

Syllabus

Course Overview

This course is an introduction to criminal justice research methods and resources used by law enforcement to assist in understanding how to track crime and criminal trends. Professionals preparing for a career in the criminal justice system should have an understanding of the impact and extensive use of criminal justice data collected by federal criminal justice agencies and private entities and the social and economic impact this data has on the United States and its citizens. You should also understand how to properly communicate the findings of criminal justice research and data so that it may be properly applied to a criminal justice research project. Additionally, this course provides a new perspective on the annually changing data involved in criminal justice research.

Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- 2 Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- 3 Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- 4 Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- 5 Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
- 6 Communicate effectively in writing.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Syllabus >> Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Integrated Materials

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the [Course Materials](#) page on Campus for more information.

Book

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 9781506359571.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Films for Humanities and Sciences (Producer). (2015). *Internet research: What's credible?* [Video]. Films on Demand.
- Hernon, P., & Schwartz, C. (2007). *What is a problem statement?* *Library and Information Science Research*, 29(3), 307–309.
- Mosher, C. J., Miethe, T. D., & Hart, T. C. (2011). *The mismeasure of crime* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Padfield, N., & Maruna, S. (2006). *The revolving door at the prison gate: Exploring the dramatic increase in recalls to prison*. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 6(3), 329–352.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences](http://www.acjs.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.acjs.org/>
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). [Key facts at a glance](http://www.bjs.gov/glance_redirect.cfm). Retrieved from http://www.bjs.gov/glance_redirect.cfm
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). [National crime victimization survey](http://www.bjs.gov/developer/ncvs/index.cfm). Retrieved from <http://www.bjs.gov/developer/ncvs/index.cfm>
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). [Uniform crime reports](https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s). Retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s>
- Homeland Security Digital Library. (n.d.). [ADAM II: 2008 annual report](https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=36255). Retrieved from <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=36255>
- Lodz Children Project. (2010). *Children of the Lodz ghetto—A memorial research project* [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEDIOoIEYbU>
- OJP National Institute of Justice. (2012). *Action research and the community to criminal justice feedback loop. Edward Davis* [Video]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu4sSM0xOII>
- Sage Publications. (2009). *David Morgan on research methods* [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzkmPLMUv9o&feature=related>

- Satlin, A. H. (2013, February 4). Mental illness soars in prisons, jails while inmates suffer. Huffington Post. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/04/mental-illness-prisons-jails-inmates_n_2610062.html
- Zendechnam, S. (2015, March 31). Mesa County agencies work to improve criminal justice system. KCCO 11 News. Retrieved from <http://www.nbc11news.com/home/headlines/Mesa-County-agencies-work-to-improve-criminal-justice-system-298070531.html>

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Library

The following suggested readings may be available in the Capella University Library. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool. If the full text is not available, you may be able to request a copy through the Interlibrary Loan service.

- Aldred, R. (2008). Ethical and political issues in contemporary research relationships. *Sociology*, 42(5), 887–903.
- Barbrey, J. W. (2004). Measuring the effectiveness of crime control policies in Knoxville's public housing: Using mapping software to filter Part I crime data. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 20(1), 6–32.
- Bridges, A.J., Wosnitzer, R., Scharrer, E., Sun, C., and Liberman, R. (2010). Aggression and sexual behavior in best-selling pornography videos: A content analysis update. *Violence Against Women*, 16(10), 1065–1085.
- Broidy, L. M., Daday, J. K., Crandall, C. S., Sklar, D. P., & Jost, P.F. (2006). Exploring demographic, structural, and behavioral overlap among homicide offenders and victims. *Homicide Studies*, 10(3), 155–180.
- Brown, B., & Benedict, W. R. (2004). Bullets, blades, and being afraid in Hispanic high schools: An exploratory study of the presence of weapons and fear of weapon-associated victimization among high school students in a border town. *Crime & Delinquency*, 50(3), 372–394.
- Chang, J., & Le, T. N. (2005). The influence of parents, peer delinquency, and school attitudes on academic achievement in Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian or Mien, and Vietnamese youth. *Crime & Delinquency*, 51(2), 238–264.
- Cochran, J. C., & Warren, P. Y. (2012). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in perceptions of the police: The salience of officer race within the context of racial profiling. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 28(2), 206–227.
- Crawley, E. and Sparks, R. (2006). Is there life after imprisonment? How elderly men talk about imprisonment and release. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 6(1), 63–82.
- Dignan, J., Atkinson, A., Atkinson, H., Howes, M., Johnstone, J., Robinson, G., ... Sorsby, A. (2007). Staging restorative justice encounters against a criminal justice backdrop: A dramaturgical analysis. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 7(1), 5–32.
- Felson, R. B., Teasdale, B., & Burchfield, K. B. (2008). The influence of being under the influence: Alcohol effects on adolescent violence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(2), 119–141.
- Giblin, M. J. (2002). Using police officers to enhance the supervision of juvenile probationers: An evaluation of the Anchorage CAN program. *Crime & Delinquency*, 48(1), 116–137.
- Gizzi, M. C., & Gerkin, P. (2010). Methamphetamine use and criminal behavior. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 54(6), 915–936.
- Gore, R. Z., & Pattavina, A. (2004). Applications for examining the journey-to-crime using incident-based offender residence probability surfaces. *Police Quarterly*, 7(4), 457–474.
- Gottfredson, D. C., & Soulé, D. A. (2005). The timing of property crime, violent crime, and substance use among juveniles. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 42(1), 1110–1120.
- Green, J. (2010). Points of intersection between randomized experiments and quasi-experiments. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 628(1), 97–111.
- Hall, E. A., Prendergast, M. L., Wellisch, J., Patten, M., & Cao, Y. (2004). Treating drug-abusing women prisoners: An outcomes evaluation of the forever free program. *Prison Journal*, 84(1), 81–105.
- Halsey, M. J. (2006). Negotiating conditional release: Juvenile narratives of repeat incarceration. *Punishment & Society*, 8(2), 147–181.
- Hartley, R. D., & Miller, J. M. (2010). Crack-ing the media myth: Reconsidering sentencing severity for cocaine offenders by drug type. *Criminal Justice Review*, 35(1), 67–89.
- Hendricks, B., Werner, T., Shipway, L., & Turinetti, G. J. (2006). Recidivism among spousal abusers: Predictions and program evaluation. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21(6), 703–716.
- Kazemian, L., & Farrington, D. P. (2006). Exploring residual career length and residual number of offenses for two generations of repeat offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 43(1), 89–113.
- Klevens, J., Baker, C. K., Shelley, G.A., & Ingram, E. M. (2008). Exploring the links between components of coordinated community responses and their impact on contact with intimate partner violence services. *Violence Against Women*, 14(3), 346–358.
- Lambert, E. G., & Paoline, E. A. (2008). The influence of individual, job, and organizational characteristics on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. *Criminal Justice Review*, 33(4), 541–564.
- Leiber, M. J., & Peck, J. H. (2012). Race, gender, crime severity, and decision making in the juvenile justice system. *Crime & Delinquency*, 61(6), 771–797.

- Miller, H.V., Tillyer, R., and Miller, J.M. (2012). Recognizing the Need for Prisoner Input in Correctional Research: Observations from an In-Prison Driving While Intoxicated Reduction Program Evaluation. *The Prison Journal*, 92(2) 274-289.
- Morabito, M. S. (2010). Understanding community policing as an innovation: Patterns of adoption. *Crime & Delinquency*, 56(4), 564–587.
- Mullany, J. M., & Peat, B. (2008). Process evaluation of a county drug court: An analysis of descriptors, compliance and outcome—answering some questions while raising others. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 19(4), 491–508.
- Schwalbe, C. S. (2012). Toward an integrated theory of probation. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(2), 185–201.
- Silver, E., Felson, R. B., & Vaneseltine, M. (2008). The relationship between mental health problems and violence among criminal offenders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(4), 405–426.
- Smith, P., & Smith, W. A. (2005). Experiencing community through the eyes of young female offenders. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 21(4), 364–385.
- Sung, H. (2006). Structural determinants of police effectiveness in market democracies. *Police Quarterly*, 9(1), 3–19.
- Tankebe, J. (2008). Police effectiveness and police trustworthiness in Ghana: An empirical appraisal. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 8(2), 185–202.
- Tewksbury, R., & Mustaine, E. E. (2005). Insiders' views of prison amenities: Beliefs and perceptions of correctional staff members. *Criminal Justice Review*, 30(2), 174–188.
- Watkins, A. M., & Melde, C. (2007). The effect of self-control on unit and item nonresponse in an adolescent sample. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 44(3), 267–294.
- Wyant, B. R. (2008). Multilevel impacts of perceived incivilities and perceptions of crime risk on fear of crime: Isolating endogenous impacts. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(1), 39–64.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- American Bar Association. (n.d.). Commission on domestic and sexual violence. Retrieved from <http://www.abanet.org/domviol>
- Annual Reviews. (n.d.). Annual review of sociology. Retrieved from <http://www.annualreviews.org/journal/soc>
- Bates, C. J. (2011). GSV SSO [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPBDEYPur-M>
- BBC TV. (2009). Milgram's obedience to authority experiment 2009 1/3 [Video]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qK9AZsi75M>
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.bjs.gov/>
- Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami. (n.d.). Responsible conduct of research (RCR). Retrieved from <https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=265>
- Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://cessda.net>
- Crime Stoppers USA. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.crimestoppersusa.com/>
- Disaster Center Crime Pages. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.disastercenter.com/crime/>
- DSECMS. (2009). The variables song—Mr. Edmonds—Rock with the Jackson 5 "I'll Be There" music theme! [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hxbz656Euyw>
- Emory School of Law. (2012). Lifexi Xie: Comparative research on gender-based employment discrimination in China [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RS5yQNGsmdY>
- Farrugia, P., Petrisor, B. A., Farokhyar, F., & Bhandari, M. (2010). Research questions, hypotheses and objectives. *Canadian Journal of Surgery*, 53(4), 278–281. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2912019/>
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/>
- I Opt Technology. (2011). "I opt" style reliability stress test [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vs6eolsqVkc>
- I Tutor. (2012). Validity and reliability [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DudgZkTay-w>
- International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.ialeia.org/>
- Lewis, M. (2012). Constructions of risk in news reporting about herbal medicine: A content analysis of mainstream Aus [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQZb3p2u0YY>
- Maggi, W. (2012). Participant/observation [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zo8xrY0XxT4>
- Market Research Videos. (2010). A history of sampling [Video]. Available from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGphuVlnrPI&feature=BFa&list=PL97C221931D4E50B8&lf=results_main
- Market Research Videos. (2010). Limitations of quantitative research [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAqYpUOivZc>
- Market Research Videos. (2010). Social research publication [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlm3JJrjJ0U>
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
- May, S. (2011). Stratified sampling [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYRUJYOpG0>
- Mayo Proceedings. (2012). Generalizability of epidemiologic findings and public health decisions [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1o4AGgyf8>
- Mays, S. (2011). Cluster sampling [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOxXy-l6ogs>
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/>
- Nick, S. (2014). The Tuskegee syphilis study—National history day 2014 [Video]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9ay3RJhavl>
- Open University. (2011). Field experiments—Critical social psychology (21/30) [Video]. Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MEAVxFKrE0>

