed articles, books, etc. (Note: Wikipedia sources cannot be used as a source in this paper).

Also, before the instructor (Dr. Cobbs) assess/grade students' papers, the papers have to be submitted via turnitin.com

The research proposal is due on or before **April 30, 2020.**

Please note that plagiarism (the act of incorporating material that comes from another author without citing the source) is the most serious intellectual fraud and must be avoided. Any act of plagiarism will result in at least a failing grade for the assignment(s) and/or course. (The research proposal is worth 100 points— Please see attached research proposal rubric). The research proposal accounts as 20% of the final grade.

*Note: All papers (including projects) must be typed, double-spaced and in APA format, 6th edition. |
|---|---|
| **Class attendance policy:** | Each student should be aware of Mississippi Valley State University's attendance requirements as reflected in its catalogue and that repetitive non-attendance could result in dropping the student from the course. Consistent and punctual class attendance is required. Tardiness is not acceptable unless bona fide excuses are provided. |
| **Submission of Work:** | The first week begins the first day of the term. Scheduled assignments MUST be completed and successfully submitted when requested by instructor by the due dates and times.

NO opportunities will be available for making up class activities or assignments if students do not have a bona fide excuse.

All course-writing assignments have to be submitted in APA format (6th edition). |

Make-up examination policy:	Make-up examinations maybe scheduled only if a student can demonstrate (with supporting documents) the occurrence of an unavoidable event (sickness, accident, death, etc).
Course Drops/Incompletes:	Students not completing the course for any reason are required to submit official drop notices to the Registrar's Office prior to the deadline date. This is **your** responsibility. Failure to comply with the procedure <u>WILL</u> result in you receiving a letter grade of "**F" or "UF."** **Also, if for any reason you decide to withdraw from the university at any time, please withdraw properly. Not officially withdrawing from the university may impact your financial aid and result in you owing the university.**
Cheating and plagiarism policy:	Cheating in any fashion will not be tolerated, including but not limited to plagiarizing another's words, work or ideas on individual class assignments. To address the situation of plagiarism, the University has implemented *Turnitin* to fight plagiarism and improve reading, writing, and research skills. *Turnitin* is a comprehensive plagiarism prevention system that lets faculty quickly and effectively check all students' work. Results are based on exhaustive searches of billions of pages from both current and archived instances on the Internet. Plagiarism will result in at least a failing grade for the assignment(s) and/or course.
Teaching/Learning Strategies	The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the instructor will set course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: class discussion, online activities, assigned readings, and/or individual projects. Students are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. Students are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and assignments. Most importantly, students are expected to be active learners and to ask for clarification when they have questions. In order to be successful in the class, it is important that students, read the assigned material, and submit assignments and be prepared to discuss what they have read. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity.
Evaluation Procedures	

Performance Standards/Grading:	
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	59% Below

Assessments	% of Overall Grade Points
Exams (3 @ 15%) each	45
Projects/Quizzes (5 @ 2% each)	10
Assignment 1 (Training Conducting Research with Human Subjects) (1 @ 5%)	5
Assignment 2 (Critique of criminological/ statistical peer reviewed article) (1 @ 10%)	10
Assignment 3 (Peer-Review Project) (1 @ 5%)	5
Assignment 4 (Research Proposal) (1 @ 20%)	20
Classroom Attendance/Participation (5%)	5
Total	**100**

ADA Statement	
	Mississippi Valley State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Services for Students with Disability Office (SSD) to obtain this service. Disabilities covered by the ADA may include learning, physical, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or chronic health disorder. Students who are uncertain if their condition/disability is qualified should contact the SDD Office. Mrs. Kathy Brownlow/ADA Coordinator Social Science Building, Office 105 Phone/e-mail: 662-254-3443, kbrownlow@mvsu.edu

GRADING RUBRIC FOR PEER REVIEW PROJECT

The purposes of the peer-review process are three-fold which include:

(1) To encourage students to produce the best possible materials by providing specific and structured proof-readings and review processes before the final research proposal is submitted to the instructor for grading/assessment;

(2) To allow peer-to-peer instruction, having each student raise the level of learning of the class by presenting new ideas and applications of concepts to a peer; and

(3) To provide students with additional opportunities to practice analytical and critical-thinking skills in the course as they analyze the structures, evidence, arguments, and plans as presented by their peers.

In the peer review/assessment process, students will earn points in the following participation criteria.

