

CJ 7320 – Quantitative Research Methods

Hines Academic Center Room 104

**Section 001 meets Tuesdays 6.30-9.20pm
Fall 2015**

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Office Hours: Tue 4.00-6.00pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course that demonstrates the practical aspects of conducting criminal justice research that uses quantitative methodologies and design. Topics include the philosophy of science; research ethics; methodological designs in establishing causation; nonexperimental/descriptive research; sampling techniques; secondary data sources and data gathering techniques.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course you should be able to demonstrate (all at the doctorate level):

1. an advanced understanding of the research process, as well as the strengths and limitations of some of the more commonly used methodologies in quantitative research; and
2. good critical evaluation and written/oral communication skills.

The goals above can be further broken down as follows:

- 1.1 Critically evaluate the literature in relation to an area of knowledge and identify original and appropriate research questions.
- 1.2 Select and justify methodologies of investigation appropriate to particular research questions, the nature of the topic, and the resources available.
- 1.3 Define and identify ethical issues as they relate to research, including IRB processes.
- 1.4 Define field-specific terms and describe the procedures, strengths and limitations of various quantitative research designs.
- 2.1 Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and synthesize the research literature.
- 2.2 Achieve a good standard of academic writing.
- 2.3 Deliver successful oral presentations.

This is a *doctoral-level* methods course that focuses on *mastering* concepts related to conducting and critically evaluating quantitative research. Therefore, **Masters-level knowledge of quantitative research methods is assumed. Students who do not have this level are required to prepare** for the course by reading the course textbooks (see below) or other suitable methods texts.

Each session will have an associated designated reading list. However, rather than going through the main concepts as covered in the textbooks, class time will be mainly used to review published research (related to the topic being discussed) and carrying out practical exercises. You are expected to have completed the designated readings and to actively engage in the in-class exercises and discussions.

As a self-assessment exercise, you are expected to complete and achieve a grade of 80% or above in the following online quizzes **BEFORE you start the course**:¹

- Multiple choice questions from the Student Resources website for Bryman's textbook (see <http://global.oup.com/uk/orc/sociology/brymansrm4e/01student/00mcqs/>), for the chapters listed in the Class Schedule below.
- From the course " Learning environment for multilevel methodology and applications (LEMMA)" (register for free at www.cmm.bris.ac.uk/lemma):
 - Pre-requisite statistics quiz
 - Module 1 quiz
 - Module 2 quizzes (4)

Other online quizzes you might want to try are:

- Research methods GoToQuiz (www.gotoquiz.com/research_methods)
- Flashcard quizzes such as www.freezingblue.com/iphone/flashcards/quiz2.php?cardsetID=174567 (more can be found on the website – simply click on “All Cards” and search for “research methods”)

You may also want to make use of other materials available from the Student Resources website for Bryman's textbook (see <http://global.oup.com/uk/orc/sociology/brymansrm4e/01student/>), which include podcasts, flashcards, glossaries, etc.

As a guide, you should be able to explain the meaning of the concepts listed below (this is not an exhaustive list!). Again, these are not terms that will be introduced in this course; instead, **these are terms you should know BEFORE starting the course**.

¹ We will not use class time to go through the material in your textbooks. Instead, we will be carrying out exercises and reviewing real research that relate to the concepts covered in your textbooks. For this reason, you need to learn the material covered in such texts (the earlier the better), or you will not perform well on this course.

Basic Concepts

quantitative vs. qualitative research
inductive vs. deductive process
conceptualization vs. operationalization
descriptive, explanatory and evaluative
research questions
role of theory in research
hypothesis
unit of analysis
criteria for causation
variables and attributes/values
independent vs. dependent variable
control group
between-subjects (independent) vs.
within-subjects (related) design
experiment vs. quasi-experiment vs. non-
experiment
counterfactual
ceteris paribus
random assignment vs. matching
random assignment vs. random sampling
time series design
outcome vs. process evaluation
Likert scales
survey piloting
open-ended vs. close-ended questions
blind and double-blind designs
probability vs. non-probability sampling
stratified and cluster/area random
sampling
proportionate vs. disproportionate
stratified random sampling
snowball sampling
selection bias
sample vs. population
sampling frame
nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio data

descriptive vs. inferential statistics
statistical significance
confidence intervals
sampling error
random vs. systematic error
response rate
parametric vs. non-parametric data/tests
normal distribution
homogeneity of variance
p value
chi square
correlation
positive vs. negative correlation
content analysis
regression
logistic regression
ANOVA and its variants (ANCOVA,
MANOVA, MANCOVA)
test-retest reliability
Cronbach's alpha
inter-observer reliability
content validity
criterion validity
internal validity
regression to the mean
treatment misidentification
differential attrition
expectancy effects
maturation
external validity
sample generalizability vs. cross-
population generalizability
ecological fallacy
ecological validity
informed consent
privacy vs. confidentiality