- OSU Biology. (2007). [Know the difference \(between hypothesis and theory\) \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdWMcMW54fA). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdWMcMW54fA>
- [Qualitative Report](http://tqr.nova.edu/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://tqr.nova.edu/>
- [Rape Victim Advocates](http://www.rapevictimadvocates.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.rapevictimadvocates.org/>
- RCU Ltd. (2010). [10 step guide to questionnaire design by RCU \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53mASVzGRF4). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53mASVzGRF4>
- Research Centre. (n.d.). [Analysing data—Becky Turner. Simon Busby. Angus Carpenter \[Video\]](https://vimeo.com/28346646). Retrieved from <https://vimeo.com/28346646>
- Riva, J., Malik, K. M. P., Burnie, S. J., Endicott, A. R., & Busse, J. W. (2012). [What is your research question? An introduction to the PICOT format for clinicians](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3430448/). Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association, 56(3), 167–171. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3430448/>
- [RTI International](http://www.rti.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.rti.org/>
- Sage Publications. (n.d.). [The practice of research in criminology and criminal justice: Pockets of crime \[Video\]](http://www.sagepub.com/prccj4e/study/video/bachman.htm). Available from <http://www.sagepub.com/prccj4e/study/video/bachman.htm>
- Sage Publications. (n.d.). [What is naturally occurring data? \[Video\]](http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid744407106001?bckey=AQ~~,AAAApmbRRLk~,C5G7jhYNtftpWKnEW6_OhOeuG-YePxQX&bctid=609854168001). Available from http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid744407106001?bckey=AQ~~,AAAApmbRRLk~,C5G7jhYNtftpWKnEW6_OhOeuG-YePxQX&bctid=609854168001
- Stanford Prison Experiment. (2009). [Stanford prison experiment: This is where it all happened \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TShFPParenk&lr=1). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TShFPParenk&lr=1>
- [Stanford Prison Experiment](http://www.prisonexp.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.prisonexp.org/>
- Statistics Learning Centre. (2011). [Types of data: Nominal, ordinal, interval/ratio—Statistics help \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXznzfn5v8). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXznzfn5v8>
- Statistics Learning Centre. (2012). [Sampling: Simple random, convenience, systematic, cluster, stratified—statistics help \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=be9e-Q-jC-0). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=be9e-Q-jC-0>
- TED Talks. (2009). [Nate Silver: Does racism affect how you vote? \[Video\]](http://www.ted.com/talks/nate_silver_on_race_and_politics?language=en). Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/nate_silver_on_race_and_politics?language=en
- TED Talks. (2010). [Esther Duflo: Social experiments to fight poverty \[Video\]](http://www.ted.com/talks/esther_duflo_social_experiments_to_fight_poverty.htm). Available from http://www.ted.com/talks/esther_duflo_social_experiments_to_fight_poverty.htm
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011). [Nathan Yau: Visualizing census data \[Video\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8g4_ee27Tk&lr=1). Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8g4_ee27Tk&lr=1
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011). [The U.S. census bureau: The importance of accuracy \[Video\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rZDEddKymU). Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rZDEddKymU>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections. (n.d.). [The Belmont report](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/index.html). Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2010). [OHRP: IRB membership \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHtlbdLkSwU). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHtlbdLkSwU>
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.). [Economy at a glance](http://stats.bls.gov/eag/). Retrieved from <http://stats.bls.gov/eag/>
- UGA Gerontology. (2010). [Georgia centenarian study \(Pt. 4\): Phase 1—Cross sectional study \[Video\]](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I03tBKVrHdk). Available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I03tBKVrHdk>
- [United States Census Bureau](http://www.census.gov/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/>
- Weber, R. (2004). [The rhetoric of positivism versus interpretivism](http://www.misq.org/misq/downloads/download/editorial/25/). MIS Quarterly, 28(1), iii–xii. Retrieved from <http://www.misq.org/misq/downloads/download/editorial/25/>
- [World Bank](http://www.worldbank.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/>

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) <https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). [Summary of the HIPAA privacy rule](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html) <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html>

Unit 1 >> An Overview of Criminal Justice Research

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.

Basic Research Concepts

As you embark on your journey to explore the ways social science research can be used in the criminal justice context, you will examine the current issues and methods you will encounter in the field. For example, how can social science researchers address the issue of school violence?

Having a firm grasp of some of the basic concepts needed for various types of research will enhance your understanding of social science, experiments, and validity of research. In the social science research realm, asking questions about the actions and attitudes of others forms the basis for research questions. It is science that makes causation and probability the focus and provides the "techniques for dealing with them more rigorously than does casual human inquiry" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 5). Accumulated knowledge provides a good starting point for the development of more knowledge. Authority presents the opportunity to trust in the judgments of individuals who possess special training, expertise, and credentials in a particular area of study. As a result, the process of inquiry can be "greatly hindered by the legitimate authorities who err within their own special province" or speak outside their expertise (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 6).

Everyday errors are present in reasoning. Overgeneralizations occur when we forget the limitations of our experiences (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, pp. 3–4). To avoid errors in personal human inquiry, we have to know "what" before we can explain "why." In these instances, using a combination of simple and complex measurement devices can assist in guarding against inaccurate observations such as overgeneralizations, selective observations, illogical reasoning, ideology, and politics, and the human factor (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015). The tendency to overgeneralize becomes more likely when pressure to reach a general understanding is present. Therefore, researchers take steps to guard against the possibility of overgeneralizing by employing strategies such as using a large sample of observations, paying close attention to how representative those observations are, and replicating or repeating a study, checking it to see whether similar results are obtained each time (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

Selective or inaccurate observation is possible due to our emotional reactions to events. Illogical reasoning occurs when we make false assumptions. Empirical research is based on experience. It yields knowledge as a result of systematic observation. In everyday personal inquiry, we can make mistakes, but science protects against such types of mistakes. On a personal level, we are prone to observe inaccurately; however, science helps us avoid observational errors by making the act of observation careful and deliberate. Where we might often rush to generalize and make premature conclusions based on limited observations, scientists avoid such over-generalizations through the process of replication (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

In this regard, science requires both logical and empirical support. Therefore, in criminal justice, the methodology employed is "how social science methods can be used to better understand crime and criminal justice policy" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 4). Resistance to change, however, can pose certain challenges. Ego-based commitments cause us to make statements that concur with our own beliefs and make it difficult to admit when we are wrong. Excessive devotion to tradition causes us to alter our reasoning to maintain familiar beliefs. Uncritical agreement with authority can hinder our ability to assert our own opinions (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 5). When setting out to perform research, we should be mindful of the purpose for criminological research. Criminal justice research serves many different purposes. Some research serves to explain associations, explore, describe, or apply certain theories. Exploration, for example, can be used to collect data about a particular situation that establishes a baseline that can be used as a basis for comparison with changes that may occur in the future. Such exploration may be useful when considering a policy change.

References

- Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* to read the following:

- Chapter 1: "Science, Society, and Criminological Research," pages 1–21.

Use the Capella University Library to read the following:

- *The Mismeasure of Crime*, Chapter 1, "Introduction: The Pervasiveness (and Limitations) of Measurement," pages 1–29.

Films on Demand Video

- View [Internet Research: What's Credible?](#)
 - This video provides more information about the validity of research sources and the use of statistics in research.

Capella Resources

Read the following on Campus:

- [Understanding Statistics](#).

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

View these videos for more information about how research is being used in the criminal justice system to improve specific areas of the criminal justice system.

- [Action Research and the Community to Criminal Justice Feedback Loop](#), Edward Davis.
- [Mesa County Agencies Work to Improve Criminal Justice System](#).
- [Mental Illness Soars In Prisons, Jails While Inmates Suffer](#).

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles and books addressing the Unit 1 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Crawley, E., & Sparks, R. (2006). [Is there life after imprisonment? How elderly men talk about imprisonment and release](#). *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 6(1), 63–82.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
- Wyant, B. R. (2008). [Multilevel impacts of perceived incivilities and perceptions of crime risk on fear of crime: Isolating endogenous impacts](#). *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(1), 39–64.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).
- [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#).

u01s2 - Your Online ePortfolio

Online ePortfolios serve two key purposes: 1) to support learning and reflection, and 2) to be used as a showcase tool. Your learning journey can be documented, and ePortfolios contribute to lifelong learning and growth through reflection and sharing. Online ePortfolios can also be shared with employers and peers to present artifacts that demonstrate your accomplishments at Capella.

Using ePortfolio to Prepare for Your Capstone

Your program may culminate in a capstone course. At that time you may be required to show evidence of your learning throughout the program by referring to multiple assessments that you have created. You will be telling a story about your learning throughout the program using artifacts you have collected during many of these courses.

Using ePortfolio to Build Your Career

As you are preparing to tell your story in the professional world, leverage your ePortfolio artifacts to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies you have gained through your program in professional conversations, performance reviews, and interviews.

To do that, reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained from your courses and the elements you have put in your portfolio, along with how you have already applied these things to your professional life or how you might apply them in the future.

Next, create your story or talking points to tell your professional story.

Saving Your Documents to ePortfolio

You will need a place to store your documents in an organized fashion so that you can access them at a later date. Do not rely on the courseroom for storage, as you will lose access to the courseroom after you have completed the course. Capella uses a cloud-based portfolio platform to facilitate your organization of the artifacts you create throughout your program.

To make an online portfolio useful, it is essential that it is organized clearly and that important files of any format are accessible. Read the [Online ePortfolio Guidelines \[PDF\]](#) to ensure you set up your online portfolio correctly. For more information on ePortfolio visit the Campus [ePortfolio](#) page.

Privacy Statement

Capella complies with privacy laws designed to protect the privacy of personal information. While you may voluntarily share your own information publicly, you are obligated to protect the personal information of others that may be associated with your academic or professional development. Before sharing information and material in any ePortfolio that is set up to be shared externally to your program at Capella, please consider privacy obligations in relation to protected populations who may be included or referenced in your academic or clinical work. Refer to the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) and/or the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#) if you have specific questions or concerns about your choices.

u01d1 - Criminal Justice Research and Reputable Resources

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.

Introduction

To put into context the utility of social research in the criminal justice field, it is important to examine popular topics in criminology. Where might you see research used in the workplace? What types of research are used? What journals and resources are useful and reliable? By reviewing a selection of articles published in prestigious journals and various Internet content, you will appreciate the difference between reputable and nonreputable resources in research.

For your main post, locate two reputable journal articles through the Capella University Library or Internet research and one nonreputable article on the Internet that focus on issues of a single general criminological or criminal justice issue, such as criminology or crime and delinquency. Then respond to the following:

1. Analyze the three articles selected, highlighting which articles should be considered reputable, and why.
2. Explain your understanding of science versus pseudoscience in the context of reputable research resources.
3. Discuss whether the articles you selected contain science or pseudoscience.
4. Determine what research methods are used in the selected articles, whether they are used by a criminal justice agency or scholar-practitioner, and why.
5. Discuss whether the articles selected are descriptive, evaluative, explanatory, or exploratory. Include in your discussion what characteristics make them so, and what makes the method used the best fit for the study over other research methods.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
 - Determine research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

- Discuss the characteristics of descriptive, evaluative, explanatory, and exploratory research methods.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
 - Analyze reputable and nonreputable journal articles obtained through the Capella library and Internet research focusing on issues of a single general criminological or criminal justice topic.
 - Explain your understanding of science versus pseudoscience in the context of reputable research sources.
 - Discuss whether the articles you selected contain science or pseudoscience.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about what you have learned about the characteristics of research reported in the journals discussed. Share your thoughts and perspectives about the hypotheses you would research and the type of research you would conduct in your current or desired position.

- What research methods do you believe are effective in various criminal justice settings?
- What factors should be considered? Why?
- What are your thoughts on the journals selected by other learners and the research methods examined?
- What did you learn that might change or refine your research approach?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

u01d2 - The (Mis)measurement of Crime

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.

Introduction

In Chapter 1 of *The Mismeasure of Crime*, you read about the importance of reliability and validity of data in social research in the criminal justice context. Often, in an effort to measure crime and delinquency, for example, the result is a mismeasurement. To avoid this mismeasurement, it is important to consider constraints in research: what they are and why they are important for valid findings.

Whether measurement of social phenomena is accurate can depend on the time and context of the data being measured. As societal views change, the meaning of the data can change with it. Therefore, it is important to select precise indicators when measuring abstract concepts, such as when trying to operationalize social phenomena. Before completing the discussion, view *Riverbend City: Crime Analyst in Action* (linked in Resources) to meet a crime analyst who shares her career challenges and strategies and introduces the research process she uses in a recent assignment.

In your main post:

1. Explain the necessary factors to consider before public opinion survey results can be trusted as a reputable criminal justice resource, based on the principles of survey research examined in Chapter 1 of *The Mismeasure of Crime*.
2. Discuss how you could use public opinion research in your current or future career path based on its reliability as a resource.
3. Examine the benefits public opinion research would bring to your sector of interest in the criminal justice field versus other more or less reputable research resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
 - Explain the necessary factors to consider before public opinion survey results can be trusted as a reputable criminal justice resource.
 - Examine the benefits public opinion research can bring to various criminal justice sectors versus other reputable and nonreputable research resources.
 - Discuss public opinion research application in your current or future career path based on its reliability as a resource.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact with other learners about the utility of public opinion research in the criminal justice field.

- What views do you share or differ on regarding the validity of data collected on public opinions?
- What factors should be considered when pursuing public opinion research over other forms of social science research in the criminal justice field? Why?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

[Crime Analyst in Action](#) | Transcript

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 2 >> The Role of Criminological Theory in Criminal Justice Research

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Theory and Research

The key purpose of many studies is to "describe the scope of the crime problem or policy responses to the problem" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 10). Often, description can be used in counting or documenting observations, such as in the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) or the U.S. Census. Explanation is simply an attempt to answer the question "why?" Finally, application "stems from a need for specific facts and findings with policy implications" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015). There are two types of applied research: evaluation and problem analysis. Evaluation covers of the effects of specific criminal justice programs, whereas problem analysis covers the "what if" questions. There are two types of data: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative and qualitative data focus on the distinction between numerical and non-numerical data. Most observations are qualitative at the outset, and quantification requires a focusing of attention and specifying of meaning. As Maxfield and Babbie noted, "Both qualitative and quantitative methods are useful and legitimate" (2015, p. 37).

