

## Advanced Research Methods (AJ 620) - Fall 2009

**Instructor:** Philip E. Carlan, Ph.D.

**Class Period:** Monday (2:00-4:45)

**Office Hours:** Arthell Kelley  
Monday/Wednesday 9:00-10:00; 11:00-12:00; 1:30-2:00  
Friday 9:00-10:00; 11:00-11:30; 1:00-4:30  
And by appointment.

**Telephone & Email:** 266-4514 • Philip.Carlan@usm.edu

**Textbook:** *Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (2005)  
Frank E. Hagan (Allyn & Bacon)

### Course Goals and Objectives

This course aims to equip students with the methodological talents to construct and direct research studies. At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Critique the merits of published articles in scholarly outlets;
2. Construct hypotheses to theoretical assumptions;
3. Select appropriate research designs with concern for, among other things, validity and reliability;
4. Design research projects meeting scientific validity requirements;
5. Develop well-constructed survey instruments;
6. Engage in appropriate interview protocols;
7. Select the most appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative design; and
8. Utilize the various sampling techniques available to researchers.

### Attendance Policy

Due to the importance of interaction and discussion, it is imperative that students be physically and mentally present for class sessions. A one letter grade penalty will be assessed upon a second absence. No course credit will be issued (regardless of current standing) beyond two class absences.

### Withdrawal Policy

The last day to drop this class without financial penalty is **Tuesday, September 1, 2009**.

The last day to drop this class without academic penalty is **Wednesday, September 30, 2009**.

### Grading Scale

A = 94+	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = Below 60
A- = 90-93	B = 83-86	C = 73-76	D = 60-66	
	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72		

## **Grading Composition**

There will be one course exam (40%). The format of the examination will focus on measuring mastery of concepts discussed in class and all assigned readings.

Chapter 1 Introduction to Criminal Justice Research Methods: Theory and Method

Chapter 5 Sampling and Survey Research: Questionnaires

Chapter 6 Survey Research: Interviews and Telephone Surveys

Chapter 3 Research Design: The Experimental Model and Its Variations

Chapter 9 Validity, Reliability, and Triangulated Strategies

Chapter 7 Participant Observation and Case Studies

## **Final Exam: Monday, December 7 @ 7:00-10:30**

Utilizing skills acquired during the term, each student will construct a well-integrated proposal (comprised of an introduction, literature review, and methodology) on an assigned topic (with some room for negotiation). The proposal will comprise 40% of the course grade and must include a data collection instrument (e.g., questionnaire). The proposal will be graded on several dimensions:

- 1) adherence to a 20-page minimum requirement (including title, abstract and reference pages);
- 2) adherence to APA publication guidelines;
- 3) originality of thought processes;
- 4) complexity of methodological design; and
- 5) mechanical and grammatical quality.

## **Due Date: Monday, November 30**

The remaining 20% of the course grade will consist of various assignments throughout the term to prepare students for the major project referenced above. The assignments will consist of a series of research exercises to improve the student's research competency. The major aspect of this grade component will promote applied learning, and also will include classroom interaction.

## **Exam Make-Up Policy**

Please make every possible effort to take the examination at the scheduled time. In the event of a missed exam, though, the make-up will be taken (if permitted) at the instructor's discretion. To qualify for this privilege, the instructor must be notified prior to the exam or, in the case of an unavoidable emergency, as soon thereafter as possible.

## **Disabilities Policy**

If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Mailing Address:

The University of Southern Mississippi  
Office for Disability Accommodations  
118 College Drive #8586  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Contact Information:

Telephone: (601) 266-5024  
TTY: (601) 266-6837  
Fax: (601) 266-6035

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism Statement**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty as outlined in the USM Student Handbook. The University's academic honesty policy will be strictly enforced. You are expected to understand the policy which is available in the University catalog and at [http://www.usm.edu/pubs/studenthandbook/p001\\_111.pdf](http://www.usm.edu/pubs/studenthandbook/p001_111.pdf). In no instance will lack of familiarity with this policy excuse the violation. Other forms of academic dishonesty include buying papers, copying paragraphs/pages of text/whole papers off the internet, copying another student's answers, etc. Academic dishonesty can result in the grade of a "0" on the assignment and/or in the course and/or the student may be reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for further action.