

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY &
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**CCJS 300: Criminological and Criminal Justice
Research Methods
Spring**

GENERAL INFORMATION

COURSE/SECTION:	CCJS 300: Sections 0101/0201	
CREDITS:	3	
TERM:	Spring 2026	
TIME/LOCATION:	0101 MW 9-10:15 AM	1203 Van Munching Hall
	0201 MW 10:30-11:45 AM	1203 Van Munching Hall

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Brett Lacey
He/him/his
OFFICE: 2211 Lefrak Hall
OFFICE HOURS: MW 8-9, T 8-9:30
TELEPHONE: 301-405-0170
EMAIL: blacey1@umd.edu

Should you need to contact me, please do so through my UMD email account. You may expect a 24-hour response time to email although I will typically get back to you much earlier. I can be reached via the above phone number as well.

TEACHING ASSISTANT INFORMATION

0101	Gina Youn	gyoun@terpmail.umd.edu	M 3-4PM, F 12-1PM
0201	Brooke Baney	bbaney@terpmail.umd.edu	MSu 2-3PM
	Madeline Burton	mburton5@terpmail.umd.edu	MW 3-4PM

All in-person TA office hours are held in 0102 Morrill Hall

Office Hours: I will maintain in-person office hours as indicated above and also by appointment if those hours do not work well with your schedule. We can also organize meetings virtually via Zoom at other times which may be more convenient for you.

Textbook:

Hagan, Frank E. (2018). Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology. Pearson. Tenth Edition. ISBN 9780134558912

Course Description: This course will teach students how to actually conduct research in the criminal justice field. Students will learn about traditional social science methods used in our discipline and how to apply them to their own research. We will cover various research designs, sampling issues, ethical

considerations, survey construction, interviewing, and basic functions with a computer software package; SPSS, that are typically used in analyzing social science data. In this class, students will complete six research projects and one optional research project that build on each other. These research projects introduce students to the various research techniques used in our field by having them actually conduct research. These projects are designed to increase in difficulty and to allow the student to apply the knowledge learned in the class as they progress. In the course of these projects, students will assess ethical issues in research, create a survey instrument, disseminate the survey, decide on and assess a sampling technique, analyze survey and other criminological data using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics, conduct a field observation study, develop hypotheses and present the justification of said hypotheses, select and transform variables, test hypotheses using criminological data, perform appropriate statistical tests, and develop conclusions and implications based on their research.

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to select, critically evaluate, and apply relevant areas of scholarship;
- Articulate the processes required to bring about a successful outcome from planning, modeling, and preparing, to critiquing, revising and perfecting;
- Recognize how an application of scholarship affects or is affected by political, social, cultural, economic or ethical dimensions;
- Produce original projects that reflect a body of knowledge relevant to this course;
- Effectively communicate the application of scholarship through written material

Prerequisites: The following courses must be taken before enrolling in this course: CCJS 100, 105, and 200 (or an approved statistics course).

Course Policy: The University has created a course related policies web page which will be adhered to that can be found at: <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Communication Policy: In accordance with university policy, your university issued email must be issued for all email correspondence. Although the above-mentioned timeframe is 24 hours to receive a reply, it will typically be much sooner. Please have some patience as at times it may take several hours to reply due to other obligations. Should you email me at off business times, you may not receive a response until the following morning. Your understanding and adherence are appreciated.

ELMS Learning Management System: This course relies heavily on ELMS as a delivery platform for the learning material. Power points, assignments, and other course documents and resources are posted and available in the ELMS course site. Students should:

- Become proficient in utilizing ELMS as a Learning Management platform
- Check ELMS regularly for changes, updates, and learning materials
- ***Set notifications in ELMS*** which automatically notify students of instructor emails, submission comments (grading), and additions of new assignments.