Important first steps in social science research include theory and hypothesis, formulating and refining a question, deductive and inductive methods, and variables. A recurring example is the Sherman and Berk study of the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment, which illustrates how a theory leads to a hypothesis, which is then tested, replicated, and refined. Identifying criminological research questions begins through personal experiences, others' experiences, and criminological theory. Then it is time to refine criminological research questions, followed by the step of evaluating criminological research questions. This step involves examining the research questions in terms of feasibility, social importance and scientific relevance. Feasibility requires that a study be conducted within the time frame and with the resources available. Social importance requires that the topic be important to the researcher and the field. Finally, scientific relevance requires that the study be grounded in existing empirical literature (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 26).

Theory is a "logically interrelated set of propositions about empirical reality" (Schutt, 2012, p. 627). Theory must be testable or falsifiable. The role of criminological theory helps researchers to explain or understand things, make predictions, organize and make sense out of empirical findings, guide research, and guide public policy. The role of theory is important for guiding criminological research because theoretical constructs point the researcher in the right direction (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 27).

Social research strategies of note include the research circle. This research circle represents the cycle between data collection and theorizing. The hypothesis is a "tentative statement about empirical reality involving...two or more variables" (Schutt, 2012, p. 45). These variables are characteristics or properties that can vary. There are two types of variables seen in research activities: independent variables, which cause variation in dependent variables, and dependent variables, which vary as a result of variation in independent variable.

Social research strategies also include deductive research, inductive research, explanatory research, exploratory research, and descriptive research. Deductive research involves a hypothesis drawn from a theory and variables that can be tested, allowing theory to guide research and nature of data collection. Inductive research involves data that is summarized in one or more empirical generalizations (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 30). Inductive reasoning moves from the specific to the general, using data to induce an explanation or theory. It "moves from a set of particular observations to the discovery of a pattern that represents some degree of order among the varied events" under observation (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 38). By contrast, deductive reasoning moves from the general to the specific. It "moves from a pattern that might be logically or theoretically expected to observations that test whether the expected pattern actually occurs in the real world" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 39). Keeping all of this in mind, it is the goal of social research to accomplish the following: measurement validity, generalizability, causal validity, and authenticity.

References

- Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
- Schutt, R. K. (2012). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* text to complete the following:

- Chapter 2, "The Process and Problems of Criminological Research," pages 24–42.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- In *The Mismeasure of Crime*, read Chapter 2, "The History of Measuring Crime," pages 30–64.
- Read Hernon and Schwartz's 2007 article "[What Is a Problem Statement?](#)" in *Library and Information Science Research*, volume 29, issue 3, pages 307–309.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concepts: Hypothesis, theory:
 - [Generalizability of Epidemiologic Findings and Public Health Decisions](#).
- Concepts: Independent variable, dependent variable, constant:
 - [Know the Difference \(Between Hypothesis and Theory\)](#).
- Concept: Generalizability:
 - [The Variables Song—Mr. Edmonds—Rock with the Jackson 5 "I'll Be There" Music Theme!](#)
- Concept: Replications:
 - [Milgram Experiment - Big History NL, Threshold 6](#).

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 2 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Broidy, L. M., Daday, J. K., Crandall, C. S., Sklar, D. P., & Jost, P. F. (2006). Exploring demographic, structural, and behavioral overlap among homicide offenders and victims. *Homicide Studies*, 10(3), 155–180.
- Felson, R. B., Teasdale, B., & Burchfield, K. B. (2008). The Influence of being under the influence: Alcohol effects on adolescent violence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(2), 119–141.
- Giblin, M. J. (2002). Using police officers to enhance the supervision of juvenile probationers: An evaluation of the Anchorage CAN program. *Crime & Delinquency*, 48(1), 116–137.
- Hendricks, B., Werner, T., Shipway, L., & Turinetti, G. J. (2006). Recidivism among spousal abusers: Predictions and program evaluation. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21(6), 703–716.

Suggested Internet Resources

- What Is Your Research Question? An Introduction to the PICOT Format for Clinicians.
- Research Questions, Hypotheses and Objectives.
- Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics.

u02a1 - Historical Crime Data Analysis

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Overview

The measurement of social phenomena and crime has grown and evolved into a much more sophisticated process of data collection and analysis since the early days of crime data collection. For this assignment, you will use the data in Exhibit 2.5 of Chapter 2 in the *Mismeasure of Crime* text (linked in Resources) as a basis for your submission. Exhibit 2.5 provides you with the homicide rate data for a sample of large U.S. cities for the years 1880–1915. Choose any three cities represented to perform a comparative analysis of the historical data.

Instructions

1. Based on your reading of the Herson and Schwartz article *What Is a Problem Statement?*, draft a narrowly focused problem statement that can be examined using appropriate criminal justice research methods for the data presented.
2. Compare the 1880 and 1915 homicide rates in Exhibit 2.5 of Chapter 2 in your *Mismeasure of Crime* text to the most recent UCR homicide rates for the cities chosen. Retrieve the rates from the FBI's UCR site, linked in the Resources.
3. Analyze whether the current rates are higher or lower.
4. Explain factors that might account for the differences.

Requirements

- **Written communication:** Must be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Resources and citations:** Format according to APA guidelines.
- **Required page count:** 3–5, not including the cover page or the references page.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

You are required to submit a draft of your paper to SafeAssign. Once you review your results and make any needed changes, submit your paper for grading.

How to Submit Your Assignment

This is a two-step process.

SafeAssign: Drafts of all assignments must be submitted to SafeAssign.

1. Access SafeAssign through the link in the courseroom.
2. Submit your assignment using the draft folder.
3. Review the returned report and make changes as needed. (You may ignore any template matches.)

Submit Your Assignment for Grading: See Submit an Assignment (linked in the Resources) for more information.

1. Click on the linked assignment heading.
2. Attach your file.
3. Click submit.
4. You will know your submission was successful by viewing the Submitted section of the My Grades area.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[*The Mismeasure of Crime*](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[What is a Problem Statement?](#)

[Uniform Crime Reports](#)

[Introduction to the Writing Center](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[APA Paper Template](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

[Submit an Assignment \[PDF\]](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u02d1 - Developing a Problem Statement

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

Inductive research can be easily conducted, although it is not generally used in the criminology and criminal justice areas because it requires that one move from a specific starting point of data to a more general idea or theory to explain patterns found in the data. Deductive reasoning is more often employed in criminological research because it allows the researcher to begin with a general idea and direction of research and then deduce more specific expectations from these general ideas, which can be tested with empirical data. In either case, social research in the criminal justice context aims to make connections between theory and empirical data. This cycle of theory to data and data to theory is characterized as a "research circle" made up of inductive, deductive, and descriptive research.

In your main post:

1. Develop a problem statement and hypothesis you could test in your current or desired criminal justice career, based on your reading of the Hernon and Schwartz article "What Is a Problem Statement?" (linked in Resources).
2. Identify the primary independent and dependent variables that would support your hypothesis.
3. Explain how the inductive research process differs from the deductive research process providing examples to explore when each type of research is most appropriate.

4. Specify whether you would use inductive or deductive research and reasoning to test your hypothesis based on the research circle discussed on page 29 of *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Develop a narrowly focused hypothesis that can be examined using appropriate criminal justice research methods.
 - Identify independent and dependent variables that support your hypothesis.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Explain how inductive and deductive reasoning is applied in a criminal justice research context.
 - Specify whether you would use inductive or deductive research and reasoning to test your hypothesis based on the research circle.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about which research method and type of reasoning you would employ based on the areas identified by other learners.

- Is the research method identified by other learners the best fit for their hypothesis? Why or why not?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding inductive and deductive reasoning? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

[What is a Problem Statement?](#)

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice

Unit 3 >> Ethical Research Practices

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.

- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

Ethical Principles and Practices

This unit focuses on ethical principles that will be revisited throughout future discussions of criminological research and your future practice of research in the criminal justice context. To gain an understanding of the historical background of ethics and philosophies in social science research, it is important to examine cases such as the Zimbardo and Milgram studies, which are often credited as prime examples of the need for ethical research standards (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 60). Social science is unique in that investigation involves real people and can affect their advancement or do them great harm. The Stanford Prison Experiment and the Milgram Obedience Experiment provide solid examples of the ethical guidelines that must be followed when conducting social research.

Historically, instances such as the Nuremberg trials following World War Two revealed contemptible medical experiments conducted by Nazi doctors. In the United States, controversial studies such as U.S. Public Health Service's Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment provide additional examples of the need for ethics in research. The Belmont Report, commissioned by the U.S. federal government and published in 1979, advanced three research mandates for conducting ethical research.

1. Respect for persons, which entails treating a person as an autonomous agent and protecting people with diminished autonomy.
2. Beneficence, which requires that researchers minimize potential harm and maximize potential benefits to research subjects.
3. Justice, which involves the fair distribution of benefits and risks in a study. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections, n.d.)

As a result of the Belmont Report, federal guidelines were adopted in 1999 as set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Food and Drug Administration. Federal regulations now include a requirement that every research institution conducting research, such as a university, have their proposals reviewed by an institutional review board (IRB).

Ethical principles of research must aim to achieve truthful and valid results. Researchers must maintain honesty and transparency regarding research procedures. Protection of research participants is paramount, and participant debriefing is often needed following the study (for example, the Milgram experiment). Ethical research must also avoid harming research participants. To this end, they must obtain informed consent so that the participant enters a study fully aware of the risks. It is important to avoid deceiving and misleading research subjects, such as the deception that occurred in the Stanford Prison Experiment. Finally, it is important to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of research subjects. Only when these principles are adhered to can researchers confidently and ethically proceed with their research, knowing that the participants are adequately protected from mental and physical harm.

Research is an important tool in the criminal justice field as it helps to assess certain implications, inform policy, and advance organizations. But these goals must be advanced in an ethical manner, and a researcher must understand the principals guide their research. Ethical principles include achieving valid results. The Code of Ethics of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) sets forth the general principles and ethical standards that form the basis for ACJS members' professional responsibilities and conduct. It also sets forth policies and procedures for enforcing those principles and standards. Established in 1963, the ACJS is a voluntary international association that promotes professional and scholarly activities in the criminal justice field. ACJS aims to promote awareness and ethics in the important areas of criminal justice education, research, and policy analysis. Demonstrating its importance in the area of ethical research, the ACJS has approximately 2,800 members from every U.S. state, many other countries, and most institutions of higher learning that offer a criminal justice or criminology program.

References

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.acjs.org>

Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections. (n.d.). The Belmont report. Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/belmont.html>

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your course text to read the following:

- In *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, Chapter 3, "Research Ethics and Philosophies," pages 42–67.

Multimedia

- View [Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment](#), which explores the 1971 study simulating prison behavior.
- View [Informed Consent in Ethical Research](#). This interactive media piece discusses the rights of clients in ethical research.

- View the [Ethical Considerations in Research](#) interactive media piece presenting ethical scenarios.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

- [The Stanford Prison Experiment: This Is Where It All Happened.](#)
- [OHRP: IRB Membership.](#)
- [The Tuskegee Syphilis Study—National History Day 2014.](#)
- [Social Research Publication.](#)

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 3 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Aldred, R. (2008). [Ethical and political issues in contemporary research relationships.](#) *Sociology*, 42(5), 887–903.
- Gizzi, M. C., & Gerkin, P. (2010). [Methamphetamine use and criminal behavior.](#) *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 54(6), 915–936.
- Schwalbe, C. S. (2012). [Toward an integrated theory of probation.](#) *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(2), 185–201.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\).](#)
- [Stanford Prison Experiment.](#)
- [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.](#)
- [The Rhetoric of Positivism Versus Interpretivism.](#)
- [The Belmont Report.](#)

u03d1 - Deception in Research

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.

Introduction

In a research project, there are many considerations that make up the design and direction of the research study. What is the problem being explored? Will there be human subjects? If there are human subjects, how are they governed and to what degree? For a research study to be valid, researchers must openly disclose the research methods proposed for the study and honestly present the findings of their study. It is for this reason that a true research study contains an entire section devoted to the research methods used. Only when full disclosure of the research methodologies takes place can proper assessment of the validity of the researcher's findings and the ethics of the methodology be assessed. View the *Crime Analyst in Action* media resource (linked in the Resources) for an example of a problem statement, data collection, and ethics considerations in criminal justice research.

The purpose of this discussion is to understand that ethical gray areas exist and fellow researcher may view the same concept very differently. In an effort to highlight varying viewpoints regarding ethics in research, based on your reading assignment and any additional research needed, address the following in your main post:

1. Devise a list of 3–5 ethical violations in criminological research methodology, based on a study other than the Stanford Prison Experiment.
2. Analyze whether you would consider each research method a true ethical violation and to what degree.
3. Explain whether IRB and ACJS ethical standards are enough to ensure that criminal justice research is conducted using ethical research methods.

