**Course Syllabus**

**SOC 311 – *Sociological Research Methods* (3 credits)**

**(Asynchronous, online, 12 week course)**

Summer Syllabus

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| **Catalog Description for SOC 311:** Covers methods sociologists use to conduct empirically grounded and theoretically engaged research. Examines research design, the role of theory, ethics, and multiple methods for gathering data. Pre: SOC 100 or 105.  Access to course materials is provided via CSU’s Canvas online course management platform.  As this is a 100% online (virtual, asynchronous course), students must have reliable personal access to a laptop or PC, a stable internet connection, and be able to log in and access the CSU Canvas site and other CSU websites. |

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| **Course Overview:** Research influences every facet of human life. Understanding how to conduct good research and seeing how research impacts our world are critically important skills for life and career. This course will introduce you to social science research methods, with special emphasis on engaging in good research in sociology, criminal justice, and criminology. We will begin by discussing why research matters and then look at what distinguishes good from bad research. Throughout the semester we will explore specific types of research methods and you will gain experience developing a research proposal. The goal is that you leave this course more knowledgeable about the basic theory and methods behind conducting social science research, with a clearer vision for how to leverage different research methods to understand our world and be a more engaged citizen. |

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| **Instructor Information:**  Chris Moloney, PhD  LinkedIn Profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chris-moloney/>  Email: Please use the Canvas email system or if needed please contact me via one of the following emails: [Moloney.christopher.j@gmail.com](mailto:Moloney.christopher.j@gmail.com) or [chris.moloney@colostate.edu](mailto:chris.moloney@colostate.edu) |

**Course Textbook and Readings:**

1. **Primary Text: *Applied Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology, 1st Ed.*** <https://www.amazon.com/Applied-Research-Methods-Criminal-Criminology/dp/0078026415>
   1. **ISBN-10**: 0078026415 / **ISBN-13**: 978-0078026416
   2. **Authors:** Fritsch, Trulson, Blackburn
   3. **Publisher:** McGraw-Hill Education
   4. Assigned sections or chapters from this text will be noted in the syllabus and in each module of our online course.
2. **Supporting Readings:** Other assigned readings will be noted in the syllabus and in each module of our online course. These will be availble in PDF format online via our course website.

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| **Assignment** | **Details** | **Grading** |
| **Online Discussions** | We will have 5 online discussion boards.  Students must post at least 1 question and respond to at least 1 other student’s post to earn full credit. | **50 points total**  (10 points per discussion, 5 points for posting, 5 points for responding). |
| **Exam** | We will have one final exam, at the end of the semester (end of week 12). | **200 points total**  (Open notes and open books / module powerpoints etc.) |
| **Research proposal project** | Beginning at the end of week 2, students will submit specific elements that, cumulatively, will enable them to craft a research proposal by the end of the semester. | **100 points total**   1. **10 pts** – Research Topic – Mod 1 2. **15 pts** – Research Questions – Mod 2 3. **15 pts** – Research Population & Data Info – Mod 3      1. **20 pts** – Lit Review – Mod 4 2. **10 pts** – Research method summary – Mod 5 3. **30 pts** – Final research proposal outline – due end of semester using TEMPLATE provided. |
| **TOTAL** | **XXX** | **350 POINTS** |

**SOC 311 Course Final Grading Scheme:**

* **321 points and above = A**
* **314 to 320 points = A-**
* **304 to 313 points = B+**
* **281 to 303 = B**
* **279 to 280 = B-**
* **270 to 278 = C+**
* **251 to 269 = C**
* **244 to 250 = C-**
* **243 to 209 = D**
* **Below 243 points = F**

**Extra Credit Policy:** No extra credit is available in this course.

**Late Assignments**: Credit will be deducted on assignments delivered more than two days past the due date. Assignments late longer than 10 days will not be accepted unless special documented circumstances exist.

**Academic Integrity Statemen**t: Students are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Student Code of Conduct for CSU. I expect you to behave with integrity and hold both yourself and your peers to the highest standards of ethical behavior. Academic dishonesty encompasses, but is not limited to: (1) plagiarism (i.e., copying another individual’s words or ideas without appropriately citing the source); (2) turning in assignments that somebody else has completed; (3) referring to notes or other written/electronic materials, collaborating with others, copying someone else’s work, or providing answers to others in any fashion during an examination. Please note that knowledge of others’ cheating and failure to report this to me can also be construed as complicity in academic dishonesty.

