



Syllabus

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Course Information	CRIM315: Research Methods and Analysis in Criminology Location: Distance Education/Blackboard
Instructor	Dr. Yasemin Irvin-Erickson E-mail: YIrviner@gmu.edu Office Hours by appointment.
Course Description	<p>This course is an introduction to research design, methods, and analysis in the field of criminology. The primary goal of this course is to help students critically analyze criminal justice research; however, students will also learn how to conduct basic research studies. The course covers the foundations of social science, research design, data collection and data analysis. We will also discuss evaluation research, ethical issues involved with social research, and the uses of research.</p> <p>This class is identified as a <i>Students as Scholars</i> Scholarly Inquiry course, where students learn about the recursive process of scholarly inquiry either through studying previous scholarship or as preparation for participating in an original scholarly project. To learn more about <i>Students as Scholars</i>, visit oscar.gmu.edu. In this Scholarly Inquiry course, students will: (1) articulate a question, problem, or challenge that is generally relevant and appropriate in scope (2) identify some relevant ethical issues; demonstrates some attention to ethical principles at some stages of the inquiry process, and (3) communicate knowledge from a scholarly or creative project through writing, presenting, or performing, employing some conventions appropriate to the audience and context.</p>
Course Objectives	<p>Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the scientific approach to research 2. Know how to read and critically analyze criminological research 3. Be aware of the ethical issues associated with criminological research 4. Understand the different approaches and techniques to design criminological research studies, and the strengths and weaknesses of each design 5. Know the basics of theory-based research design, conceptualization and measurement of theoretical ideas, sampling, and data collection 6. Interpret research data and results 7. Effectively communicate research design and findings to an audience

<p>Course Methodology</p>	<p>The class format will combine reading, lectures, presentations, and other learning tools. The class will be interactive and require every student to be engaged in the classroom discussion and assignments. In addition to the lectures, screencasts and timely completion of assignments, every student will be expected to be an active participant and a dedicated individual applying what you learn to every element of the course work.</p>
<p>Required textbook(s) and/or materials</p>	<p>Required Text: Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2018/8th edition). Research methods for criminal justice and criminology. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 9781337091824</p> <p>You can buy or rent new or used version of this book (make sure it is the 8th edition). Our Blackboard provides a link to Barnes & Noble, but you can buy/rent this book from other sellers as well. Please note that Lesson 1 reading material from our book (Chapter 1) is included on Blackboard for your convenience.</p>
<p>Computer Requirements</p>	<p>Hardware: You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and 2. space to store work that you will do for the course. <p>If you consider the purchase of a new computer, please go to Patriot Tech to see recommendations.</p> <p>Software: Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See supported browsers and operating systems. Log in to myMason to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java, and Windows Media Player, QuickTime and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free here.</p> <p>Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch this video about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.</p> <p>Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will</p>

be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

Course-specific Hardware/Software

Check the syllabus for your course or contact the instructor prior to the start of the course to find out about specific technical requirements for your class. Hardware or software required for your course or program may be available for purchase at Patriot Computers (the University's computer store that offers educational discounts and special deals).

Instructor's note:

1-You will be asked to submit assignments written in Word (for those using Pages, please convert your document to Microsoft Word or PDF).

2-You will be asked to record one individual and one group video during our course. You will be also asked to have a virtual group meeting for a written assignment. You can use Kaltura which is available on Blackboard for your individual video recording. You can find more information on how to use Kaltura at this website: <https://its.gmu.edu/article-categories/teaching-learning/blackboard/tl-s/kaltura-students/> . You can use your software of preference for virtually meeting with your group members or recording your group discussion. I personally use Zoom and you can create a free Zoom account to record videos/audio recordings. You can use more information on Zoom recordings at this address: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362473-Local-recording>. You can upload your non-Kaltura videos on Blackboard (see Week 14 assignment description for information on how to upload videos created by software other than Kaltura on Blackboard).