ASSESSMENT

As part of this course, you will need to sit two exams, deliver one oral presentation in class, submit one research proposal, and complete several small assignments in class (see below). The details on these forms of assessment are provided in Table 1. Detailed assessment criteria – in the form of assessment rubrics – will be provided separately for the oral presentation and the research proposal.

There will be NO optional assignments for extra credit.

Table 1. Overview of course assessment.

		Small assignments	Presentation	Research proposal	Exams
Deadline		Various (see Class Schedule)	Oct 27 / Nov 3	Nov 24	Oct 6 / Dec 8
Learning outcomes assessed	Weight	10%	15%	25%	20% / 30%
1.1	Critically evaluate the literature in relation to an area of knowledge and identify original and appropriate research questions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Select and justify methodologies of investigation appropriate to particular research questions, the nature of the topic, and the resources available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Define and identify ethical issues as they relate to research, including IRB processes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.4	Define field-specific terms and describe the procedures, strengths and limitations of various quantitative research designs.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.1	Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and synthesize the empirical literature.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Achieve a good standard of academic writing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2.3	Deliver successful oral presentations.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Small Assignments

This is a seminar-style class and its success depends on your attending class (and remaining there for the duration), adequately preparing for class (i.e., by reading/learning the designated materials and completing any other tasks set by the instructor), and actively participating while in class. Class participation and successful completion of small assignments will contribute 10% towards your final course grade.

Some of the exercises will be introduced in class (i.e. class exercises, providing feedback to your peers during peer assessment exercises and presentations), while others you will have to complete before class (i.e., small assignments), either individually or in small groups. Small assignments should be submitted on the dates and specified in the Class Schedule below, electronically, through Turnitin. You should also bring printed copies to class, as class time will be devoted to discussing these assignments. Please note that **you will not receive individual feedback for these small assignments; instead, the content of such assignments will be discussed in class and any questions you have about the tasks set can be clarified then.**

Instructions for using the Turnitin service are provided below.

The small assignments you will need to complete are (all deadlines fall on a Tuesday, unless otherwise indicated):

- September 1, 10am: CITI training completed (submit completion certificate via Turnitin).
- September 8, 10am: Briefly annotated bibliography, outline of background section, and research question(s) for your proposal (aim for 10+ papers; submit Word document via Turnitin).
- September 15, 10am: Updated briefly annotated bibliography, outline of background section, and research question(s) for your proposal (aim for 20+ papers) PLUS notes of methodological approach to be adopted (aim for 250-500 words, or 1-2 pages double-spaced; submit both annotated and methodology notes as a single Word document via Turnitin).
- Friday September 25, 10am: Background section from proposal (aim for 1,000-1,500 words, or 4-6 pages double-spaced; submit Word document via Turnitin and email copy to your assigned peer).
- Friday October 15, 10am: Methodology section from proposal (aim for 1,500-3,000 words, or 6-12 pages double-spaced; submit Word document via Turnitin and email copy to your assigned peer).
- Friday November 6, 10am: Full draft proposal (aim for 3,500-3,000 words, or 14-20 pages double-spaced, excluding references and appendices; submit Word document via Turnitin and email copy to your assigned peer).

Oral Presentation

You will need to deliver ONE presentation, where you will defend your research proposal. Presentations will take place on October 27 and November 3.

Your presentation should provide an overview of your proposed research project. As such, it should include:

- a background section which clearly specifies how your research fits in with the existing literature and what your research questions and/or hypotheses will be (i.e., why carry out the research);
- your proposed methodology and plan for analysis (i.e., how to carry out the research?); and
- what your findings may be, including a discussion of the implications of such findings.

