

POLS 3700 CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH METHODS

Fall 2026

Course Meeting Times

Class Meeting Time: MW: 1:15pm-2:35

Class Meeting Location: Baldwin Hall, rm 104

Instructor Information

Instructor: Professor Susan Haire

Email: cmshaire@uga.edu

Phone: 706-542-2057

Office Hours: M: 11:15-12:00 W: 2:45-3:45pm Baldwin Hall, rm 180

Website: <https://spia.uga.edu/faculty-member/susan-b-haire/>

Also available virtually and by appointment. Emails will be returned as soon as possible, typically within 24 hours during the week (M-F).

Course Description & Details

Fundamental principles of social science research and related research design. Structured to develop students' abilities to think clearly, critically, and logically about social science issues through the scientific evaluation of empirical issues and evidence.

COURSE-LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course:

- Students will be familiar with the basic methods used in empirical analyses of political and social phenomena related to the field of criminal justice.
- Students will be familiar with peer reviewed processes for scientific research and be able to identify credible data sources for inquiry.
- Students will have designed a research project to address an inquiry related to criminal justice.
- Students will have executed an original data analysis to test a hypothesis and include a write up of the results.
- Students will have a basic understanding of statistical software applications for the analysis of social scientific data.

COURSE TOPICS

- 1. Course introduction
- 2. Theory and criminal justice inquiry
- 3. Formulating hypotheses & general issues in research design
- 4. Ethical issues in criminal justice research
- 5. Evaluating causal relationships
- 6. Concepts, operationalization, and measurement
- 7. Sampling
- 8. Experimental & quasi-experimental designs
- 9. Survey research
- 10. Agency records & content analysis
- 11. Comparative method & secondary data
- 12. Data analysis & interpretation

TEXTBOOK

Required Reading and Software

Bachmann, Ronet and Russell K. Schutt. 2024. *The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*. 8th ed. (Sage Publications). There is a very helpful web site associated with this text: edge.sagepub.com/bachmanprccj8e. You are free to purchase earlier editions (the 7th edition or 6th edition) but you will be responsible for making sure that your reading in the earlier edition lines up with the 8th edition (I'll provide a table of contents for the 8th edition for you to compare).

Additional readings and materials will be uploaded to ELC.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

This course will also require that you learn how to use a statistical software program, SPSS, available for free through EITS' "VLAB". More information on what you need to do to download and access VLAB and SPSS can be found here: <https://eits.uga.edu/support/vlab/>

SPSS is also available for purchase or lease through various web sites; if you purchase or lease it yourself, you are able to download the software for personalized use. Some students may find the convenience worth the additional cost--you can get a 12-month rental from OntheHub or another IBM vendor for appr. \$40.

Additional readings and materials will be uploaded to ELC.

Assessment and Grading

Tests (50%) You will have four tests that will be conducted “in person.” The first test and last test are each worth 10%; the second and third tests are each worth 15%. All exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. For each test, I will allow each student to bring in a single page of notes that they have written (in their own hand).

Class participation (10%). In-class participation counts for 10% of your participation grade. All students should be prepared to discuss the assigned material. In addition, students will be asked to participate in class on exercises designed to apply your concepts from the readings. I will not grade these “exercises” but completion of them represents half of your class participation grade. The other half of your participation grade reflects on your attending, and participating in class.

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I would like to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

If you experience a severe illness or you are dealing with a chronic sickness or other extenuating circumstance that is affecting your academic attendance, please contact me and Student Care and Outreach: <https://sco.uga.edu/> via email so that we can work out an accommodation.

Out-of-class graded assignments (40%)

More details on each assignment below will be available on ELC.

Annotated reference list assignment - (10%)

Article summary and critique – (10%)

Data analysis paper assignment - (20%)

MISSED EXAMS & LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students with medical emergencies may schedule a make-up test or submit a late assignment; however, you must contact me prior to the due date (or test date) and may need to provide evidence that you were ill on that date. Late assignments may also be accepted under other circumstances, provided a student has contacted the instructor prior to the due date. Late assignments incur grading penalties that are commensurate with the degree to which the submission is late. If you experience a severe illness or you are dealing with a chronic sickness or other extenuating circumstances that is affecting your academic performance (including attendance), please contact me and Student Care & Outreach (sco@uga.edu) so that we can work on an accommodation.

FINAL GRADES

92.5-100: A

89.5-92.49: A-

87.5-89.49: B+

82.5-87.49: B
79.5-82.49: B-
76.5-79.49: C+
70-76.49: C
60-69: D
Below 60: F

Course Statements & Policies

UGA HONOR CODE

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu. Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

Accessibility & Class Recordings

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the *Accessibility & Testing*. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <https://accessibility.uga.edu/>.

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Accessibility & Testing center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws."

USE OF AI IN THIS COURSE

Unless expressly authorized in assignment directions, the use of artificial intelligence (or word mixing software for the purpose of disguising plagiarized work) is considered unauthorized assistance in this course.

Use of AI tools has become an issue in higher education as well as the legal profession; we'll discuss these issues over the course of the semester. For our purposes, we will use AI for a specific assignment where it augments, rather than replaces, your skills. You should always be aware of the limitations of (G)AI tools. For example, AI may be inaccurate and/or biased. To gain a deeper understanding of GAI tools, you should explore the following resources:

Introduction to Generative AI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IK3DFHRFfw>

UGA LibGuide on Generative AI

<https://guides.libs.uga.edu/ai>

UGA WELL-BEING RESOURCES

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the [Embark@UGA](https://embark.uga.edu) program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Accessibility & Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting well-being.uga.edu.

STUDENT SUCCESS RESOURCES

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey. Through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support, we promote well-being, student learning, and community building. To connect with OSSA,

email ossa@uga.edu, call (706) 542-0163, or visit Milledge Hall (near Reed Hall and Sanford Stadium).

DISCLAIMER

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Course Schedule & Activities

A detailed list of assignments and due dates will be available on ELC and updated regularly over the course of the semester.