3-In this course, I provide transcripts for lecture material. If you need audio description for material on Blackboard (such as assignment descriptions, Blackboard module descriptions), please let me know at your earliest convenience.

4-For two assignments in our course (Lesson 7 and Lesson 14 assignments), you will need to interact with your group members. You can use the e-mail function on our course's Blackboard page to e-mail your group members. After Week 2, I will create group folders on Blackboard to help you interact with your group members. These folders and the content of the folders will only visible to you, your group members, and me (and not visible to other classmates). I strongly encourage you to utilize these group folders to prep for your group assignments. These folders will allow you to have everything in one place as you prep as a group. Group work can become stressful with different communication preferences and existing work/school and other commitments of your group members. If you use the tools in your group folders, you do not need shuffle between e-mails, mobile apps/text messages, and documents on google drive and other similar cloud storage services as you work on your group assignments. Please also remember that your group members might prefer not to share their contact information. The tools in your group folders

	allow you (1) to interact with one another without sharing personal information, (2) share drafts of your sections of the assignments, (3) work on drafts of your assignments comfortably in one place.
Course Website	<p>Blackboard 9.1 will be used for this course. You can access the site at http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu. Login and click on the “Courses” tab. You will see CRIM 315 course.</p> <p>NOTE: Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account. You must have consistent access to an internet connection in order to complete the assignments in this course through Blackboard (http://mymason.gmu.edu). Note the technology requirements for Department of Criminology, Law, and Society in your Blackboard course menu—it contains details of minimum technology requirements.</p>
Participation	<p>Learning can only happen when you are playing an active role. It is important to place more emphasis on developing your insights and skills, rather than transmitting information. Knowledge is more important than facts and definitions. It is a way of looking at the world, an ability to interpret and organize future information. An active learning approach will more likely result in long-term retention and better understanding because you make the content of what you are learning concrete and real in your mind.</p> <p>Although an active role can look differently for various individuals, it is expected in this class that you will work to explore issues and ideas under the guidance of the professor and your peers. You can do this by reflecting on the content and activities of this course, asking questions, striving for answers, interpreting observations, and discussing issues with your peers.</p>
Rules and Expectations	<p>In correspondence/communication, students will be expected to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Be professional and respectful in correspondence b) Make reasonable requests of the instructor. I will be happy to clarify course material and answer legitimate questions; however, please exhaust other information sources (e.g., syllabus, Blackboard) for answering your question before contacting me and remember, “Poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part.” <p>In regard to honesty in work students will be expected to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review the University integrity and honesty policies in the student handbook for guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating (summarized below). I will gladly clarify my stance on any questionable or “grey area” issues you may have. b) Refrain from dishonest work as it will receive a minimum penalty of zero on the assignment and a maximum penalty of a zero for the course with a report to the Honor committee. The GMU Honor Code requires that faculty submit any suspected Honor Code violations to the Honor Committee. Therefore, any suspected offense will be submitted for adjudication.
Mason Honor Code	<p>The complete Honor Code is as follows: <i>To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code:</i></p>

	<p>Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.</p> <p><i>(From the Catalog – catalog.gmu.edu)</i></p>
Cheating Policy	<p>Any form of cheating on an activity, project, or exam will result in zero points earned. “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to, the following: reviewing others’ exam papers, having ANY resources utilized when not allowed, collaborating with another student during an individual assignment.</p> <p>If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU writing center.</p>
Plagiarism and the Internet	<p>Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources.</p> <p>This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not.</p> <p>Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material. Review the Honor Code here.</p>
Individuals with Disabilities	<p><i>Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu Phone: (703) 993-2474</i></p>
Academic Integrity and Inclusivity	<p>Our university seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.</p> <p>This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences. That means, we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should</p>