Discussion Objectives

The competency in this discussion is supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
 - Devise a list of ethical violations in criminological research methodology.
 - Analyze research method ethical violations.
 - Explain whether IRB and ACJS ethical standards are enough to ensure that criminal justice research is conducted using ethical research methods.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about examples of the research methods that you and your fellow learners deem to be either not ethical violations at all or not as serious ethical violations. Why does unethical research occur? What is it about certain research methods that may make ethical research more or less likely? Share your perspective with others, based on their identification of unethical research methods, as to whether criminologists should be allowed to conduct replications of studies that are known to be ethically questionable. Apply your analysis to the examples shared.

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

[Crime Analyst in Action](#) | Transcript

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

u03d2 - Unethical Research: The Stanford Prison Experiment

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

Introduction

Conducting research can yield very specific and valuable findings, some good and some bad. Even the bad results result in benefitting society in some way going forward, but at what cost? For example, the Stanford Prison Experiment, conducted by Stanford University is well-known for its questionable and controversial research methods. This study highlights the need for informed consent and guides future researchers in how (not) to conduct a valid research study. The bottom line for any research study is that participants deserve and need to be protected from mental and physical harm. Using unethical research in the name of research is simply not acceptable under any circumstances.

After reading about the Stanford Prison Experiment in Chapter 3 of your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* text and viewing the *Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment* video about the Stanford Prison Experiment conducted by Stanford University, conduct Internet research to identify an ethical study conducted by a criminal justice agency (as opposed to a scholar-practitioner such as a university). Then address the following in your main post:

- Analyze whether the research methods used in the Stanford Prison Experiment were ethical.
- Explain whether it was ethical to trade the suffering experienced by participants for the knowledge gained by the research.
- Illustrate the characteristics of an ethical research study conducted by a criminal justice agency.
- Differentiate the ethical research methods used in the study conducted by a criminal justice agency and the deceptive research methods employed in the Stanford Prison Experiment.
- Determine what you believe was the worst ethical violation in the Stanford Prison Experiment and how it could have been avoided.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
 - Analyze the differences in research methods used by various organizations.
 - Determine ethical violations in research and how they can be avoided.
 - Explain whether it is ethical to trade the suffering experienced by research participants for the knowledge gained by the research.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

- ## Response Guidelines

- Is the research method employed by a criminal justice agency identified by other learners ethical? Why or why not?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding ethics in research? Why or why not?
- Based on the research methods shared by fellow learners, do you believe there is any difference between research methods employed by academic or nonacademic institutions?

Course Resources

Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide

Introduction



- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

As we move into examining the process of conceptualization and measurement, we move from the initial stages of forming a research question to conceptualizing and operationalizing the key terms so they can be widely understood and easily tested. It is then that we consider evaluating measures for validity and reliability and the levels of measurement that can be used to express the relationship between a variable's values. Meaningful and

effective research design requires accurate conceptualization of whatever it is the researcher seeks to investigate and measure (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 27). Understanding how to scientifically and systematically define the terms of their inquiry is the key to a researcher's success.

A concept is a "mental image that summarizes a set of similar observations, feelings, or ideas" (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 71). Concepts are also the words or symbols in language that we use to represent these mental images or feelings. It is important to note that these mental images vary based on a researcher's background, training, experiences, or even their own paradigms. According to Maxfield and Babbie, "Clarifying abstract mental images is an essential first step in measurement" (2015, p. 107). Conception by definition is a subjective thought about things that we encounter in daily life. These concepts may be words or symbols in language that we use to represent these mental images. Concepts are abstract because they are separate from the labels assigned to them. There are three classes of things scientists measure:

1. Direct observables—those things that we can observe simply and directly.
2. Indirect observables—relatively more subtle, complex, or indirect observations.
3. Constructs—the "theoretical creations based on things that cannot be observed directly or indirectly." (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 111)

Conceptualization is the process we use to specify what is meant by a concept and precisely what we mean when we use particular terms. The end product of the process of conceptualization is the identification of a set of indicators of what we have in mind, indicating the presence or absence of the concept being studied. Although observations and experiences are real, our concepts, on the other hand, are mental creations. Taking a look at conceptualization in practice, we can see various examples that can lead to ambiguity of concept, such as youth gangs. For example, youth gangs do not have one definition. The definition is difficult for four reasons: youth gangs are not cohesive; individual gangs change their focus over time; gangs have a hodgepodge of features; and there are several popular and incorrect myths about youth gangs (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 71).

Researchers require clear conceptualization so that intended meanings are accurately and explicitly conveyed. Concepts become variables when they have been operationalized. Variables (characteristics that vary) allow us to measure our concepts, but not every concept is represented by a variable in every scenario. Invariance is represented as a constant. Operationalization is the process of specifying how to assign and measure value of a variable for each case. For this, we can seek available sources such as government reports, nonprofit advocacy groups, and university researchers. Utilizing techniques such as constructing closed-ended survey questions with exhaustive and mutually exclusive response choices decreases ambiguity and nonresponse. Open-ended survey questions allow respondents to engage with more complex questions and researchers to explore unanticipated response options.

There are various levels of measurement. Nominal levels vary in quality but not quantity. In other words, a variable's attributes are mutually exclusive when every case can have only one attribute and a variable's attributes are exhaustive if every case can be classified. Ordinal levels indicate greater or lesser but not how much. Interval levels indicate fixed measurement units but have no absolute zero. Ratio levels have fixed measurement units and an absolute zero. Measurement validity ensures that a measure indicates what it is intended to measure. Face validity ensures that a concept meets measurement validity "on its face." Content validity speaks to whether a measure covers the full range of a concept's meaning. Criterion validity is established when the scores obtained on one measure can be accurately compared to those obtained with a more direct or already validated measure of the same phenomenon. Construct validity shows that a measure is related to a variety of other measures (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 85).

Reliability ensures that a measure yields consistent scores on different occasions demonstrated by consistency in results or scores obtained at different times for an unchanging given phenomenon (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 85). Reliability is based on "whether a particular measurement technique, applied repeatedly to the same thing, will yield the same result each time" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015, p. 124). It cannot ensure accuracy any more than precision can. There is also no way to control observer subjectivity. The test-retest method, or intraobserver reliability, can be appropriate to make the same measurement more than once. If answers vary, the measurement method is unreliable, to the extent of that variation. Inter-item or internal consistency measures refer to whether different items measuring the same concept actually yield comparable results or scores. Alternate-forms or split-halves reliability refers to comparing subjects' responses to variations of survey questions. Finally, Inter/intra-observer reliability provides confidence that individual observer biases do not skew measures.

Valid measures are truly indicators of underlying concepts. A reliable measure is consistent. The creation of specific, reliable measures often seems to diminish the richness of meaning our general concepts have. The key standards for measurement quality are reliability and validity. In order to ensure the quality of the information obtained and the study overall, achieving validity and reliability is paramount. In an effort to improve reliability and validity, it is important to be mindful that reliable measures are not necessarily valid measures and that differences in context can affect validity and reliability.

References

- Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage.

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 4, "Conceptualization and Measurement," pages 70–90.

Use the Capella library to complete the following

- In *The Mismeasure of Crime*, read Chapter 3, "The History of Measuring Crime," pages 30–64.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Levels of measurement:
 - [*Types of Data: Nominal, Ordinal, Interval/Ratio—Statistics Help*](#).
- Concept: Systematic social observation:
 - [*GSV SSO*](#).
- Concept: Research survey design:
 - [*10 Step Guide to Questionnaire Design by RCU*](#).
- Concept: Test-retest reliability:
 - [*"I Opt" Style Reliability Stress Test*](#).
- Concepts: Validity, reliability:
 - [*Validity and Reliability*](#).

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 4 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Lambert, E. G., & Paoline, E. A. (2008). [*The influence of individual, job, and organizational characteristics on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment*](#). *Criminal Justice Review*, 33(4), 541–564.
- Leiber, M. J., & Peck, J. H. (2012). [*Race, gender, crime severity, and decision making in the juvenile justice system*](#). *Crime & Delinquency*, 61(6), 771–797.
- Miller, H. V., Tillyer, R., & Miller, J. M. (2012). [*Recognizing the need for prisoner input in correctional research: Observations from an in-prison driving while intoxicated reduction program evaluation*](#). *Prison Journal*, 92(2), 274–289.
- Morabito, M. S. (2010). [*Understanding community policing as an innovation: Patterns of adoption*](#). *Crime & Delinquency*, 56(4), 564–587.
- Mullany, J. M., & Peat, B. (2008). [*Process evaluation of a county drug court: An analysis of descriptors, compliance and outcome—answering some questions while raising others*](#). *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 19(4), 491–508.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [*Rape Victim Advocates*](#).
- [*Bureau of Justice Statistics*](#).

u04a1 - Problem Statement and Measurement

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Overview

As you learned in Chapter 3 of *The Mismeasure of Crime*, official crime data are derived from normal functions of the criminal justice system, such as police reports that detail offenses, arrests, charges filed, and the like. As you saw in Unit 1, the official data in the criminal justice field has grown tremendously over the years. Official crime data collected according to set procedures and with data sets such as the UCR can be classified in the context of a criminal justice process and scored, once classified, in terms of the number of occurrences. As you recall from Chapter 4 of *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, there can be sources of ambiguity in concept. There can also be sources of ambiguity, as such, in classifying or categorizing crimes. This can be problematic in that the purpose of the UCR and other databases is to establish uniformity in classifications and scoring to better utilize the data collected.

For this assignment, you will use the data from the FBI's UCR site (linked in the Resources) for the U.S. burglary rate between 1990 and 2008 as the basis for your responses.

Instructions

1. Analyze the pattern of changes in the U.S. burglary rate between 1990 and 2008 using the data from the FBI's UCR website.
2. Articulate a problem statement that could be used to research this pattern of change over time.
3. Explain two different substantive reasons (based on criminological theory or crime prevention policies) that would account for this pattern of change over time.
4. Explore two different measurement or methodological issues that would account for this pattern of change over time.

Requirements

- **Written communication:** Must be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Resources and citations:** Format according to APA guidelines.
- **Required page count:** 3–5, not including the cover page or the references page.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

You are required to submit a draft of your paper to SafeAssign. Once you review your results and make any needed changes, submit your paper for grading.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[Uniform Crime Reports](#)

[Introduction to the Writing Center](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

APA Paper Template

[SafeAssign](#)

[Submit an Assignment \[PDF\]](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u04d1 - Measurement Validity

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.

Introduction

As you learned in Chapter 4 of your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, an empirical measure of validity adequately reflects the meaning of the concept under consideration. When considering the issue of conceptualization, it is more difficult to demonstrate that individual measures are valid. For example, face validity offers empirical measures that may or may not jibe with common agreements and individual mental images about a particular concept. Criterion-related validity relies on comparing a measure with some external criterion. Measures can be validated by showing that it predicts scores on another measure that is generally accepted as valid. With discriminant validity, the measure of a concept is different from measures of similar but distinct concepts. Conceptual definitions offer a working definition specifically assigned to a term. This specification of conceptual definitions does two important things. It serves as a specific working definition presented so readers understand the concept and focuses

observational strategy. It is operational definitions that spell out precisely how the concept will be measured; a description of the operations undertaken in measuring a concept.

In your main post:

1. Develop a narrowly focused concept, such as poverty, depression, or social support to test its validity.
2. Explain your chosen concept.
3. Identify three empirical research articles using a library search to find the most valid measure of your chosen concept.
4. Summarize your findings based on your empirical research.
5. Explore how valid the measure is and the basis for your rating of validity.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Develop a narrowly focused concept to test its validity.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
 - Explain your chosen concept.
 - Identify three empirical research articles using a library search to find the most valid measure of your chosen concept.
 - Summarize your findings based on your empirical research.
 - Explore how valid the measure is and the basis for your rating of validity.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about the different validation strategies used and their relative merits identified by other learners.

- Is the concept defined clearly in each article? Why or why not?
- How similar are the definitions of your concepts and those of others?
- Did you share similar experiences to other learners regarding in testing the validity of your concepts? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 5 >> Sampling

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Sampling Methods

In this unit, you will gain a deeper appreciation for the importance of sampling diligence and how it ultimately relates to researchers' confidence in their findings' generalizability, as well as sampling methods, design, and distribution. The logic behind probability sampling establishes the foundational basis for small subsets of populations representing large populations. The key indicator of sample quality is the extent the sample can be considered representative. In other words, the similarity of the sample's characteristics and those of the population from which it was drawn are critical. Although samples should be unbiased, it is expected that a certain amount of sampling error exists.

Careful sample planning is critical, as researchers cannot investigate the social processes of every setting or person. The components of a sample include the population, sample, sampling frame, elements, and sampling units. The population consists of all of the elements or individuals of interest. The sample is a subset of elements from the larger population. The sample is selected from a list called the *sampling frame*. The elements are made up of the sample participants selected. Finally, sampling units are the entities from which or whom we collect information about the elements (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 94).