Review posted course materials each week to stay abreast of what is occurring in the course including due dates and materials which will assist in completing the final. I will be using ELMS to post the syllabus, grades, some handouts, and you will be submitting assignments on ELMS as well. Go to

<http://www.elms.umd.edu/> and log in with your Directory ID (logon ID) and password to use this feature. In the event you have difficulty with ELMS:

1. Contact the ELMS support desk at 301- 405-1500
2. Send me an email letting me know what has occurred (Blacey1@UMD.EDU)

UMD Course Related Policies

The University has created a UMD Course Related Policies website:

<http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies/html>

Classroom Conduct Policy: Students are expected to behave professionally in the classroom, be respectful towards instructors and fellow classmates, and ensure their behaviors do not disrupt or interfere with class activities. Instructors have the authority and professional obligation to maintain a positive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

To that end, the following expectations will be enforced:

- Students are expected to arrive to class on time and remain in class for the entire class period.
- Be attentive throughout the entire class period.
- Do not engage in side conversations with students.
- Act in a mature and adult manner at all times.
- Respect everyone in the class, but not be fearful of disagreement. Discussion and debate are at the heart of learning.
- Do their best to succeed. Some students may need to work harder than others to succeed, but all students can earn an A in the class depending on their willingness to work.
- Ask the instructor for clarification or further explanation if they feel they do not understand the material being discussed or read. Chances are someone or everyone else has the same question.
- Challenge the instructor using evidence and reasoned arguments if they disagree with something the instructor says!
- Please note that cell phones are to be turned off during class. Repeated classroom disruptions will result in being asked to leave the class and may ultimately affect the grade you receive.
- While laptop use is allowed in lectures, please do not visit websites not related to the course or watch videos. This is rude to the instructor and distracting to other students.

INSTRUCTOR CONDUCT POLICY: Students can expect me to:

- Treat them with respect.
- Provide feedback in a timely manner on assignments (ideally, within two weeks of the due date of exercises, usually sooner).
- Provide extensive feedback and assistance to students as they learn.
- Be honest in response when I do not know something.
- Enforce the standards I have established for grading and the learning outcomes of the course.

Names, Pronouns, and Self-Identifications

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more. Additionally, how you identify in

terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Religious Observances: If you are unable to take the any exams or to be present in class on a required attendance day due to a religious observance, you will need to discuss this with me by February 9, 2026.

Course Requirements

There are multiple requirements for this course. As noted above, there are six required and one optional extra credit projects where students will do independent research using social science data that will build on each other. These required research projects make up 1/3 of the overall course grade and will be submitted **online**. There will also be three **in class** exams, each covering a specified portion of material and they will total the other 2/3 of the overall course grade. None of the exams are cumulative in nature. The exams are designed to cover the vocabulary, content, and the use of statistical software that students must learn in order to conduct research. **Exams and all assignments are considered Major Scheduled Graded Events and therefore the University medical excuse policy which allows one student signed honor statement attesting to illness does not apply to them.** Exams are primarily multiple choice and true/false. Approximately 2/3 of exam questions are from lecture and the remaining 1/3 are from the book. **Exams must be taken in the class you are registered for and will be in person. Assignments must be turned in online via ELMS.** Bring a picture ID to each exam.

You can earn extra credit by completing an Extra Credit Research Project (distributed in early April). For the **Extra Credit Research Project**, I will discuss it during class and it will have a maximum of ten raw points.

Assessments:

Exams I, II, III (50 pts. Each)

Research Projects:

- RP1 Ethical Issues (10 pts)
- RP2 Survey Construction (10 pts)
- RP3 Analysis with descriptive statistics (10 pts)
- RP4 Sampling and Survey Research (15 pts)
- RP5 Field Research (15 pts)
- RP6 Artificial Intelligence (20 pts)
- RP7 Analysis with Tests of Independence (20 pts)

Total Points: 250

The instructor reserves the right to adjust policies/assignments/points or content dates.

Course Evaluation Policy

Your feedback about this course is very important to me and therefore we will do several forms of evaluation throughout this semester. One way is to fill out the online evaluation at the end of the semester. CourseEvalUM will be open for students to complete their

evaluations for Fall 2026 courses in April. Students can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete their evaluations. Students who complete evaluations for all of their courses in the previous semester (excluding summer), can access the posted results via Testudo's CourseEvalUM Reporting link for any course on campus that has at least a 70% response rate.