	<p>also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. http://oai.gmu.edu/</p>
Student Privacy Policy	<p>George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records.</p> <p>Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/</p>
E-Mail Policy	<p>Web: masonlive.gmu.edu</p> <p>Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback.</p> <p>Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.</p> <p>Students are also expected to maintain an active and accurate mailing address in order to receive communications sent through the United States Postal Service.</p> <p><i>(From the 2017-18 Catalog – catalog.gmu.edu)</i></p> <p>When you e-mail the instructor, include CRIM315 in the subject of the e-mail. Expected timing of email replies: within 24 hours but not on weekends</p>
Counseling and Psychological Services	<p>Counseling and Psychological Services provide a wide range of free services to students, faculty, and staff. Services are provided by a staff of professional clinical psychologists, social workers, counselors, learning specialists, and psychiatric providers. Our individual and group counseling, workshops, and community education programs are designed to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance.</p> <p>Emergency Contacts: Online Crisis Chat Crisis Text Line: Text 741-741 CrisisLink: 703-527-4077 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255 Veterans Crisis Line: 800-273-8255, Press 1 Mason Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Crisis Line: 703-380-1434 TrevorLifeline: 866-488-7386 Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860</p> <p>Non-Emergency Contacts: Counseling and Psychological Services: 703-993-2380 Student Support and Advocacy Center: 703-993-3686 Mason Police: 703-993-2810</p>

	<p>For a list of Student Support Resources at our University please visit https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/knowning-mason-students/student-support-resources-on-campus/</p>
Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence	<p>George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination, and we are committed to a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202 Sexual Harassment and Misconduct (http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/sexual-harassment-policy) speaks to the specifics of our process, our resources, and the options available to you. Confidential student resources are available on campus at the Student Support and Advocacy Center (http://ssac.gmu.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (http://caps.gmu.edu), and Student Health Services (http://shs.gmu.edu).</p> <p>All other members of the University community (including faculty, except those noted above) are not considered confidential resources and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator. For a full list of resources, support opportunities, and reporting options, contact the Title IX Coordinator, at http://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix, at 703-993-8730, or in the Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics office in the Aquia Building, Suite 373.</p>
Enrollment Statement	<p>You are responsible for verifying your enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments must be made by the deadlines established each year in the Schedule of Classes, available from the Registrar's website (http://registrar.gmu.edu)</p>
Course Grading & Evaluation	<p>Grades will be assigned as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A+: 97.00-100 A: 93.00-96.99 A-: 90.00-92.99 B+:87.00-89.99 B:83.00-86.99 B-:80.00-82.99 C+:77.00-79.99 C:73.00-76.99 C-:70.00-72.99 D:60.00-69.99 F:0-59.99
Discussions– 30 points (10 discussions, 3 points each)	<p>Your challenge is to immerse yourself in the topics and perspectives presented in the course. You will want to be able to comment on the discussion topics with authority. You are encouraged to make notes on your own thoughts about the various concepts and issues, and consider possible issues/outcomes. Your posts should be to the point and include sufficient technical detail for others to respond. You should present your opinions, but justify them with facts and proper sources. What did you disagree with and why, or not understand?</p>