The ultimate goal in sampling is confident generalizability to the larger population under investigation. Sample generalizability is how we describe our ability to generalize from a sample to the larger target population—the population from which the sample was drawn. Sample generalizability occurs when a conclusion based on a sample of a population holds true for the entire population. Cross-population generalizability, or external validity, characterizes the ability to generalize findings about one population or setting to other populations or settings. This is so, for example, when findings about one group hold true for other groups. Sample generalizability ultimately depends on the amount of sampling error (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 96). Sampling error can be described as the difference between the sample's characteristics and the target population from which it was drawn. Ideally, samples are representative of the original population and sample characteristics will mimic those of the group from which it was drawn. Using census data that study entire populations allows researchers to bypass generalizability hurdles. In assessing population diversity, generalizability rests on how well a sample represents the diversity of the population from which it is drawn. A representative sample "looks like" the population from which it was selected in all respects that are potentially relevant to the study" (Schutt, 2012, p. 528).

There are various sampling methods available. Sampling methods include probability sampling and nonprobability sampling. Probability sampling methods are an effective means of selecting representative samples. They allow us to estimate the amount of sampling error we can expect in a given sample. The key component to remember about probability sampling is that every member of the total population must have some known nonzero probability of being selected into the sample (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015). At the core of estimating population parameters with sample statistics are sampling distribution and probability theory. Sample statistics cluster around the true population parameter when a large number of samples of a given size are drawn. With the increase of a sample size, the cluster tightens. Probability theory specifically allows for inferences regarding the way in which sampled data are distributed around the value found in a larger population (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

Probability sampling reveals the likelihood that an element of the population will be selected. Systematic bias, however, can still be present with survey respondents' nonresponse. Personal bias can affect a sample. And there are also endless possibilities for inadvertent sampling bias but these instances are not always readily noticeable, so it is important to remain aware of this. If the aggregate characteristics of the sample closely approximate the same aggregates in the population, a sample is considered to be representative of the population from which it is drawn (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015). All members of a population have an equal chance of being selected in the sample in the equal probability of selection method. There are two main advantages:

1. Because they avoid biases, the samples are more representative than other types of samples.
2. It is possible to estimate the accuracy or representativeness of the sample.

Probability sampling methods, such as simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified random sampling, and multistage cluster sampling, eliminate systematic bias as the probability of selection is known. Simple random sampling identifies cases strictly on the basis of chance and requires a procedure that generates numbers or identifies cases strictly on the basis of chance and is done with random number tables or random digit dialing, for example, sampling with or without replacement. Random sampling dictates that every element has a known and independent chance of being selected into the sample (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 99).

Systematic random sampling involves randomly selecting the first element from a list, and then choosing every *n*th element thereafter. In other words, elements are randomly selected from within previously sorted sample strata. The number of cases from one sampled case to another is referred to as the sampling interval, which does not have to be a whole number. This is not useful in lists that are ordered in a meaningful way and thus exhibit periodicity. Stratified random sampling uses information known about the total information prior to sampling to make the process more efficient (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 101). The elements are randomly selected from within previously sorted sample strata. Proportionate random sampling represents each stratum exactly in proportion to its size. Disproportionate random sampling can be used to overrepresent small strata. Multistage cluster sampling can be useful when a sampling frame is not available. This type of sampling includes selecting random elements from randomly selected available groups or clusters.

When considering nonprobability sampling methods, these methods are less statistically representative than probability sampling methods, which makes them less reliable than probability sampling methods as they do not reveal the likelihood of sample selection. They are, however, still appropriate for many research applications. Purposive sampling, the selecting of an element based on its unique characteristics, is useful when the desire is to select

specific elements of a population. The reason for this may be that the elements are thought to be representative, or because they represent the range of variation expected in a population. When using quota sampling, the researcher begins with a detailed description of the characteristics of the total population and then selects sample members in a way that includes the different composite profiles that exist in the population. Finally, snowball samples are those that accumulate subjects through chains of referrals. These are most commonly used in field research and involve the selection of elements recommended by a previously sampled elements (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

References

- Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.
- Schutt, R. K. (2012). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your course texts to read the following:

- In *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, Chapter 5, "Sampling," pages 93–115.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Probability sampling:
 - [*A History of Sampling*](#).
- Concept: Cluster sampling:
 - [*Cluster Sampling*](#) | Transcript.
- Concept: Types of sampling:
 - [*Sampling: Simple Random, Convenience, Systematic, Cluster, Stratified—Statistics Help*](#).
- Concept: Stratified sampling:
 - [*Stratified Sampling*](#).

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 5 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Brown, B., & Benedict, W. R. (2004). [*Bullets, blades, and being afraid in Hispanic high schools: An exploratory study of the presence of weapons and fear of weapon-associated victimization among high school students in a border town*](#). *Crime & Delinquency*, 50(3), 372–394.
- Gottfredson, D. C., & Soulé, D. A. (2005). [*The timing of property crime, violent crime, and substance use among juveniles*](#). *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 42(1), 1110–1120.
- Tewksbury, R., & Mustaine, E. E. (2005). [*Insiders' views of prison amenities: Beliefs and perceptions of correctional staff members*](#). *Criminal Justice Review*, 30(2), 174–188.
- Watkins, A. M., & Melde, C. (2007). [*The effect of self-control on unit and item nonresponse in an adolescent sample*](#). *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 44(3), 267–294.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [*Bureau of Justice Statistics*](#).

u05d1 - Probability Versus Nonprobability Sampling

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.

Introduction

Probability sampling is used to assist researchers in generalizing from observed cases to unobserved cases. As a research method, probability sampling is a method of selection in which each member of a population has a known chance or probability of being selected. If it is the case that all members of a population are similar in all respects, there is no need for sampling procedures. A sample must contain essentially the same variations that exist in the population. The original sampling method must be known to evaluate the quality of a sample and findings based on that sample's responses and behavior, and findings will only be as generalizable as the sample is to the original larger target population.

The purpose of this discussion is to understand that there are various methods of sampling and that a successful study relies on the thoughtful sample planning to choose the best research method to effectively investigate social processes without having to consider every setting or person. Based on your reading assignment and any additional research needed, address the following in your main post:

1. Explain, using examples, how sampling as a research method is used for statistical data analysis in criminology or criminal justice.
2. Differentiate between the advantages and disadvantages of probability-based sampling designs and nonprobability-based designs.
3. Explore whether any of the research described in Chapter 5 of your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* text with a nonprobability-based design has been conducted instead with the probability-based design.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
 - Explain how sampling as a research method is used for statistical data analysis in criminology or criminal justice.
 - Differentiate probability based sampling designs and nonprobability-based designs.
 - Explore whether a nonprobability-based design could have been conducted instead with the probability-based design.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about examples of the research methods discussed in Chapter 5 that you and your fellow learners described.

- How would you discuss the degree of confidence you can place in the results obtained from research using a nonprobability-based sampling design in the criminal justice field?
- What difficulties might be encountered in an attempt to use random selection in a criminological or criminal justice context?
- What perspective can you share about other examples where probability sampling is not an option for researchers? Apply your analysis to the examples shared.

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

u05d2 - Probability Samples and Validity of Generalizations

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.

- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

Various sampling designs are available to suit different research and purposes populations. For example, although simple random sampling is logically the most fundamental probability sampling technique, it is not often in practice. Systematic sampling employs a sampling frame for selection of units that appear at a certain specified interval. This research method is, however, the functional equivalent to the simple random sampling method. The stratification method is valuable because it improves how representative a sample is by reducing the sampling error. When selecting adequate numbers of certain types of subjects who are relatively rare in the population being studied, disproportionate stratified sampling can be particularly useful. Finally, the method of multistage cluster sampling is most often utilized when there exists no list of the members of an entire population.

In Chapter 5 of *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, you learned about the three main types of probability sampling. Using your library research skills and what you have learned about sampling methods, research scholarly journal articles to find one that describes criminological research using a sample drawn from some population and respond to the following in your main post:

1. Describe the type of probability sample used in the study.
2. Draft a problem statement for a research topic relevant to criminology that could be used in conjunction with the probability sampling method you shared.
3. Differentiate the strong and weak points in how the sample was drawn in terms of how they may affect the success of the study.
4. Analyze your level of confidence in the validity of generalizations about the population based on the sample.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Draft a problem statement for a research topic that could be used in conjunction with probability sampling.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Describe the type of probability sampling methods used in criminological and criminal justice research.
 - Differentiate the strong and weak points in how samples are drawn in terms of how they may affect the success of a study.
 - Analyze your level of confidence in the validity of generalizations about a population based on a sample.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about the sampling research methods you discussed and the type of sampling methods you would employ based on the studies researched by other learners.

- Did the researchers have a problem due to nonresponse considering the sample?
- How confident are you in the validity of generalizations about the population based on the samples shared?
- Do you need any additional information to evaluate these samples?
- Based on your understanding of probability sampling, do you think a different sampling strategy would have been preferable in certain studies?
- Do you think the generalizations were warranted? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 6 >> Conceptualization and Measurement of Crime

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Conceptualization and Measurement

Many different approaches to measuring crime illustrate the general principles of conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement in the criminal justice research context. In this unit, you will explore five criteria for establishing causal explanations: association, time order, nonspuriousness, mechanisms, and context. In addition, instances that can threaten internal and external validity are explained. You will also learn how true experimental and quasi-experimental research designs seek to establish causally valid explanations for varied social phenomena. Experiments are designed and implemented in order to establish whether one process is directly responsible for changes in another (Bachman & Schutt, 2018, p. 70).

As a starting point for research using any measure of crime, researchers should first grasp the types of offenses the chosen measure does and does not include. From a research design standpoint, a decision will need to be made as to offenses, units of analysis, and purposes before specifying measures of crime. Different measures of crime are based on different units of analysis. For example, the UCR, as you have seen and used previously, is a summary measure that reports totals for individual agencies (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

Different measures of crime are also developed for specific research and policy purposes. Many police departments perform crime analysis with their own incident-based records. There are many different measures of crime because each measure is imperfect and has its own strengths and weaknesses. Causal explanations account for attitudes, behaviors, and events. A causal effect occurs when variation in the independent variable is followed by variation in the dependent variable and all other influences are taken into consideration. Causal relationships require an association between two or more variables. Variation in the independent variable must precede the observed effect. Causal explanations can only be determined once spurious relationships, or the effect of a third variable, are accounted for. Causal mechanisms are the means by which the independent variable influences the dependent variable. Contextual effects of a certain setting are identifiable when the relationship between a cause and effect in one setting differs from that same relationship situated in another setting.

As you will see in this unit, experiments are very useful for controlled testing of causal processes. They may also be a good fit for evaluation studies. The classical experiment uses pretesting and post-testing of experimental and control groups to test the effect of an experimental stimulus on some dependent variable. While it is important that experimental and control groups be similar to each other, it is not as important that a group of experimental subjects be representative of some larger population. The experiment process examines the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable. Variables must therefore be defined operationally. In experimentation, specific and standardized measurements and observations are required (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

True experiments allow researchers to test causal hypotheses and establish association, time order, and nonspuriousness. They have three key features. They include two comparison groups (experimental condition and control); there is random assignment to each group (matching helps ensure that groups remain similar); and there is an assessment of dependent variable change following application of experimental condition. Pretests and post-tests measure outcome and dependent variable before and after application of the experimental condition. Field experiments utilize the conditions of an experimental method in a real-world setting.

By way of comparison, quasi-experiments are weaker than true experiments as they lack random assignment to control and experimental groups but otherwise are still designed to measure the effect of some change in the independent variable on the dependent variable. Internal validity (causality) and generalizability are not easy to establish simultaneously when using experimental design. True experiments offer internal validity but are not easily generalizable because of their limited controlled setting. Quasi-experiments are often generalizable but allow for less confident causal explanations.

References

- Bachman, R., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Fundamentals of research in criminology and criminal justice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Babbie, E. R. (2015). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology* (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* to read the following:

- Chapter 6, "Causation and Research Design," pages 119–149.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- In *The Mismeasure of Crime*, read Chapter 4, "Self-Report Studies," pages 117–150.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Control group:
 - *Esther Duflo: Social Experiments to Fight Poverty*.
- Concept: Field experiment:
 - *Field experiments—Critical Social Psychology (21/30)*.
- Concept: Subject fatigue:
 - *Limitations of Quantitative Research*.
- Concept: Cross-sectional design:
 - *Georgia Centenarian Study (Pt. 4): Phase 1—Cross Sectional Study*.

