

## CRMJ 2685: Research Methods

Fall 2018

MWF 1:10 – 2:00pm

**Instructor:** Kimberly Schweitzer, Ph.D.

kschweit@uwyo.edu

Arts & Sciences Room 307 (on the North side of A&S)

Office Hours: Monday 2:30 – 3:30 pm and Wednesday 10 – 11 am

*Note:* I am also available by appointment. Send me an email, and we will set up a time that works for the both of us.

**Teaching Assistant:** Karlee Provenza, M.S.

kprovenz@uwyo.edu

Biological Sciences Room 136

Office Hours: Tuesday 11am – 1pm and Wednesday 12 – 1 pm

**Required Text:** NONE (cue happy dance)

**Prerequisites:** Criminal Justice Major

*Recommended Pre/Co-requisites:* CRMJ 1000, STAT 2050 or 2070, ENGL 1010

### Course Description & Goals:

This course is designed to introduce you to the methods used to investigate and conduct scientific research. Throughout this course, you will learn how to be a better consumer of research. Research findings are easily misportrayed by news outlets and others attempting to convey the results. By the end of this course, you should be able to determine what is good research and what scientific findings actually mean (and do not mean). By the end of this course, you should also be able to develop a research question and hypothesis, write a clear and concise review of the current literature, collect and analyze data, and interpret and discuss results. To do that effectively, you will need to be able to write and communicate well; this course will help you with these skills.

### Grading Details:

**In-Class Activities** (~113 points): To aide in your understanding of the topics we will be covering, there will be numerous in-class activities. You **MUST be present IN CLASS** that day to obtain the points from the activity. In other words, **these points CANNOT be made up** unless your absence is sanctioned by the Office of Student Life or because of participation in a University-sponsored activity. Either way, talk to me beforehand.

**Research Project** (199 points): To apply what you have learned in class and to expose you to the actual process of conducting and communicating research, you will be asked to write up and communicate research findings from a study you conduct based off of an idea you generated with other members of the class. Although the research idea will be generated with three of your classmates, **most components of this assignment will be individual in nature**. Details will be discussed in class and on the course webpage.

Your project will be submitted in parts, with the final complete submission utilizing the feedback you were given on the earlier drafts. Be sure to look at the rubric to make sure you have covered the required material. Each part must be uploaded directly into WyoCourses. I strongly encourage everyone to visit the UW Writing Center before turning in written assignments. See the section “Writing Center” below for more details. In addition to the written component, each group will give a presentation regarding their research and results. Specifically, each group will need to cover the four main components of their research papers (i.e., introduction, method, results, and discussion). I know giving presentations in class is stressful and anxiety provoking for some. However, communicating your findings is an integral part of doing research, and I would like to believe that your classmates want to hear about your studies! After all, they did participate in them.

**Exams** (200 points): There will be two regular (non-cumulative) and one optional cumulative final worth 100 points each. Questions will come from the lectures, reading assignments, handouts, and in-class activities and will be multiple choice, true or false, fill in the blank, and short answer. Before every exam, there will be an in-class review session. If you take all three of the exams, the lowest of your exam scores will be dropped. Because only two of the three exams will count towards your final grade, you also have the option to not take one of the exams. This should compensate for you having an ‘off’ day or for any unexpected events that may interrupt your exam preparation. Because you are only required to take two of the three exams, there will be **NO make-up exams** given unless your absence is sanctioned by the Office of Student Life or your absence is because of participation in a University-sponsored activity.

**Other Methods of Assessment:** Throughout the course, there may also be other ways in which you will be assessed (e.g., low-stakes quizzes, brief essay questions). Instructions for any of these assignments will be discussed in class and/or posted on WyoCourses.

**Extra Credit:**

*SONA Research Participation:* To better understand the research process, I encourage participation in research that is being done through the Psychology and Criminal Justice departments by offering up to 10 points of extra credit for SONA participation (one point of extra credit for each half hour of SONA participation, up to five hours). The SONA coordinator will provide more information in class.

Additional opportunities for extra credit will be announced in class *if* they arise.