	<p>Initial/Original Post Please post what you view as the appropriate responses to the above prompts. Your initial post should be 150-300 words. Please provide response with a clear, well-formulated thesis; sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling count. Support all posts with appropriate rationale and citations from readings; appropriately document sources.</p> <p>Responding to Others Responses to at least two classmates' postings should be approximately 200 words and should be thoughtful, substantial, polite and more extensive than a simple "well done" phrase or "I agree." Consider points of agreement, disagreement, assumptions, and value judgments. You will be able to respond to others after you submit your initial post.</p> <p>Instructions Each student will make at least one original post by Thursday 11:59 PM, EST, and react to at least two of your peers' posts by Sunday 11:59 PM, EST. Review the Discussion Board Participation guidelines (including rubric) in the syllabus, as appropriate.</p>
<p>Quizzes – 20 points (10 quizzes, 2 points each)</p>	<p>Students will complete 10 quizzes throughout the course (Weeks 1-6; Weeks 8-10; and Week 12). Each quiz will be 2 points. With the exception of Quiz 1, all other quizzes will include 4 questions (multiple choice and/or True/False) based on the reading material of the week. Quiz 1 will test students' knowledge of the information on the syllabus. Other quizzes will test students' knowledge of the reading material. Answers to quizzes will be available after their due date (after Sunday midnight). If you would like to check the correct answers to quizzes, please check Blackboard after the due date of each quiz.</p>
<p>Assignments – 50 points</p>	<p>Each week, assignments are required to be uploaded to Blackboard. Assignments are due by Sunday, 11:59 PM, ET unless otherwise stated. Refer to the course schedule and weekly overviews for details.</p> <p>Lesson 1 Assignment #1: Victims of Identity Theft (Week 1): 2 points Lesson 1 Assignment #2: Identity Theft Topic Signup (Week 2): 1 point Lesson 2 Assignment: CITI Human Subjects Training (Week 2): 10 points Lesson 4 Assignment: Research Article Analysis (Week 4): 5 points Lesson 6 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey Questions (Week 6): 10 points Lesson 7 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey Group Questions (Week 7): 5 points Lesson 11 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey (Week 11): 10 points Lesson 13 Assignment: Critical Reflection (Week 13): 2 points Lesson 14 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey Results (Week 14): 5 points</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Need Help? Utilize the "Ask the Instructor" discussion forum on Blackboard or email your instructor directly.</p>	

Expect to work **15-20** hours per week on assignments for this course.

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due by the end of the week in which they are assigned. For the purposes of this course, a week is defined as **beginning at 12:01 am each Monday EST, and ending at 11:59 pm on the following Sunday EST.**

To help you manage your schedule and time to complete the assignments in this course, please follow the recommended timeline below. If you have a question or concern or encounter a problem about an assignment, please contact me immediately so we can discuss and work out a resolution.

Weeks	Lessons	Assignments
Week 1 (Jan 25-Jan 31)	Lesson 1: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Syllabus and Chapter 1 • Take Intro Quiz • Participate in the Online Discussion 1 • Participate in Online Discussion 2 • Complete Lesson 1 Assignment 1 • Complete Lesson 1 Assignment 2
Week 2 (Feb 1-Feb 7)	Lesson 2: Ethics and Criminal Justice Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 3 • Take Chapter 3 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion • Complete Lesson 2 Assignment: CITI Certificate
Week 3 (Feb 8-Feb 14)	Lesson 3: General Issues in Research Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 4 • Take Chapter 4 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion
Week 4 (Feb 15-Feb 21)	Lesson 4: Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 5 • Take Chapter 5 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion • Complete Lesson 4 Assignment: Research Article Analysis
Week 5 (Feb 22-Feb 28)	Lesson 5: Measuring Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 6 • Take Chapter 6 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion
Week 6 (Mar 1-Mar 7)	Lesson 6: Survey Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 9 • Take Chapter 9 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion • Complete Lesson 6 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey
Week 7 (Mar 8-Mar 14)	Lesson 7: Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 8 • Complete Lesson 7 Assignment: Group Survey Questions
Week 8 (Mar 15-Mar 21)	Lesson 8: Qualitative Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 10 • Take Chapter 10 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion

Week 9 (Mar 22-Mar 28)	Lesson 9: Field Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 11 • Take Chapter 11 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion
Week 10 (Mar 29-Apr 4)	Lesson 10: Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 12 • Take Chapter 12 Quiz • Participate in Online Discussion
Week 11 (Apr 5-Apr 11)	Lesson 11: Experimental and Quasi- Experimental Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 7 • Complete Lesson 11 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey
Week 12 (Apr 12-Apr 18)	Lesson 12: Interpreting Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 14 • Take Chapter 14 Quiz
Week 13 (Apr 19-Apr 25)	Lesson 13: Criminological Theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Lesson 13 Assignment: Critical reflection
Week 14 (April 26-April 30*)	Lesson 14: Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion • Complete Lesson 14 Assignment: Identity Theft Survey Results (*additional time is provided for this assignment: this assignment is due by 11:59 pm on May 5th)