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 6 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Green, J. (2010). *Points of intersection between randomized experiments and quasi-experiments*. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 628(1), 97–111.
- Hall, E. A., Prendergast, M. L., Wellisch, J., Patten, M., & Cao, Y. (2004). *Treating drug-abusing women prisoners: An outcomes evaluation of the forever free program*. *Prison Journal*, 84(1), 81–105.
- Silver, E., Felson, R. B., & Vaneseltine, M. (2008). *The relationship between mental health problems and violence among criminal offenders*. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(4), 405–426.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Disaster Center Crime Pages](#).
- [Crime Stoppers USA](#).
- [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#).

u06a1 - Self-Report Studies

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Overview

As you read in Chapter 4 of *The Mismeasure of Crime*, several forms of self-report studies are reviewed. One of those studies included the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, which was established by the National Institute of Justice to monitor drug use among arrestees in many jurisdictions of the United States. According to the authors, one of the main benefits of self-report studies in research is as a source of information provided by

individuals based on their behavior, unfiltered by any official or judicial process. This self-study process was developed in an effort to counteract what were considered systematic biases and distortions in the data collected about crime from official measures. The ADAM study was based on data collected by interviewers interviewing arrestees who had been jailed or booked less than 48 hours for various drug offenses. This study fits into the self-report category because its subjects are focused in a group that was geared to provide more targeted information based on their known drug use.

For this assignment, you will access the 2008 ADAM II Annual Report, linked in the Resources. Select one illicit drug (for example, marijuana) for your research and respond following the instructions below.

Instructions

- Analyze differences in the use of this drug across the 10 cities in the ADAM report, based on your research of the ADAM study.
- Explain why the rates of use of the particular substance selected are higher or lower in some cities as compared to others.
- Specify what methodology was used to study the validity of self-reported drug consumption from ADAM studies.
- Explore some of the important effects of under-reporting.

Requirements

- **Written communication:** Must be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Resources and citations:** Format according to APA guidelines.
- **Required page count:** 3–5, not including the cover page or the references page.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

You are required to submit a draft of your paper to SafeAssign. Once you review your results and make any needed changes, submit your paper for grading.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[ADAM II: 2008 Annual Report](#)

[Introduction to the Writing Center](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[APA Paper Template](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

[Submit an Assignment \[PDF\]](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u06d1 - True Experiments and Causation

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

In research, a causal connection between independent and dependent variables is a critical component. It is therefore important to understand the meaning of causation in order to determine whether an experiment is causally valid. We generally view the concept of cause in the context of cause and effect as one action that may cause another to occur. View the *Crime Analyst in Action* media resource for an example of data quality and validity before answering these questions. With variables, the independent variable is considered the cause and the dependent variable is considered the effect. Therefore, a causal connection exists when a change to the independent variable is followed by a change to a dependent variable. It follows that

association in research refers to that change in the independent variable being associated with the change in the dependent variable, therefore solidifying the causal relationship. There must be an association for a causal connection to exist between these variables in research.

For this discussion, select a true experiment from the *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, available in the Capella library.

In your main post:

1. Diagram the selected experiment using the exhibits in Chapter 6 of your *Fundamentals of Research In Criminology and Criminal Justice* text as a model.
2. Explain the extent to which experimental conditions were controlled and the causal mechanism was identified.
3. Specify the independent and dependent variables in the true experiment selected.
4. Determine whether an association exists between the independent and dependent variables in the true experiment.
5. Express how generalizable you think the study's results are to the population from which the cases were selected.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Diagram a true experiment.
 - Explain the extent to which experimental conditions are controlled and the causal mechanism.
 - Specify the independent and dependent variables in a given true experiment.
 - Determine whether an association exists between independent and dependent variables in a true experiment.
 - Express how generalizable a study's results are to the population from which the cases were selected.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about the true experiments selected by other learners and whether an association exists between the independent and dependent variables in the true experiment. Discuss how confident you and other learners can be in the causal conclusions from the study, based on your review of the threats to internal validity discussed in Chapter 6 of your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* text (selection bias, endogenous change, external events, contamination, and treatment misidentification).

- How generalizable are the studies' results to specific subgroups in the study? How thoroughly do researchers discuss these issues?
- Do you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding generalizability? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

[Crime Analyst in Action](#) | Transcript

[Capella University Library](#)

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 7 >> Survey Research

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Design and Research

In this unit, you will explore survey design, administration, strengths, and weaknesses. There are five basic survey designs and these can be compared to determine how you, as a researcher can maximize their efficiency as an effective research method for your particular area of focus. Survey findings are sometimes met with a measure of skepticism, but it is important to consider how methodological and ethical challenges steer those outcomes when considering their appropriateness.

Survey research involves data collection from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions and can cover one topic or many (omnibus survey). Versatility of surveys stems from the applicability for any topic of interest. Efficiency flows from their low cost and the minimum time expenditure needed. Generalizability with surveys is achievable if surveying populations through random sampling. When measuring crime through victim surveys, victim surveys are a viable alternative measure of crime but they are still subject to error. There are several advantages to measuring crime through surveys. Surveys enable researchers to collect information that is not reported by police, identify incidents not been recorded as crimes, and provide more disaggregated analysis. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), for example, includes detailed personal and household information about incidents but does not include crimes committed against businesses or individual victims under the age of 12. NCVS is a nationally representative measure, but it cannot estimate victimizations for states or local areas. It therefore comes down to what is asked and how it is asked. Any effort to compare trends and changes in crime over time must take into account the changes in measurement.

In developing a survey, questionnaire, or interview, schedule is the foundation of every survey. If a survey is designed properly, it can help generate responses that are reliable and generalizable. Maintaining focus of well-defined inquiry is key, as well as adopting and building from existing effective instruments. Each technique for formulating questions has advantages and disadvantages when constructing a questionnaire. It is important to be cognizant of bias in questionnaire items, which should be avoided, as that may encourage respondents to answer in a particular way or to support a particular point of view. There are generally three ways to administer questionnaires. There are self-administered questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, and telephone interviews, and each approach can vary. For instance, computers can be used to enhance each type of survey. The use of computer-assisted surveys can have many advantages, but they also may require special skills and equipment. In face-to-face surveys, it is essential that interviewers be neutral. An interviewer's presence in the data collection process must not affect the responses given.

Several strategies can be used to prevent measurement error, such as the use of Likert scales. You can minimize "fence sitters" and "floaters" by omitting neutral response options. Filter questions and skip patterns can prove to be a timesaver for all involved. Additionally, question indices that group elements of conceptual constructs minimize idiosyncratic variation and help measure respondent reliability. It is also a good practice to pose demographic questions at the survey's end.

Survey layout should be attractive to the eye, topics should be organized, and instructions should be brief. Of the five basic survey designs, all have their own shortcomings. Mailed or self-administered surveys can yield low response rates. Group-administered surveys require the assembly of a captive audience. Phone survey outcomes are invalid because of sample inaccessibility or an unwillingness to participate. Finally, in-person surveys require a great deal of training and financial resources. Web-based surveys are often inaccessible to criminological research subjects.

There are, however, definite advantages and disadvantages of each survey type. The weaknesses of survey research include their being somewhat artificial or potentially superficial. Surveys can also be high on reliability and generalizability, but weak on validity. It therefore may be difficult to gain a full sense of social processes in their natural settings using surveys as a research method. There are additional ways of collecting data by asking questions, such as specialized interviews with a small number of people and focus groups.

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your course text to read the following:

- In *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, Chapter 7, "Survey Research," pages 153–181.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Electronic survey:
 - [*Nathan Yau: Visualizing Census Data*](#)
- Concept: Survey error:
 - [*The U.S. Census Bureau: The Importance of Accuracy*](#)
- Concept: Survey data:
 - [*Nate Silver: Does Racism Affect How You Vote?*](#)

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 7 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Chang, J., & Le, T. N. (2005). [The influence of parents, peer delinquency, and school attitudes on academic achievement in Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian or Mien, and Vietnamese youth](#). *Crime & Delinquency*, 51(2), 238–264.
- Cochran, J. C., & Warren, P. Y. (2012). [Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in perceptions of the police: The salience of officer race within the context of racial profiling](#). *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 28(2), 206–227.
- Klevens, J., Baker, C. K., Shelley, G.A., & Ingram, E. M. (2008). [Exploring the links between components of coordinated community responses and their impact on contact with intimate partner violence services](#). *Violence Against Women*, 14(3), 346–358.
- Tankebe, J. (2008). [Police effectiveness and police trustworthiness in Ghana: An empirical appraisal](#). *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 8(2), 185–202.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives \(CESSDA\)](#).

u07d1 - Open- and Closed-Ended Survey Questions

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

As surveys are among the most popular forms of research published in criminology, it is valuable to explore the quality of surveys as a research method. How survey questions are drafted can have a great impact on the quality and accuracy of your findings. Open-ended questions do not enforce explicit response options, whereas fixed-choice questions only allow for a list exhaustive and mutually exclusive responses. It is important to write clear and meaningful questions and avoid confusing phrasing or vagueness. Researchers should also avoid negatives and double-negatives, double-barreled questions, and favoring agreement or disagreement for clarity's sake. Certain trade-offs and compromises must often be made between research goals, such as achieving measurement reliability and validity, generalizability, and cost-effectiveness including the decision to use open- or closed-ended questions.

In this discussion, you will explore the trade-off of whether to use open- or closed-ended questions in survey research. For this discussion, address the following in your main post:

1. Articulate a crime-related problem statement that is appropriate for a survey of college students based on your desired criminal justice career path.
2. Develop at least one hypothesis and several variables related to your problem statement.

3. Draft five closed-ended questions that measure these variables and five open-ended questions that you think will measure the same variables as the closed-ended questions.
4. Examine the effectiveness of responses that could be collected from each type of question based on the question format and phrasing.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Articulate a crime-related problem statement that is appropriate for a survey of college students.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Develop at least one hypothesis and several variables related to a problem statement.
 - Draft five closed-ended questions and five open-ended questions that measure the same variables.
 - Examine the effectiveness of responses that could be collected from open- and closed-ended questions.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about potential responses to the open-ended and closed-ended questions with other learners.

- What differences can you predict from respondents based on the type of question administered? Why?
- What changes would you make in the closed-ended questions based on the open-ended responses based on your perspective and the perspective of others?
- Has your confidence in closed-ended questions increased or decreased as a result of these shared perspectives?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

u07d2 - Quality of Academic Survey Research

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

Introduction

In critiquing survey research in existing literature, it is important to focus on the quality of the surveys reported in academic journals that present survey data on criminology/criminal justice-related topics. Specific items to consider include the sampling design, manner of administration, response rate, and number of surveys completed, as well as the key findings of a study. Some of the attraction for survey research is its versatility because they can be used to explore almost any topic. Surveys are efficient in that more data can be collected at a lower cost, and relatively quickly, compared to other research methods. Surveys can have high generalizability as they lend themselves to probability sampling from large populations.

The purpose of this discussion is to gain a deeper understanding of the function and utility of surveys as a viable research method. For this discussion, use your library research skills to locate a research article in an academic journal that presents survey data on a criminology/criminal justice-related topic and address the following in your main post:

1. Explain the sampling design, manner of administration, response rate, and number of surveys completed for the survey selected based on the information presented in the methods section of the article selected.

2. Analyze the key findings of the study, as stated in the abstract (or in the absence of the abstract, in the findings section of the article), in the context of the study's problem statement.
3. Explore the generalizability of the findings based on the survey.
4. Determine whether there are any potential problems for generalizability based on response rates for each survey.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
 - Explore the generalizability of findings based on a survey.
 - Determine potential problems for generalizability based on response rates for a survey.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
 - Explain the sampling design, manner of administration, response rate, and number of surveys completed for a selected survey.
 - Analyze the key findings of a study, in the context of the study's problem statement.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about survey research methods explored by other learners and the type of survey methods you would employ based on the research methods identified.

- Are the survey methods employed by scholar-practitioners identified by other learners effective? Why or why not?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding the generalizability of survey research? Why or why not?
- Based on the survey methods shared by fellow learners, considering the sampling design, manner of administration, response rate, and number of surveys completed for each survey based on the information presented in the methods section of the articles selected, was survey research the best research method employed based on the problem statement articulated?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 8 >> Qualitative Research

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Qualitative Methods and Data Analysis

In this unit, we will examine the methods of qualitative research, from participant observation to intensive interviewing and focus groups. Qualitative research transforms the everyday operations of listening, observing, and participating into a scientific and systematic methodology that unlocks truths and findings that go untouched in other research designs. Additionally, because the role of the researcher rises to a principal component of the research process itself, review and evaluation must meet a more enhanced set of criteria. Qualitative research is particularly different from experimental and survey designs in terms of data collection, exploratory research questions, and a focus on unstudied processes and phenomena. In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research is oriented to social context and the interconnections between processes. The focus in this type of research is placed on human subjectivity and events experienced leading up to an outcome.

Three distinct research designs originated from early 20th century field research: participant observation, intensive interviewing, and qualitative data analysis. Participant observation involves gathering data while developing a sustained relationship with individual or group under investigation. Within this type of research design, there are different approaches. Complete observation requires minimal disruption and prevents researchers from participating with subjects. Participation and observation involve varying degrees of participation with subjects. Covert participation prevents researchers from revealing their identity and poses some unique ethical issues as it may involve disguising a researcher's agenda. There are no jottings or field notes with covert participation. Rather, increased attention paid to maintaining relationships in the field and managing personal dimension of field research. Systematic observation involves a standardized design reliant upon intensive record-keeping. With participant observation, field researchers are bound to be affected on a personal, emotional level. The impact of personal issues varies with the depth of involvement.