Criteria (100 total points)	Non-performance	Insufficient	Sufficient	Expected
Submitted your finished paper as requested for peer review assessment to allow your assigned peer to comment or make suggestions for improvement on your work **(20 points)**	**0 points**	**1-13 points** Incomplete/not finished/or 2 days past deadline.	**14-15 points** Fully completed and 1 day past deadline	**16-20 points** Fully completed and submitted on the due date as requested.
Provide meaningful feedback on submission of a learners data/research sufficiency **(20 points)**	**0 points**	**1-13 points** Comments are superficial and do not provide true analysis	**14-15 points** Comments indicate correct analysis of the data/research	**16-20 points** Comments include specific suggestions and additional resources for consideration
Provided meaningful feedback on structure/organization and clarity of points **(20 points)**	**0 points**	**1-13 points** Comments are superficial	**14-15 points** Comments identify potential problems with the structures and organization of the components/ Concepts	**16-20 points** Comments include specific suggestions improving structure and order
Provided meaningful feedback on the logic, assumptions, and recommendations the learner(s)/peer(s) has drawn	**0 points**	**1-13 points** Comments provided are not logical or incorrectly state	**14-15 points** Comments illustrate useful analysis of logic and assumptions	**16-20 points** Comments include specific suggestions for improving or

(20 points)		assumptions	and identify potential problems	resolving problems with logic or assumptions and help to restate recommendations that are better supported by the evidence
Provided all comments in a positive, encouraging, and constructive manner to a learner **(20 points)**	**0 points** Comments might be interpreted as insulting	**1-13 points** Comments are neutral or non-encouraging	**14-15 points** Comments include positive feedback and suggestions	**16-20 points** Comments praise specific strengths of the presentation as well as the constructively addressing weaknesses with alternatives that might be considered

Source: (MNSCU, 2012)

GRADING RUBRIC FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Paper Content and Organization	Percentage (%)
The paper includes an abstract of the proposal	5
The paper clearly lays out an appropriate introduction that contains the problem/question to be addressed.	10
The paper includes an appropriate literature review, including a critical examination of the literature regarding the topic	15
The researcher clearly cites existing research on the topic (at least 8 to 10 sources)	5
The paper clearly articulates how the researcher conceptualizes and defines the main terms used in the research	10
The paper includes a clear articulation of why this method is most used appropriate for the research proposal (i.e., its strength)	5
The paper includes a clear explanation of the major weakness of the method used in the research proposed	5

The paper includes a detailed discussion about how the researcher will operationalized and measure the major concepts used in the proposal	5
The paper includes a clear and detailed discussion about the population affected by the research and the sample chosen	5
The paper includes a detailed discussion of the significance of this research (i.e., why this research matters and deserves to be considered)	5
The paper includes a detailed discussion of the ethical considerations of the research of interest	5
All major claims in the proposal are backed up by existing research (i.e., claims are based on evidence either obtained from the textbook or your own research on the topic, not opinion)	5
The paper follows the provided "Research Proposal" outline	10
Paper Mechanics-10%	
Paper includes a title page with identifying information (Title of Research, Name (student, the Name of Course, Date of submission); title page has to follow APA 6th ed. for mat/style (visit the below listed website- https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/	2
Paper contains the following pages: a title, an abstract, 8 to 10 text and a reference	2
Paper is typed in 12 pt. "Times New Roman" font and double spaced	2
All citations in the paper are typed accordingly to APA (6th ed.) format/style	2
The paper includes an appropriate reference page listing all citations	2
Total	100

(www.iue.edu, 2011)

If student/learner submits a paper with more than 9% commonalities of published information (according to turnitin.com), then, the student will obtain a total of 0 points for his or her submission/submittal.

Total Points: _____ /100

General Comments:

Course Outline: The Course outline is *subject to some changes depending on the needs and level of the class.*	
WEEKS	**ASSIGNMENTS**
1 1/13-1/19	**January 13: Classes Begin** Introduction of course, students, and instructor Review of syllabus **PRE-TEST**
2	**Part One: An Introduction to Criminal Justice Inquiry** Chapter 1 –Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry

