

**STUDENT WARNING:** This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

## American Public University System

*The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind*

**School of Security & Global Studies**  
**SSGS300 Research Methods**  
**3 Credit Hours**  
**8 Week Course**  
**Prerequisite(s): None**

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### Course Description (Catalog)

This is an introductory social science research methods course that will provide students with an understanding of the research process, allowing students to develop the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to read, interpret, and evaluate published research. The course will explore quantitative, qualitative, and combined research approaches. Students will prepare work requiring critical analysis of recent published research in the social science fields. Students will examine the importance of theory as it relates to social science research and differentiate between major research approaches, designs, and data collection techniques in recently published research in the social science field. Students shall be introduced to social science academic writing and documentation styles.

### Course Scope

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This course is divided into 8 weeks and is organized to give students a broad context in which it will provide you with the information and processes needed to conduct social science research while an undergraduate student at APUS/AMU.

### **Course Objectives (CO)**

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to

- CO1: Explain why a consumer of research should understand various research methods.
- CO2: Evaluate recently published peer-reviewed scholarly articles in terms of conducting a literature review to support a research proposal.
- CO3: Differentiate between qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches to research.
- CO4: Produce an abstract and research proposal introduction.
- CO5: Describe the differences between a null hypothesis and an alternative hypothesis.
- CO6: Examine different types of research instrument validity and reliability measures.
- CO7: Critique scholarly research content within an annotated bibliography.
- CO8: Produce an academic research proposal based on a thorough analysis of a current issue in the social sciences reflecting the need for further study and demonstrating a well thought out research design.

### **Course Delivery Method**

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week as noted and include Forum questions (accomplished in groups through a threaded forum), examination, and individual assignments submitted for review by the Faculty Member). Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

### **Course Resources – The following course resources are located in the APUS academic databases for student access.**

Books, book chapters and articles.

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Bergman, M. M. (2008). The straw men of the qualitative-quantitative divide and their influence on mixed methods research. *Advances in mixed methods research: Theories and applications*, 11-21. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857024329.d3>

Ellis, L., Hartley, R. D., & Walsh, A. (2010). *Research methods in criminal justice and criminology: An interdisciplinary approach*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Greener, I. (2011). *Designing social research: A guide for the bewildered*. Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446287934>

McCold, P. (2008). Protocols for evaluating restorative justice programs. *British Journal of Community Justice*, 6(2), 9-28.

Prunckun, H. (2010). *Handbook of scientific methods of inquiry for intelligence analysis* (Vol. 11). Scarecrow Press.

Walliman, N. (2011). *Research methods: The basics*. Routledge. Read Part 1, Pages 5-65.

#### *Suggested Readings:*

Purdue Online Writing Lab. "Evaluating Sources: Overview." Accessed January 13, 2016. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/01/>

Purdue Online Writing Lab. "Evaluating Bibliographic Citations." Accessed January 13, 2016. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/02/>

Purdue Online Writing Lab. "Evaluation During Reading." Accessed January 13, 2016. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/03/>

Purdue Online Writing Lab. "Evaluating Print vs. Internet Sources." Accessed January 13, 2016. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/04/>

Greener, I. (2011). "Elements of Quantitative Design: Sampling and Statistics – or What Can I do with Numbers?" In *Designing Social Research: A Guide for the Bewildered* 55-73. SAGE Research Methods. Available in APUS Library eReserves. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446287934>

Hancké, B. (2009). "Writing Up Your Research." In *Intelligence Research Design: A Guide for Beginning Researchers in the Social Sciences*. 108-127. Oxford University Press. Available in APUS Library eReserves.