Copyright

The lectures that I deliver in this class and the course materials I create and distribute are protected by federal copyright law as my original works. My lectures are recorded or delivered from written lectures in order to ensure copyright protection. You are permitted to take notes of lectures and to use course materials for your use in this course. You may not record, reproduce, or distribute my lectures/notes for any commercial purpose without my written consent. Persons who sell or distribute copies or modified copies of my course materials, possess commercial copies of my notes (i.e., Terpnotes), or assist another person or entity in selling or distributing those materials may be considered in violation of the University Code of Student Conduct, Part 9(k).

Accessibility and Disability Support

I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Accessibility and Disability Support Services (ADS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland ADS Accommodation form which has been updated for the Fall 2026 semester. This form must be presented to me no later than February 9, 2026. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with ADS or who do not provide me with documentation that has not been reviewed by ADS after February 9, 2026. ADS students who are requesting to take their exams at the ADS Center need to provide me with the link to the testing form for each exam and I must receive this **no later than 1 week prior to each exam**. The student is expected to take the exam at the same time as the rest of the class.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty of any form will absolutely NOT be tolerated. Academic dishonesty encompasses the traditional behavior such as cheating on exams and assignments, giving false statements, etc., but also includes activities such as possessing and/or reviewing previous semester's exams and computer assignments. It is important to note that course assistance websites such as Course Hero, Grammarly, Quill Bot, or **any AI generated content** are not permitted sources, unless permission is granted. The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally Recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit the following link:

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-integrity-student-conduct-codes/>

Evaluation and Assessment of Course Learning Outcomes (Grading): Percentage points will be converted to a letter grade as listed below:

A+ (97-100%)	B+ (87-89%)	C+ (77-79%)	D+ (67-69%)	F (<60%)
A (93-96%)	B (83-86%)	C (73-76%)	D (63-66%)	
A- (90-92%)	B- (80-82%)	C- (70-72%)	D- (60-62%)	

I will be rounding grades at the end of the term, using the .45 threshold. So, for example, a 92.45% will be rounded up to an A, but a 92.44% will remain as an A-. Please do not ask for your grade to be “bumped” or rounded up. If the request is made, your email will be ignored and any chance of the grade changing will then be gone.

Attendance will be taken on the days that RP7 and the Extra Credit Research Projects are handed out and discussed. You must be present those days or have an excused absence you notified me in advance of in order to receive assistance from myself or the TA on these assignments. In general, it is expected that you must attend class on the days I hand out and discuss all assignments in order to receive assistance from myself or the TAs.

Makeup Policy

This course has a very strict makeup policy regarding exams or assignments. These will only be given in cases of excused absences and official documentation is required. **Exams and research projects are considered to be Major Scheduled Graded Events and therefore the University medial excuse policy which allows one student signed honor statement attesting to illness does not apply to them.** Excused absences are: illness with a doctor’s note, death in the immediately family, required school activities, and required court appearance. **I will not accept a Health Center honor statement to verify an illness.** If you go to the Health Center and a doctor will not write you a note, you will need to get a copy of your medical record from them to verify your illness. By law, you are entitled to get a copy of this and it is your responsibility to do so.

For exams, I must be notified by email or phone PRIOR to missing an exam (must notify me before the exam begins in class) for me to consider providing a makeup exam, even if this means you have to use limited cell data to email me. Make up exams may be a different style than you regular exam If you have a problem on the date of the exam, call or email me. If you know in advance that you will be absent for an exam with an approved absence, you will be expected to take the exam prior to your absence and prior to the regularly scheduled exam.

For the Research Projects, I must be notified PRIOR to the start of class on the day the Research Project is due for me to consider an extension. Given that you have ample time for each Research Project and they are submitted online, I do not anticipate giving extensions on these projects. Do the projects early to avoid potential issues. **If you are traveling for athletic events or other approved absences the day the Research Project is due, it is still due and you will need to submit the project before you go.**