Your total talk time will be 15 minutes, at the end of which questions will be asked by the instructor and other students. You should incorporate any feedback received into the final draft of your research proposal (this is due on November 6; see below). You should use PowerPoint for your presentation and may use handouts to distribute to the audience if you wish, although this is not required (handouts may consist of your PowerPoint slides and/or additional materials). Your instructor can make copies for you if needed (just be sure to provide enough notice). Try to limit your presentation to no more than 15 slides, including the title slide (about one slide per minute). An assessment rubric will be provided closer to the time of the presentations.

Your PowerPoint presentation should be submitted through Turnitin on the date you are scheduled to deliver your presentation, no later than 10am on the date you're scheduled to present – PLEASE NOTE IT IS THIS VERSION OF THE POWERPOINT FILE YOU WILL HAVE TO USE DURING YOUR PRESENTATION.

As with exams, no-shows on the date of your scheduled presentation will automatically yield a ZERO grade and you will NOT be allowed to reschedule. Again, this penalty may be waived but only when exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated (see above).

You will be assessed while you are giving your presentation and you will receive formal feedback (in the form of a grading sheet, and in addition to the feedback provided verbally, during the presentation session) within a week of your presentation. Your presentation will contribute 15% to your final grade.

Research Proposal

You will need to write ONE research proposal, which is due on November 24.

Your proposal should be between 3,500 and 5,000 words in length (exc. footnotes, reference list and appendices). Proposals falling outside these parameters will have points deducted.

The overall structure of your proposal should be in line with that suggested for your presentation (see above). However, depending on the nature of your proposed research study, different

specific sections/information may need to be included. Expectations regarding the content of your proposal will be discussed throughout the semester, and an assessment rubric will also be provided. You should also make use of your instructor's office hours, where you can discuss your own proposal on a one-to-one basis.

Research proposal topics (including specific research questions to be answered by the proposed research) will need to be proposed no later than September 8 (when your first annotated bibliography is due) and officially approved by the instructor no later than September 22. If you fail to meet EITHER of these two deadlines, 10% will be deducted from your research proposal final grade.

Make sure you include page numbers and your student number in every page of your proposal (e.g., as a header/footer). Please use standard margins (one inch), double spacing and Times New Roman 12pt font. There is no need to include a cover page or a table of contents.

Your research proposal should be submitted by November 24 at 10am through Turnitin.

Any proposals uploaded later than the date and time specified will receive a ZERO grade. Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances (see above) and evidence of these will be required.

Your research proposal will contribute 25% to your final grade.

You will receive a grade and formal feedback for your proposal within 2-3 weeks of the submission deadline.

Proposals that are indicative of plagiarism (or any other form of violation of the Honor Code) will be investigated as per procedure, and penalties applied if appropriate (see [Texas State University's Honor Code](#) and University related Policies section below).

Exams

There will be TWO exams, on Tuesday October 6, and on Tuesday December 8. The first exam will cover the material cover up until the date of the exam; the second exam will cover all the material covered in the course. Both will take place in a computer lab (i.e., you will type in, rather than hand-write your answers; room number TBC). The exam will be closed-book, but you can bring in with you a printed letter-sized "cheat sheet" which you would have created and which may be double-sided. Access to the internet or any materials outside of your cheat sheet is strictly prohibited; any students who are caught doing this will be the subject of an Honor Code violation investigation.

The exams will be similar to the comprehensive exam for this course, with two questions of which you will answer one. You will have TWO HOURS to answer the exam question.

Late arrivals and no-shows on the date of your exam will automatically receive a ZERO grade and you will NOT be allowed a retake. This penalty may be waived but only when exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Exceptional circumstances include sudden illness or an accident. Delays in getting to campus due to heavy traffic, an alarm not going off and the like DO NOT constitute exceptional circumstances. If you want to request a penalty waiver, you should email the instructor outlining the extenuating circumstances that apply in your case at your earliest opportunity, and provide her with evidence of such circumstances as requested.

You will receive a grade and formal feedback for your proposal within two weeks of the submission deadline.

Your first exam will contribute 20% to your final grade, and your second (final) exam 30%.