**Grade Breakdown:**

|   |           |   |          |   |         |
|---|-----------|---|----------|---|---------|
| A | 90 – 100% | C | 70 – 79% | F | 0 – 59% |
| B | 80 – 89%  | D | 60 – 69% |   |         |

**Attendance:** As with many college classes, attendance in this class is not a part of your grade. That said, I strongly suggest you attend every class, as material covered in class will be used to assess your knowledge. Additionally, a portion of your grade will come directly from in-class activities. Thus, to earn those points, you *must* be in class.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Because attendance is not a part of your grade, I expect that when you do choose to come to class, you plan to be fully present while there. Being fully present means you are listening to me and your classmates and are taking part in any discussions and answering (or attempting to answer) questions posed during class. It does NOT mean texting, checking your Facebook, sending snap chats, scrolling through Pinterest or the Chive, tweeting, or doing any other work not directly relevant to class. If you have a hard time avoiding your friends and social media for 50 minutes three times a week and for some reason still want to attend class, please sit in the back of the room so you are less distracting to your classmates and myself.

Throughout the course, we will have discussions on various, sometimes controversial, topics. I do not expect you all to have the same viewpoints on everything we discuss. In fact, I hope you are all comfortable openly disagreeing (or at least creating thoughtful opposing arguments even if you do not feel that way), as this will lead to more in-depth discussions. However, I do expect you to respect your classmates and respond in an appropriate manner. I strongly urge you to view the material we cover in an objective and scientific manner. Please refrain from sharing personal stories/anecdotes and your religious or political beliefs, as the discussions we will have in this course are meant to be based in research. This will help ensure that all students are comfortable in the classroom without being concerned of being attacked for their beliefs or encountering other students' personal information.

**Email Policy:** Email is the best and easiest way to contact me with your questions. However, please refer to this syllabus and the course webpage before emailing me. I am more than willing to answer your questions, but past experiences have shown that the majority of students' questions can be answered through a quick search of already possessed materials. Typically, I reply to emails the same day. However, from time to time I do attempt to have a life (surprising, I know). Monday through Friday, expect a response within 24 hours, unless I let you know I am sick or out of town; Saturday and Sunday, expect a response by the end of Monday (holidays are an exception). **If this does not happen, PLEASE email me again.** I receive a lot of emails and sometimes they get lost in the shuffle. If you have a question regarding an assignment, emailing me at 3 am the morning it is due is not the best idea. Email me a couple of days before instead. If your question is specific or elaborate and requires a more detailed response then I can provide in an email, email me and we can set up a time to meet and chat about it.

**Email Etiquette:** When you contact me via email, I expect your email to follow proper emailing etiquette. This means you should start the email with a greeting of some sort; the body of the email should contain complete sentences and proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation; and you should end the email with your name. I understand many of you email from your phones or tablets. I do, too. But, that is not an excuse. Please take 30 seconds and read through your email before hitting send. Thank you in advance!

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism can occur in many ways. Most obviously, plagiarism occurs when one directly takes text from a source and does not put it in quotations and/or cite the source. Plagiarism that is somewhat less obvious to students is paraphrasing knowledge attained from a source and not crediting that source. **Any information discussed in your assignments for this course that is not common knowledge (e.g., The sky is blue.) or your own opinion (e.g., I like dogs.) MUST be cited properly.** Plagiarized work will not be allowed. If you are unsure how

to properly cite your sources, please contact the Writing Center, reference the APA manual or any of the numerous online resources (e.g., Purdue Owl), or speak with myself or the TA.

**Writing Center:** I highly encourage *every* student to visit the UW Writing Center *prior* to turning in written assignments. In as short as a 30-minute appointment, the Writing Center consultants can help improve your writing and, therefore, your grade. To make an appointment, click “Schedule a Consultation” at <http://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/writing-center/index.html>.

**Special Needs:** If you have a physical, learning, sensory, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO Knight Hall Room 330 before accommodations can be provided.

**Disclaimer:** Everything in this syllabus is subject to change at my discretion. However, any changes will be announced in class or on the course website. The syllabus is meant to be an outline of what to expect during the course and may not be followed exactly.