Intensive Interviewing employs open-ended and unstructured questioning posed to uncover in-depth information regarding the respondents' feelings, experiences, and perceptions. Here, the researcher is establishing and maintaining a partnership. The aim is to develop a comprehensive picture of an interviewee's background, attitudes and actions in their own words. The saturation point emerges when new interviews yield little additional information. It is critical that the researcher establish a rapport to foster interviewee comfort and interview productivity. Recording responses must be accurate but unobtrusive. Finally, focus groups consist of unstructured group interviews in which the group leader actively encourages group discussion among participants. For instance, groups may include recruited participants that represent target population, where the emphasis is on discovery of unanticipated findings and hidden meanings.

Qualitative data analysis focuses on the details and meanings expressed by a few cases. In this research method, the researcher is identified as an instrument and potentially influential on inquiry approach. The focus is on context and rich descriptions rather than generalizability and amassing an unending list of variables. The various techniques of qualitative data analysis include documentation and meticulous recording, conceptualization, categorization and organization, identifying related themes and theoretical relationships in matrices, and evaluating alternative explanations and challenging validity through credibility analyses and consideration of how responses were offered. Qualitative research conclusions reveal subjects' tacit knowledge of the social process unfolding in their worlds and are substantiated by researchers' own reflexivity or natural development of evidence.

Types of qualitative data analysis include but are not limited to ethnography, grounded theory, and computer-assisted analysis. Ethnography is study of culture of cultures that a group of people share through intense immersion in group life. Grounded theory inductively builds a systematic theory grounded in research observations. Computer-assisted analysis involves electronic coding and reporting executed in conjunction with traditional analyses. As with any research method, qualitative research poses some ethical issues. Therefore, a researcher should do their best to ensure voluntary participation and subject well-being. Other strategies to maintain ethics include negotiating appropriate identity and research agenda disclosure, maintaining confidentiality, setting appropriate boundaries between subjects and researcher, and ensuring researcher safety.

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* to read the following:

- Chapter 8, "Qualitative Methods and Analysis," pages 185–221.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- In *The Mismeasure of Crime*, read Chapter 5, "Victimization Surveys," pages 151–192.

Internet Resources

The following resources are from the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

- [National Crime Victimization Survey](#).
- [Key Facts at a Glance](#).

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Qualitative data analysis:
 - [Analysing Data—Becky Turner, Simon Busby, Angus Carpenter](#)
- Concept: Participant observation:
 - [Participant/Observation](#).
- Concept: Systematic observation:
 - [The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice: Pockets of Crime](#).
- Concept: Focus group:
 - [David Morgan on Research Methods](#).

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 8 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Halsey, M. J. (2006). [Negotiating conditional release: Juvenile narratives of repeat incarceration](#). *Punishment & Society*, 8(2), 147–181.
- Padfield, N., & Maruna, S. (2006). [The revolving door at the prison gate: Exploring the dramatic increase in recalls to prison](#). *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 6(3), 329–352.
- Smith, P., & Smith, W. A. (2005). [Experiencing community through the eyes of young female offenders](#). *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 21(4), 364–385.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Annual Review of Sociology](#).
- [RTI International](#).
- [Qualitative Report](#).

u08a1 - Qualitative Versus Quantitative Research

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Overview

As you have explored in previous units, some surveys provide alternative measures of crime but are still not perfect. Victim surveys are an example of such an alternative measure of crime. There are advantages to measuring crime through surveys. As you have observed, surveys enable researchers to collect certain information not reported by police. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is a national crime survey based on multistage cluster samples. As discussed in Unit 7, the NCVS is a national measure of victimizations, but as such does not estimate state or local victimizations. Sampling methods for each survey in the NCVS illustrate different approaches to representing somewhat rare events. Therefore, many states have begun conducting their own victimization surveys because data collected from the NCVS cannot provide state-level estimates.

For this assignment, search the Internet to find results from a state crime victim survey that includes a description of the methodology used to conduct the survey. Next, visit the NCVS Key Facts at a Glance page (linked in the Resources) as a starting point for a basis of comparison to what many states are now doing. Then, respond to the following:

1. Explain the results from the state crime victim survey you selected, including a description of the methodology used to conduct the survey.
2. Analyze a similar crime victim survey conducted at the national level, using the NCVS.

3. Differentiate your selected state's crime victim survey method with some of the techniques used to collect data under the NCVS program.
4. Explore the advantages associated with measuring crime through the use of a national victimization survey as compared to official crime reports.
5. Distinguish the NCVS survey and the state survey you selected as they relate to how crime is measured specific to the nature and extent of crime, regardless of reporting.

Requirements

- **Written communication:** Must be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Resources and citations:** Format according to APA guidelines.
- **Required page count:** 3–5, not including the cover page or the references page.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

You are required to submit a draft of your paper to SafeAssign. Once you review your results and make any needed changes, submit your paper for grading.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[National Crime Victimization Survey](#)

[Key Facts at a Glance](#)

[Introduction to the Writing Center](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[APA Paper Template](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

[Submit an Assignment \[PDF\]](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u08d1 - Participant Observation and Field Research

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

In field research, it is important to remember that an observer may play various roles. For example, a researcher who plays the role of a full participant is a genuine participant in what they are studying, and this can have a direct effect on ethical issues. A researcher can also be what is called a complete participant. In this role, the researcher may affect the social processes he or she is studying. That said, this is a rare occurrence in criminal justice institutions. To say a researcher is "going native" suggests one who tends to identify too much with the participants' interests and viewpoints. An observer-as-participant, on the other hand, still interacts with the participants but has no pretense of being an actual participant. By way of contrast, a researcher who observes a location or process without becoming a part of it in any way is considered a complete observer.

For this discussion, review the experiments and surveys described in previous chapters of your *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice* text. Choose one experiment or survey to use as a basis for comparison with field research and respond to the following in your main post:

1. Propose a field research design that would focus on the same research question as the experiment or survey, but with participant observation techniques in a local setting.

2. Articulate an appropriate problem statement in relation to the field research proposed.
3. Explain the researcher role you would play in the setting along the participant observation continuum.
4. Lay out the stages of your proposed field research study, including your plans for entering the field, developing and maintaining relationships, sampling and recording, and analyzing data.
5. Analyze what you would expect your study to add to the findings resulting from the study you selected.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Articulate a problem statement related to field research.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Propose a field research design with participant observation techniques in a local setting.
 - Explain a researcher role you would play the participant observation continuum.
 - Lay out the stages of a proposed field research study.
 - Analyze what you would expect field research to add to the findings resulting from an experiment or survey study.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about field research with a focus on researcher roles as they relate to data collection.

- How is the field research method you identified similar to or different from field research methods identified by other learners regarding sampling, recording, and analyzing data?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding developing and maintaining relationships in the field? Why or why not?
- Did you have similar expectations of whether your study would add to the findings resulting from the experiment or survey studies selected? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[Community of Excellence](#)

Unit 9 >> Analyzing Content

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Content Analysis

In this unit, you will gain a deeper understanding for how content centers on secondary data analysis such as the use of data that were previously collected. We will also explore some suggestions for data sources and the research methods used to engage with them. The research methods we have studied as well as the data sets used in their application are not without their flaws, but solutions for emergent methodological issues do exist.

The process of using secondary data refers to researchers using preexisting data but in a different way than it was used before or to answer a different question than intended by the researchers who originally collected the data. In other words, secondary analysis is the analysis of data collected in a previous study by another researcher for some purpose other than the topic of the current study. Examples of secondary data include historical documents, official statistics, official records, and surveys (for example, census statistics, archives of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [ICPSR], and data from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data [NACJD] used by many researchers). Research conducted using historical events aims to develop theoretical explanations of the particular historical events and processes as opposed to describing them. Some methodological challenges in this approach include lost, damaged, and biased materials.

Many researchers use agency records as a data source in a variety of research applications. Descriptive or exploratory studies are the types of research that most commonly use published statistics and agency records, but these data sources also have utility in applied studies. Researchers generally use varied published statistics and nonpublic agency records. The three general categories of information collected by or for public agencies are published statistics, nonpublic agency records (often collected for internal use), and new data collected by agency staff for specific purposes. Government organizations routinely collect and publish compilations of data such as census statistics, NCVS statistics, and the *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*. The data collected by criminal justice organizations, including nonpublic agency records, is often made available to criminal justice researchers. For example, sources such as the UCR, Correctional Population in the United States, and Court Caseload Statistics can provide child abuse, delinquency, and adult arrests, crime "hot spots" data to those researching criminal justice topics.

When considering agency records as a measure of decision-making, it is safe to say that you should expect the expected. If you encounter unexpected findings or patterns, it is best to first review the data collection procedures before accepting the unexpected results. Using hybrid sources in your research means combining observation or interview data collection with day-to-day criminal justice agency activities. An advantage of using this type of source includes being more cost-effective than fielding a team of research assistants, and maintaining more control over the measurement process than there would be by relying on agency definitions. There are also some disadvantages, though, such as the need to obtain an organization's cooperation and the fact that, when they rely on agency staff, staff and researchers have less control over the data collection process in general.

Comparative methods are used by researchers interested in making often transnational connections and comparisons between entities across time and space, such as historical periods and geographical contexts. Content analysis involves the systematic analysis of message characteristics by making inferences from text through systematic analysis. This can be done by identifying a population of documents or textual sources (newspapers articles, television commercials, et cetera), designing coding procedures for variables to be measured, and performing base statistical analyses on counting occurrences. Because communication takes many forms, content analysis can study human communications and many other aspects of behavior. Coding is the process of transforming raw data into a standardized, quantitative form. Coding is the measurement process in content analysis. It consists of the logic of conceptualization and operationalization. It is possible to test reliability in content analysis through inter-rater reliability and the test-retest method. There are examples of content analysis in newspaper stories about crime, violence in video games, and classifying gang-related homicides.

In the criminal justice context, crime mapping relies on a geographic information system (GIS) to conduct analyses of the relationship between social process and geographical context or location. This provides visual and statistical analyses of spatial nature of social phenomena, links the relationship between varied aggregated variables, and visually communicates results. Combining research designs can help to support a measurement approach that can affect causal validity. Triangulation makes use of multiple methods to study one research question. In the course of your research, when using secondary sources, certain methodological issues may arise, which include measuring across contexts, sampling across time and place, or accurately identifying causal relationships. You must also consider ethical issues such as avoiding harm or embarrassment to descendants of people named in historical documents and ensuring subject confidentiality. Additionally, transnational survey data collection requires special consideration of other countries' norms, values, and routine activities.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your course text to read the following:

- In *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*, Chapter 9, "Analyzing Content," pages 225–245.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

The following videos illustrate the concepts listed.

- Concept: Secondary data:
 - [*What Is Naturally Occurring Data?*](#)
- Concept: Historical events research:
 - [*Children of the Lodz Ghetto—A Memorial Research Project*](#).
- Concept: Comparative research:
 - [*Lifei Xie: Comparative Research on Gender-Based Employment Discrimination in China*](#).
- Concept: Content analysis:
 - [*Constructions of Risk in News Reporting About Herbal Medicine: A Content Analysis of Mainstream Aus.*](#)

Suggested Readings

Read the following articles addressing the Unit 9 topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Barbrey, J. W. (2004). [*Measuring the effectiveness of crime control policies in Knoxville's public housing: Using mapping software to filter Part I crime data*](#). *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 20(1), 16–32.
- Bridges, A. J., Wosnitzer, R., Scharrer, E., Sun, C., & Liberman, R. (2010). [*Aggression and sexual behavior in best-selling pornography videos: A content analysis update*](#). *Violence Against Women*, 16(10), 1065–1085.
- Dignan, J., Atkinson, A., Atkinson, H., Howes, M., Johnstone, J., Robinson, G., ... Sorsby, A. (2007). [*Staging restorative justice encounters against a criminal justice backdrop: A dramaturgical analysis*](#). *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 7(1), 5–32.
- Gore, R. Z., & Pattavina, A. (2004). [*Applications for examining the journey-to-crime using incident-based offender residence probability surfaces*](#). *Police Quarterly*, 7(4), 457–474.
- Hartley, R. D., & Miller, J. M. (2010). [*Crack-ing the media myth: Reconsidering sentencing severity for cocaine offenders by drug type*](#). *Criminal Justice Review*, 35(1), 67–89.
- Kazemian, L., & Farrington, D. P. (2006). [*Exploring residual career length and residual number of offenses for two generations of repeat offenders*](#). *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 43(1), 89–113.
- Sung, H. (2006). [*Structural determinants of police effectiveness in market democracies*](#). *Police Quarterly*, 9(1), 3–19.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).
- [National Criminal Justice Reference Service \(NCJRS\)](#).
- [World Bank](#).
- [Economy at a Glance](#) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- [United States Census Bureau](#).
- [International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts](#).

u09d1 - Content Analysis of Data Sets

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

Records kept by organizations such as nonpublic records for internal operational purposes can turn out to be valuable sources of data for criminal justice researchers. Additionally, there may be times when public organizations are asked to collect new data for researchers. This can be accomplished by interviews or through observation. Agencies typically use different, and sometimes unclear, units of count to record information collected about people and cases. Thus, the units of analysis represented by agency data may not always be obvious on their face. Archives and agency records may be based on units of analysis that are not suitable for particular research questions. Although it is possible to move from individual to aggregate units of analysis, it is not possible to move in the opposite direction. That said, sampling agency records is relatively simple once the units of analysis are defined. View the *Crime Analyst in Action* media resource (linked in the Resources) for an example of data analysis, findings, and discussion before you complete this discussion.