HOW TO USE TURNITIN

If you don't have a Turnitin account yet, you will need to create one. To do this:

1. Go to www.turnitin.com.
2. Click on **Create Account** at the top of the page.
3. Click on **Student**.
4. Fill in all the fields. Enter the Class ID and class enrollment password as provided by your instructor (see below).
5. You should now see this class listed under the 'All Classes' tab.
6. Click on the class title to access the assignments list.
7. Click on the Submit button next to the relevant assignment to upload your essay (remember to select the 'Upload single file' from the drop-down menu).

If you already have a Turnitin account:

1. Log into www.turnitin.com.
2. Click on the "enroll in a Class" tab.
3. Enter the Class ID and class enrollment password as provided by your instructor (see below).
4. You should now see this class listed under the 'All Classes' tab.
5. Click on the class title to access the assignments list.
6. Click on the Submit button next to the relevant assignment to upload your essay (remember to select the 'Upload single file' from the drop-down menu).

The Class ID and enrollment key for this course are:

Class ID: 10295745
Class enrollment key: CJ7320LS

More details can be found on <http://www.its.txstate.edu/departments/etc/turnitin.html>.

READING REQUIREMENTS

The main textbooks for this course are:

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods, 4th ed.* New York: Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 978-0-19-958805-3.

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference.* Houghton Mifflin Co.
ISBN: 978-0-395-61556-0.

If you have other research methods texts that you prefer to use instead, that is fine, as long as they cover the same topic at the same depth.

Additional readings are listed on the Class Schedule (see below). You are also required to identify and read additional material relating to the topic that you choose for your research proposal; evidence of wider reading will be one of the assessment criteria.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Wk	Date	Class topic	To be completed BEFORE class (Additional readings may be assigned by instructor)	Important dates
1	Aug 25	Introduction to the course Getting Started with Research: Literature Searches/Reviews and Research Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 1 – The nature and process of social research ▪ Bryman Ch. 4 – Planning a research project and formulating research questions ▪ Bryman Ch. 5 – Getting started: Reviewing the literature ▪ Holbrook, A., Bourke, S., Fairbairn, H., & Lovat, T. (2007). Examiner comment on the literature review in Ph.D. theses. <i>Studies in Higher Education</i>, 32(3), 337-356. ▪ Walker, J. (1998). The role of the literature review in publication. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice Education</i>, 9(2):iii-vi. 	
2	Sep 1	Theories, Epistemologies, and Designs in Quantitative Research Ethical Principles in Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 2 – Social research strategies ▪ Bryman Ch. 3 – Research Designs ▪ Bryman Ch. 6 – Ethics and politics in social research ▪ Asscher, J. J., Deković, M., Manders, W., van der Laan, P. H., Prins, P. J. & van Arum, S. (2014). Sustainability of the effects of multisystemic therapy for juvenile delinquents in The Netherlands: Effects on delinquency and recidivism. <i>Journal of Experimental Criminology</i>, 10(2), 227-243. 	<p>SEP 1, 10AM CITI training completed Submit completion certificate via Turnitin</p>
3	Sep 8	Conceptualization and Measurement Measurement Validity Internal Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 7 – The nature of quantitative research ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 2 – Statistical conclusion validity and internal validity ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 3 – Construct validity and external validity (pp. 64-82 only) ▪ Hinkle, J. C. (2015). Emotional fear of crime vs. perceived safety and risk: Implications for measuring “fear” and testing the broken windows thesis. <i>American Journal of Criminal Justice</i>, 40(1), 147-168. 	<p>Sep 10th official 12th day of class – withdraw with full refund</p> <p>SEP 8, 10AM Briefly annotated bibliography (10+ sources), background section outline, and research question(s) for proposal Submit via Turnitin</p>