1/20-1/26	Assigned Reading: Chapter 1 **January 20: Martin Luther King Holiday** **January 21: Classes resume**
3 **1/27-2/2**	Chapter 2—Foundations of Criminal Justice Research Assigned Reading: Chapters 2 **January 30: Project/Quiz 1** **Unit 1 – Write & Wrong: Library Research –An Overview** **January 27: Last Day to Drop/Add Courses Registration Closes** **January 31: Report of Non-Attendance Due**
4 2/3-2/9	Chapter 3—Ethics and Criminal Justice Research Assigned Reading: Chapter 3 **February 6: Assignment 1-Protecting Human Research Participants Training** **Project/Quiz 2** **Unit 2 – Write & Wrong – Criminal Justice Library Research** **February 6: MLK/Black History Convocation**
5 2/10-2/16	**Part Two: Structuring Criminal Justice Inquiry** Chapter 4—General Issues in Research Design Assigned Reading: Chapter 4 **February 13: Test 1 (covers chapters 1-4, lecture notes, assignments)**
6 2/17-2/23	Chapter 5—Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement Assigned Reading: Chapter 5 **February 20: Formulate your Topic for Research Proposal** **Project/Quiz 3** **Unit 3- Write & Wrong-Plagiarism** **February 21: Graduation Application Due to Student Records**
7 **2/24-3/1**	Chapter 6—Measuring Crime Assigned Reading—Chapter 6 **February 27: Project/Quiz 4** **Unit 4: Write & Wrong - Organizing a Paper: From Taking notes to Creating** **an Outline**
8 3/2-3/8	Chapter 7—Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs Assigned Reading: Chapter 7 **March 5: Assignment 2 (Critique of criminological/statistical peer reviewed** **article)** **March 2-6: Mid-Term Exams**
9 3/9-3/15	**Part Three: Modes of Observation** Chapter 8—Sampling Assigned Reading: Chapter 8 **Unit 5 – Write & Wrong – Mechanics of Writing: From the First Draft to the** **Final Draft** **March 9-13: Spring Break**
10	Chapter 9—Survey Research

3/16-3/22	Assigned Reading: Chapter 9 **October 24: Test 2 (covers chapters 5-9, lecture notes, assignments)** **March 16: Classes Resume** **March 16-18: Academic Advisement** ** Online Registration begins for Summer I, Summer II & Fall 2020** **March 19: Honors Convocation**
11 3/23-3/29	Chapter 10—Qualitative Interviewing Assigned Reading: Chapter 10 **March 26: Project/Quiz 5** ** First Draft of Proposal Due** **Unit 7 – Write & Wrong- Creating a Reference List in APA Style** **March: Last Day to Withdraw from a class**
12 3/30-4/5	Chapter 11—Field Observation Assigned Reading: Chapter 11 **April 2: Research Day** ** Last Day to Withdraw from the University**
13 4/6-4/12	Chapter 12— Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data Assigned Reading: Chapter 12 **April 9: 2nd Draft of Research Proposal** **April 10: Good Friday**
14 4/13-4/19	**Part Four: Application and Analysis** Chapter 13— Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis Assigned Reading: Chapter 13 **Unit 8 – Write & Wrong – Citing in the Text in APA Style** **April 14: Assignment 3 (Peer Review Project) Due** **April 13: Easter Monday; Classes Resume 6:00 p.m.-Monday Night** **April 13-17: Founder's Day** **April 16: Founder's Day Convocation**
15 4/20-4/26	**Prepare Research Proposal for Final Submission**
16 4/27-5/3	**Preparation for Test 3 (covers chapters 10-13, lecture notes, assignments)** **April 30: Assignment 4 (Research Proposal) Due** **April 27-30: Senior Final Exams** **May 1: Senior Final Grades Due** **POST-TEST**
17 5/4-5/10	**May 4-8: Final Exams**

Disclaimer:	This syllabus is not a contract. It is only a guideline. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and additions to this syllabus at her/his discretion. If changes are necessitated during the term of the course, you will be notified of changes in class.

Note: Mississippi Valley State University uses Canvas as its Learning Management Platform for online instructions. Pertaining to Canvas, either a faculty/staff member or a student, may ask, which Internet Browser Should I Use for Canvas?

The latest versions of **Firefox**, **Chrome**, and **Safari** are all good choices for working in Canvas. Important note: If you need help downloading one of these browsers, Mr. Huntley and Mr. Pendleton(Online and Distance Education Staff) will be happy to help you. They can be reached at 662-254-3114 or 662-254-3624. Additionally, you may contact them via email at mack.pendleton@mvsu.edu and hunt@mvsu.edu.

It is a good idea to have more than one browser installed on your personal computer. Many times problems you experience online can be fixed by switching from one browser to a different browser.