Should I have reason to suspect that academic dishonesty has occurred, I will conduct a thorough investigation or may refer the matter to the Director of Student Conduct for investigation. Possible sanctions should you be found responsible for academic dishonesty could include a failing grade for the course, suspension or even expulsion from the University. Such consequences could negatively affect your candidacy for graduate/professional programs or for some jobs.

**Accommodation/access statement:** Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the University Disability Services Office.

**Advising Statement**: Advising is designed to help students complete the requirements of the university and their individual majors. Students should consult with their advisor at least once a semester to decide on courses, check progress towards graduation, and discuss career options and other educational opportunities provided by CSU. Advising is a shared responsibility, but students have final responsibility for meeting degree requirements.

**SOC 311 Course Calendar:**

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| **Module / Timing** | **Topics and Readings** | **Assignment Details** |
| **Module 1 - Weeks 1 and 2:**  (May 14 – 27) | **Course intro and major topics:**   * The purpose and role of research, i.e. “to what end?” * Defining research problems and goals. * Who or what might we study? * Quick overview of the research process.   Review Chapter 1 and 2 of *Applied Research Methods.* Take note of blue box examples and orient to material. | * **End of Week 2** – Submit your Research Topic Area – **10pts** * **End of Week 2 – Complete Discussion board #1 -** **10 pts** |
| **Module 2 - Weeks 3 and 4:**  (May 28 – June 10) | **Major Topics:**   * Foundations of applied research design. * What is data – and where do we find it? * Research ethics and considerations   Read the online article:   * “On Being Sane in Insane Places” available on the course site. | * **End of Week 4** – Submit 2 or 3 focused research questions within your topic area and identify 1 or 2 possible ethical concerns or issues – **15pts** * **End of Week 4 completed discussion board #2 – 10 pts** |
| **Module 3 - Week 5 and 6**:  (June 11 – 24) | **Major Topics:**   * Focusing on your population of interest and the “right” data. * How to conduct a lit review?   Read the two online articles:   * “Bad Social Science” * “F\*ck Ups in Social Research” available on the course website. | * **End of Week 6:** Identify the research population and data you need to access answer your research questions – **15pts** * Begin your mini-literature review which is due end of week 8. Focus on the following:   + #1 Locate 8-10 already published articles using Google Scholar or the UH library website that relate closely to your chosen topic area.   + #2 For each publication, identify the major research question or focus, the research methods and the main results or conclusions.   + #Please record the title, author, and year each article was published. |
| **Module 4- Weeks 7 and 8:**  (June 25 – July 8) | **Major Topics:**   * **Intro to Quantitative Research and Data** * What’s the value of quantitative research and data? * Quick primer on statistics * What are surveys and sampling?   Review Ch. 3, 4 and 9 in *Applied Research Methods.* Take note of blue box examples and orient to the material. | * **End Week 10: Submit your mini-literature review using template provided on Canvas** and answers these questions:      1. How did your research focus or questions change?   2. Did you find a new gap or need to be addressed? – **20 pts**   * **Complete discussion board #3** – **10pts** |
| **Module 5 - Weeks 9 and 10**  (July 9 – 22) | **Major Topics:**   1. **Intro to Qualitative Research and Data**  * What’s the value of qualitative research and data? * What are interviews, focus groups, and coding?   Read Ch. 6 and Ch. 7 in *Applied Research Methods* | * Prepare for delivery of your completed research project outline document (due in **Week 12** and your final exam which takes place at the end of **week 12**). * **End Week 10**: Provide a 1-page summary of the research methods most appropriate to answering your research questions details – **10pts** * **End of Week 10 -Complete discussion board #4** – **10pts** |
| **Module 6 - Weeks 11 -12**  (July 23 – August 6) | **Major Topics**:   * The value of mixed methods research * Exploratory research and policy analysis * Linking research, theory, policy, and practice * Examples and reviews of good-applied research in CJ * Disseminating research – what do you when it’s done? * Cutting edge research in criminal justice – what’s new in forensics and crime scene investigation?   Review Ch. 8 from *Applied Research Methods.* Note blue box examples and orient to material.  Read these online articles:   * “Crime and Criminal Justice…Applied Research” by Potter available on course website * Read “Mixed Methods in CJ and Crim” by Wilkes, Johnson, etc. available on course website | * **End of week 12 -Complete discussion board #5 –** **10pts** * **Submit Research proposal using TEMPLATE provided -** **30 pts** * **COMPLETE FINAL EXAM – 200 pts** (open book and open notes) |