Wk	Date	Class topic	To be completed BEFORE class (Additional readings may be assigned by instructor)	Important dates
4	Sep 15	External Validity Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 8 – Sampling ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 3 – Construct validity and external validity (pp. 83-102 only) ▪ Bureau of Justice Statistics (n.d.). <i>Survey methodology for criminal victimization in the United States</i>. Last accessed August 15, 2014, from www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs_methodology.pdf ▪ Wiecko, F. M. (2010). Research Note: Assessing the validity of college samples: Are students really that different? <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i>, 38(6), 1186-1190. 	<p>SEP 15, 10AM</p> <p>Updated briefly annotated bibliography (20+ sources), background section outline, and research question(s) for proposal + Notes on methodology</p> <p>Submit via Turnitin</p>
5	Sep 22	Survey Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 9 – Structured interviewing ▪ Bryman Ch. 10 – Self-completion questionnaires ▪ Bryman Ch. 11 – Asking questions ▪ Bryman Ch. 28 – E-research (pp. 670-680 only) ▪ Baker, T., Gordon, J. A., & Taxman, F. S. (2014). A Hierarchical Analysis of Correctional Officers' Procedural Justice Judgments of Correctional Institutions: Examining the Influence of Transformational Leadership. <i>Justice Quarterly</i>, Latest Articles. ▪ Bryman Ch. 15 – Quantitative data analysis ▪ Covey, H. C., Menard, S., & Franzese, R. J. (2013). Effects of adolescent physical abuse, exposure to neighborhood violence, and witnessing parental violence on adult socioeconomic status. <i>Child maltreatment</i>, Online Before Print. 	<p>NO LATER THAN SEP 22</p> <p>Research proposal topic approved by instructor</p> <p>FRIDAY SEP 25, 10AM</p> <p>Draft background section</p> <p>Submit via Turnitin and email copy to your peer</p>
6	Sep 29	Secondary Data Research PEER ASSESSMENT: Background section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 13 – Content analysis ▪ Bryman Ch. 14 – Secondary analysis and official statistics ▪ Explore the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data website (www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NACJD) ▪ Read your peer's background section and note feedback 	
7	Oct 6	EXAM 1		

Wk	Date	Class topic	To be completed BEFORE class (Additional readings may be assigned by instructor)	Important dates
8	Oct 13	Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, and Non-Experimental Designs, Evaluation Research PART 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 1 – Experiments and generalized causal inference ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 4 – Quasi-experimental designs that either lack a control group or lack pretest observations on the outcome ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 5 – Quasi-experimental designs that use both control groups and pretests ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 8 – Randomized experiments: Rationale, designs, and conditions conducive to doing them ▪ Pawson, R. & Tilley, N. (2004). Realistic evaluation. Last accessed August 15, 2014, from www.communitymatters.com.au/RE_chapter.pdf 	FRIDAY OCT 15, 10AM Draft methodology section Submit via Turnitin
9	Oct 20	Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, and Non-Experimental Designs, Evaluation Research PART 2 PEER ASSESSMENT: Methodology section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shadish et al. Ch. 6 – Quasi-experiments: Interrupted time-series designs ▪ McDowall, D., & McCleary, R. (2014). Interrupted time series models. <i>Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice</i>, 2653-2665. ▪ Shadish et al. Ch.7 – Regression discontinuity ▪ Lipsey, M., Petrie, C., Weisburd, D., & Gottfredson, D. (2006). Improving evaluation of anti-crime programs: Summary of a National Research Council report. <i>Journal of Experimental Criminology</i>, 2(3), 271-307.* ▪ Read your peer's methodology section and note feedback 	Oct 25 th last day to drop class (automatic W deadline)
10	Oct 27	PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS		OCT 27, 10AM Presentation slides Submit PowerPoint file via Turnitin (Group 1)

(*) Other articles within this issue may also be of interest.

Wk	Date	Class topic	To be completed BEFORE class (Additional readings may be assigned by instructor)	Important dates
11	Nov 3	PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS		<p>NOV 3, 10AM</p> <p>Presentation slides</p> <p>Submit PowerPoint file via Turnitin (Group 2)</p> <p>FRIDAY NOV 6, 10AM</p> <p>Draft full proposal DUE</p> <p>Submit via Turnitin and email copy to your peer</p>
12	Nov 10	PEER ASSESSMENT: Background and methodology sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read your peer's draft proposal and note feedback 	
13	Nov 17	NO CLASS		Nov 19 th last day to go to zero hours enrolled
14	Nov 24	Writing Up and Publishing Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bryman Ch. 29 – Writing up social research ▪ Editor's Corner in <i>Criminologist</i> 	<p>NOV 24, 10AM</p> <p>Proposal</p> <p>Submit via Turnitin and bring printed copy to class</p>
15	Dec 1	Exam Review and Q&A Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attempt previous methods comprehensive exam questions (available online from: www.cj.txstate.edu/degrees-programs/doctoral/current_students.html) 	
16	Dec 8	EXAM 2		

COURSE RELATED POLICIES

Attendance and Participation

Students will be required to sign a register at the start of each class. Attendance and punctuality are required. Please do not come in late or leave early as this can be distracting to others.