Research Projects

All research projects are **due via ELMS by the very beginning of the class you are registered for (either MW 9 or 10:30)** and they must be submitted on time. **I do not accept late assignments** and they are due to be submitted by the beginning of class online on the due date. **I will lock the submission**

at 10 minutes after the class starting time and no submissions will be accepted after that time. This is a firm deadline with no exceptions. You can always submit assignments early but never late. **Only one submission is permitted per research project.** Makes sure you include all necessary attachments before you click submit. If you accidentally submit prematurely, you can add an attachment in the comments section of your submission. Once a research project is submitted on ELMS, it is considered submitted and changes cannot be made. **You will need to check that your submissions and attachments posted and can be viewed on ELMS. I will not give credit after the fact if the submission did not submit or cannot be viewed in ELMS.**

WEEKLY SCHEDULE/FINAL EXAM REMINDER

WEEK 1 (January 26-30, 2026)

Week 1: Major Topics	Intro and syllabus
January 28	
	Introductions, thoroughly read and review syllabus

WEEK 2 (February 2-6, 2026)

Week 2: Major Topics	Process of Research
February 2	
	Process of Research Read Ch. 1
February 4	
	Presentations

WEEK 3 (February 9-13, 2026)

Week 3: Major Topics	Ethics
February 9	
	Ethics
February 11	
	Ethics

WEEK 4 (February 16-20, 2026)

Week 4: Major Topics	Research Design
February 16	
	Ethics presentations Get RP2
February 18	
	Ethics Presentations

WEEK 5 (February 23-27, 2026)

Week 5: Major Topics	Coding
February 23	
	Hypothesis testing Research design experiments Read Ch. 3 Read p. 86-88
February 25	

	Sampling, Questionnaire Construction Read p. 98-117 Coding/SPSS Read Chapter 2-3 RP2 due
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WEEK 6 (March 2-6, 2026)

Week 6: Major Topics	Exam 1
March 2	
	Exam Review
March 4	
	Exam 1

WEEK 7 (March 9-13, 2026)

Week 7: Major Topics	Computer Week
March 9	
	Computer Workshop Group 1 Virtual Lab Get RP3
March 11	
	Computer Workshop Group 2 Virtual Lab Get RP3

WEEK 8 (March 16-20, 2026)

Week 1: Major Topics	Rest and relaxation
March 16	
	NO CLASS- Spring Break
March 18	
	NO CLASS- Spring Break

WEEK 9 (March 23-27, 2026)

Week 9: Major Topics	Field Research
March 23	
	Measures of Central Tendency/ Read Pages 117-130/Reliability and Validity Read Ch. 9
March 25	
	Interviews Read p. 132-146 Read Ch. 7 RP3 due Get RP4

WEEK 10 (March 30- April 3, 2026)

Week 10: Major Topics	Field Research/unobtrusive measures
March 30	
	Self-Reports Read p. 123-127 Get RP4
April 1	
	Sampling

WEEK 11 (April 6-10, 2026)

Week 1: Major Topics	
April 6	
	Exam Review RP4 due
April 8	
	EXAM II in class RP 4 due Sunday

WEEK 12 (April 13-17, 2026)

Week 1: Major Topics	
April 13	
	Unobtrusive Research Read p. 86-97 Get RP 5
April 15	
	Field Research Read p. 86-97Q & A

WEEK 13 (April 20-24, 2026)

Week 1: Major Topics	
April 20	
	Crime Databases Read p. 123-127 Get RP 6
April 22	
	Victimization Read p. 146-158 Extra Credit Part I- Attendance required for assistance RP5 due

WEEK 14 (April 27-May 1, 2026)

Week 14: Major Topics	Scales and Prediction
April 27	
	Artificial Intelligence Get RP 7
April 29	
	Prediction RP6-Due

Week 15: (May 4-8, 2026)

Week 15: Major Topics	Reliability and Validity, Evaluative Research
May 4	Scales Read Chapter 10
May 6	
	Evaluation Research/Proposal writing Read Ch. 11 RP7-Due Sunday at 11:59 PM Extra Credit due

WEEK 16 (May 11-15, 2026)

Week 16: Major Topics	
Final Exam 0101	May 14, 1:30 PM
Final Exam 0201	May 18, 10:30AM

All Research Projects are submitted via ELMS

All exams are in class and in the regular classroom.

The instructor reserves the right to revise/change this syllabus and all terms within.