In Unit 7, you explored using surveys as a data source. For this discussion, review the survey data sets available through the ICPSR, using either its published directory or its Internet site (linked in the Resources). Then respond to the following in your main post:

1. Identify two data sets that might be used to study a research question in which you are interested.
2. State your selected research question.
3. Use the information in the ICPSR reports about them to determine whether the data set contains the relevant variables you will need to answer your research question.
 - a. Enter key words for your research question into the Find & Analyze Data search field on the ICPSR landing page. A list of studies displays in the search return.
 - b. You can filter your results using the filters listed on the left side of the page.
 - c. You can navigate to the main Find & Analyze Data page from the ICPSR site's drop-down menu located in the upper right corner of the main page.
4. Explore the issues of confidentiality and anonymity in terms of whether they are appropriately addressed.
5. Examine whether the information provided was enough to ensure that all ethical guidelines were followed.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Identify ICPSR data sets that might be used to study a research question.
 - State a career-related research question.
 - Use information in the ICPSR reports to determine whether the data set contains variables relevant to a research topic.
 - Explore the issues of confidentiality and anonymity.

Examine whether ICPSR data sets ensure that all ethical guidelines were followed.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about the data sets selected by you and your fellow learners. Were the data sets identified viable choices to support your proposed research question? Share your perspective with other learners about the advantages and disadvantages of using one of these data sets to answer your research question over designing a new study. Based on the research proposed by other learners, were the issues of confidentiality and anonymity appropriately addressed? Why or why not? Did you and other learners differ about whether the information provided was enough to ensure that all ethical guidelines were followed? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

[Crime Analyst in Action](#) | Transcript

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

u09d2 - Content Analysis Strategy

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.

Introduction

It is important during the research process that researchers, when they use data from agency records, be mindful of potential reliability and validity problems. "Follow the paper trail" and "Expect the expected" are two general principles researchers should use to guide them when using agency records in their research. Following the paper trail and expecting the expected are both actions that involve not only examining the data collected but also how it was collected. Having a good appreciation of how agency records are produced is the best way to avoid reliability and validity problems. Such problems can include clerical errors and changes in data collection procedures, social production of data (such as decisions by criminal justice personnel), agency data that are not designed for research (collected because the law requires it), tracking people rather than patterns (operational level, officials generally more interested in keeping track of individual cases than in examining patterns), and increases in error due to volume (the potential for clerical errors increases as the number of clerical entries increases).

For this discussion, select a current criminal justice or crime-related topic in your professional area of interest that has been the focus of news articles. Then respond to the following in your main post:

1. Propose a content analysis strategy for this topic using newspaper articles or editorials as your units of analysis.
2. Draft a problem statement for your selected topic.
3. Identify your key independent and dependent variables.
4. Define the population selection of the units of analysis, a sampling plan, and coding procedures for your key variables. You may use an article on this topic as the basis for developing your coding procedures test.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
 - Draft a problem statement for a selected topic.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
 - Propose a content analysis strategy for a criminal justice topic using newspaper articles or editorials as the units of analysis.
 - Identify key independent and dependent variables for a research topic.
 - Define the population selection of the units of analysis, a sampling plan, and coding procedures for key variables.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about your content analysis strategy and the units of analysis you would employ based on the problem statement articulated.

- Is the content analysis strategy you propose valid and reliable based on thoughts shared by other learners? Why or why not?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners your sampling plan and coding procedures? Why or why not? Would you refine your coding procedures based on the perspectives shared by other learners? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

Unit 10 >> Policy Analysis and Reporting Research Results

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in writing.

Policy Analysis and Research Results

Especially evident in the field of criminal justice is the fact that evaluation or applied research findings steer policy decisions that impact the lives of real people. In this unit, you will review a history of evaluation research and explore examples of methodologies that can be used to assess the impact of research on criminology and criminal justice programs and policies. Demand is increasing for evidence-based policy requiring that applied research satisfy the highest levels of methodological and ethical standards.

Evaluation research is social research conducted solely to investigate the design, implementation, and utility of social programs and then to help solve identified programming problems (for example, substance abuse treatment, welfare, correctional agendas, and vocational and educational training). Not only does evaluation research determine program efficacy, but it also presents results that can be understood by practitioners in the field.

Some basics of evaluation include inputs, program process, outputs, outcomes, feedback, and stakeholders. Inputs include the resources, raw materials, clients, and staff that go into a program. The program process consists of a complete service delivery, treatment, or intervention. Outputs are a direct product of a program's service delivery whereas outcomes demonstrate the impact of a program on the cases processed. Feedback is important information about service delivery system outputs, outcomes or operations that is made available to any program inputs. The stakeholders are the individuals or groups demonstrating some basic concern for the program's execution. Alternatives to evaluation research include research conducted for knowledge's sake or advocacy. Both types of research rely on data-driven empiricism. Some of the main motivations for evaluation research are management and administrative purposes, testing theoretical hypotheses, and deciding whether to continue, cut, bolster, or modify program.

Quantitative methods are generally favored for tracking post-process change and meta-analyses that identify patterns of change in several studies investigating the same research question. The effect size is the statistic representing the association between independent and dependent variables across studies. By contrast, qualitative methods reveal what is happening to program inputs and illustrates why treatment does or doesn't work for different people. A demand for evidence-based policy requires that researchers perform a systematic review of all available evidence (triangulation). Ethical issues are always a primary concern. Human subject concerns are paramount to research agendas that directly impact whether individuals have access to potentially beneficial programming. Political contexts can bias researchers and highlight or downplay certain findings. For example, random assignment to an entitlement program is unfair to those denied the treatment

When considering your research report goals, from the proposal to the presentation, research reporting goals often include the agendas of the researcher, the funding agency, the subjects under investigation and even the interests of the anticipated audience. They should strive to advance scientific knowledge and shape social policy. To that end, engaging in participatory action research is always an option. The types of research reports you may encounter include student papers and theses, peer-reviewed journal articles (containing an abstract, introduction, literature review, methods section, results, analytical discussion, and references), and applied reports commissioned by nonacademic agencies or institutions.

To ease the process of writing up research findings, certain strategies can be very helpful, such as drafting an outline, allowing for and valuing the time you invest in development, writing as much as you can as quickly as possible, and suspending preoccupations with polish and perfection. You can also solicit feedback and write while conducting your research.

Circling back to the beginning of your course, keep in mind that ethical issues in research, such as honesty, maintaining full records of research effort, resisting fudging statistics, acknowledging research sponsors, and considering co-authors' needs and expectations in collaborative work are essential. Finally, plagiarism is not an option. The research must be original and should be unique to your research methods employed, and the data collected should have value and utility in your chosen area of focus.

Learning Activities

u10s1 - Studies

Required Readings

Use your course text to read the following:

- In *Fundamentals of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice*:
 - Chapter 10, "Evaluation and Policy Analysis," pages 249–270.
 - Chapter 12, "Reporting Research Results," pages 292–309.

Suggested Audiovisual Resources

Review the following resources on the concepts listed:

- Concept: Qualitative data analysis:
 - [*Analysing Data—Becky Turner, Simon Busby, Angus Carpenter.*](#)
- Concept: Participant observation:
 - [*Participant/Observation.*](#)
- Concept: Systematic observation:
 - [*The Practice of Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice: Pockets of Crime.*](#)
- Concept: Focus group:
 - [*David Morgan on Research Methods.*](#)

Suggested Readings

Review the following articles and books addressing the course topics. Familiarizing yourself with these resources will provide you with additional insight and perspective about research practices in the criminal justice context.

- Halsey, M. J. (2006). [*Negotiating conditional release: Juvenile narratives of repeat incarceration.*](#) *Punishment & Society*, 8(2), 147–181.
- Padfield, N., & Maruna, S. (2006). [*The revolving door at the prison gate: Exploring the dramatic increase in recalls to prison.*](#) *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 6(3), 329–352.
- Smith, P., & Smith, W. A. (2005). [*Experiencing community through the eyes of young female offenders.*](#) *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 21(4), 364–385.

Suggested Internet Resources

- [*Annual Review of Sociology.*](#)
- [*RTI International.*](#)
- [*Qualitative Report.*](#)

u10a1 - Connecting Your Learning

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

In this assignment, the criteria in your Connecting Your Learning Scoring Guide are directly aligned to competencies 1–5 for the course.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 2:** Articulate a problem statement appropriate for examination using criminal justice research methods.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
- **Competency 4:** Use a common research method of criminal justice practitioners to examine the problem statement.
- **Competency 5:** Differentiate between reputable and nonreputable criminal justice research resources.

Assignment Description

Throughout the class, you have examined research methods, from probability sampling to survey research. You have assessed the challenges associated with research design, ethical research practices, data collection methods, and analyzing content and reporting research results. You have also evaluated the validity of research measures and reputability of resources available for criminal justice research.

Prepare a 5–7 page paper (1–1.5 pages per competency for competencies 1–5), focused on the course competencies and address two key areas of learning for each competency. This paper should showcase your learning proficiency and describe the importance of your learning relative to application in a career context.

Be sure to review the Connecting Your Learning Scoring Guide to ensure that you understand the criteria for this assignment.

Requirements

- **Written communication:** Must be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Resources and citations:** Format according to APA guidelines.
- **Required page count:** 5–7, not including the title page or the references page.
- **Required number of references:** One reference per competency for competencies 1–5.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

You are required to submit a draft of your paper to SafeAssign. Once you review your results and make any needed changes, submit your paper for grading.

Portfolio Prompt: This assignment should be placed in your ePortfolio for future reference and to demonstrate your learning connections for future employment purposes.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[APA Paper Template](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

[ePortfolio](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u10d1 - Reporting Research Results

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.

Introduction

When you are setting out to perform research on a particular topic, a goal of your research must be to advance and expand knowledge. If social research findings, in particular, are not communicated to your target audience, then the effort is ultimately unproductive. Meaningful and successfully articulated presentation of research begins with drafting a formal plan for research. If an organization is performing the research, it may not have clear statements or ideas about its program goals. In these cases, researchers must work with agency staff to formulate mutually acceptable statements of goals before proceeding to effectively reach their target audience with their findings. Identifying the goal of the research being conducted is critical to ensuring that the research goals are focused and met, such as taking steps to learn policy goals when doing evaluation research.

For this discussion, use the Internet to locate two different examples of criminological research projects that have been completed. Then respond to the following in your main post:

1. Describe how each study differs in its approach to reporting the research results.
2. Explain to whom you believe the author (or authors) of each study chosen is reporting (that is, who is the audience?).
3. Explore whether the predicted audience helped to shape the author's approach to reporting the results.
4. Analyze from a rating standpoint the overall quality of the research conducted and the effectiveness of the writing and data collected.
5. Outline the improvements you would you make, if any, to the studies you selected.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives.

- **Competency 1:** Differentiate research methods used by criminal justice agencies.
 - Describe how research studies differ in their approach to reporting the research results.
- **Competency 3:** Contrast the research methods used by criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners.
 - Explain the target audience of selected research studies.
 - Explore whether a study's predicted audience can help to shape the author's approach to reporting the results.
 - Analyze from a rating standpoint the overall quality of research conducted and the effectiveness of the writing and data collected.
 - Outline potential improvements to make to select research studies.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of at least two peers. Interact about how the research methods examined differ between criminal justice agencies and scholar-practitioners in terms of research goals.

- Are the research methods and findings identified by other learners effective for their target audience? Why or why not?
- Did you share perspectives similar to other learners regarding how studies differ in their approach to reporting the research results? Why or why not?

If you support your discussion points with external sources, you must provide citation information such as author and title. However, full APA citations are not needed for discussions.

Course Resources

CJ Discussion Scoring Guide

GREAT Discussion Guidelines for Criminal Justice

[Community of Excellence](#)

[Criminal Justice Undergraduate Library Research Guide](#)