Technology / Electronic Devices

The use of certain electronic devices is allowed during class, as long as they are being used towards the aims of the course. In other words, you are allowed to use your laptop or iPad to take or access notes, or to perform certain class exercises; you are not permitted to use electronic devices for non-educational purposes (e.g., checking your text messages, playing solitaire). Penalties may be applied if you are caught engaging in this type of behavior, as doing so distracts others. The use of digital recorders may be allowed by arrangement. Students with disabilities will also be able to use specialized equipment by arrangement (more details on this later).

Office Hours

Office hours are available for you to address questions, concerns, and any issues you may wish to discuss about the course. Please do not hesitate to take advantage of this time, especially if you are experiencing difficulties with the course. The sooner we address a problem, the more likely we are to resolve it favorably. If you are unable to meet during the office hours for any reason, please contact me to arrange an appointment outside these hours.

During office hours, I will be in my office and happy to welcome drop-ins, but students who have previously made an appointment will have priority. Outside office hours, I will only see students by prior arrangement.

There is a 24-hour cancellation policy for all appointments. If you make an appointment and fail to turn up, or if you cancel with less than 24 hours' notice for no legitimate reason, this will be recorded. After two such incidences, you will be unable to make any further appointments. You will, however, still be able to drop in during office hours.

If you have any questions about the content or administration of the course, and this can be addressed through email, please consider posting a message in one of the course forums, so that other students can benefit from any resulting discussion.

Contact

Email is the best way to get in touch with either of us as we are not always on campus or available by phone. As a general rule, we will respond to emails within 1-2 business days; if for whatever reason we have no access to email for more than a couple of days, we will let you know in advance.

If you have any questions about the content or administration of the course, and this can be addressed through email, please consider posting a message through TRACS, so that other students can benefit from any resulting discussion.

I often email students with important information, or make announcements through TRACS, which automatically get sent to your TX State email account. It is your responsibility to ensure you regularly check your TX State email account.

UNIVERSITY RELATED POLICIES

Academic Honesty Policy

Submission of any work for a grade for which unauthorized help has been received is termed academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a failing grade in the course. "Unauthorized" is a term used here to designate stealing, copying (with or without permission), or collaboration with other individuals. Students are strongly encouraged to refer to the Texas State student handbook for policies related to academic dishonesty. These policies may be found at <http://www.dos.txstate.edu/handbook/rules.html> .

Honor Code

(<http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps - 07- 10 - 01.html> under attachment I)

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our university live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS. We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

WE ARE RESPECTFUL. We act civilly toward one another and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

WE ARE HONEST. We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

THE PLEDGE FOR STUDENTS. Students at our university recognize that, to insure honest conduct, more is needed than an expectation of academic honesty, and we therefore adopt the practice of affixing the following pledge of honesty to the work we submit for evaluation:

I pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.

THE PLEDGE FOR FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION. Faculty at our university recognize that the students have rights when accused of academic dishonesty and will inform the accused of their rights of appeal laid out in the student handbook and inform them of the process that will take place:

I recognize students' rights and pledge to uphold the principles of honesty and responsibility at our university.

ADDRESSING ACTS OF DISHONESTY. Students accused of dishonest conduct may have their cases heard by the faculty member. The student may also appeal the faculty member's decision to the Honor Code Council. Students and faculty will have the option of having an advocate present to insure their rights. Possible actions that may be taken range from exoneration to expulsion.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may require accommodations to participate in the course. They must contact the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. They will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at that time. Failure to contact the instructor in a timely manner will delay any accommodations they may be seeking. Ongoing care by a physician does not automatically qualify you as an ODS special needs student. Students are required to file paperwork for accommodations with ODS each semester. Accommodations granted one semester do not automatically carry forward to the next.

This syllabus is tentative and may change due to unforeseen circumstances. The best way to stay informed is to check your TX State email, the TRACS site for this class, and to attend class. If there are any changes to the syllabus, the instructor will notify you in class and upload an updated copy to TRACS. Please note that losing your syllabus does not constitute an excuse for missing assignments or noncompliance with course policies.