Golden-Biddle, K., & Locke, K. (2007). "The Style and Practice of Academic Writing." In *Composing Qualitative Research*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). 10-25. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412983709>

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## Evaluation Procedures

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following course requirements:

- 1. Graded Introduction:** This is a graded requirement. This forum is to invite you to accomplish two things: 1) build peer- to-peer relationships by introducing oneself and one's background to the class; 2) articulate individual student learning goals and/or expectations for the class. There is a 250-word requirement for your introduction post.
- 2. Research Proposal (Term Project):** Each student will be required to complete the term project, which is an 8-10 page (not counting the cover page), research proposal in proper APA format. In preparation for the research proposal, students will submit a working title, an annotated bibliography and a rough draft. The completed finalized research proposal is due no later than Sunday of week 8.
- 4. Working Title:** Submit your proposed working title for approval by no later than Sunday of week 2. Late submissions of this assignment will not be accepted.
- 5. Annotated Bibliography:** Submit an annotated bibliography by no later than Sunday of week 3. Late submissions of this assignment will not be accepted. More info on annotated bibliographies may be found at the Purdue Owl Writing website i.e., <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>
- 6. Rough Draft:** Submit a rough draft of the research proposal by no later than Sunday of week 5.
- 7. Forums (Weeks 1-8):** Each student will be required to answer the weekly forum question and respond to at least two other students. The forum questions can be found on the Forum Board. Students will be required to post their weekly forum question response to the proper forum board.

<u>Grade Instruments</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Graded Introduction	01%
Research Proposal (term project)	50%
Working Title	10%
Annotated Bibliography	15%
Rough Draft	15%
Forums	09%
Total	100%

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NOTE: Classroom participation is necessary for distance education. This is not a correspondence course you will have to interact with your fellow students and your professor. The more interaction that we achieve will increase our knowledge of each other, the course material, and the learning process.

It is imperative that the student stays in contact with the professor and university. If your work schedule changes, or you are deployed, a family emergency occurs, or anything that will cause your course assignments to be late. You must make contact with the class professor. The class professor will work out a personal class completion schedule with the student. It is the student's responsibility to advise the professor of any changes that will cause course assignments to be late. It is the course professor discretion to either deny or grant an extension based on information that is provided to the class professor. Please read any announcement on requests for extension of course as posted in the announcement section.

Students should log into the classroom several times a week and check discussion boards and emails. If the student fails to communicate or stay in contact with the course professor, he/she may be dropped or fail the course. It is strongly suggested to communicate openly and freely with the course professor. If you need anything communicate with the course professor first to work out any problems.

## 8 – Week Course Outline

Please see the Student Handbook to reference the University's grading scale.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Learning Objectives</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
1	Overview: Writing a Research Proposal.  Consumer of Scholarly Research	<b>Wk 1:</b>  <b>CO1</b> Explain why a consumer of research should understand various research methods.	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach  Chapters 1, 2 & 16, Appendix A, B, and C	Assignments due in Week one:  1.) Graded Introduction: Post in Introduction Forum  2.) Week 1 Forum- (Initial Post due Thursday and 2

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			Greener (2011) Walliman (2011) Read Lesson 1 located in the classroom	replies due Sunday of this week) Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons
2	Topic Selection & Literature Review	<b>Wk 2:</b>  <b>CO2</b> Evaluate recently published peer-reviewed scholarly articles in terms of conducting a literature review to support a research proposal.	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach Chapters 2 & 5, Appendix A, B, and C  Greener (2011). McCold (2008)  APUS Library  Read Lesson 2 located in the classroom	Assignments due in Week two:  1.) Forum-(Initial Post due Thursday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week)  2.) Submit Working Title  Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons
3	Research Approach: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mix Methods  Create and Annotated Bibliography from Peer Reviewed Articles/Studies located in APUS Library Databases	<b>Wk 3:</b>  <b>CO3</b> Differentiate between qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches to research. <b>CO7</b> Critique scholarly research content within an	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach  Chapter 9 and 10 Review Chapter 13  Gubrium et.al. (2012)	Assignments due in Week three:  1.) Forum-(Initial Post due Thursday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week) Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons  2. Submit an annotated bibliography by no

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		annotated bibliography.	Read Lesson 3 located in the classroom	later than Sunday of week 3.
4	Abstract & Introduction Page	<p><b>Wk 4:</b></p> <p><b>CO4</b> Produce an abstract and research proposal introduction.</p>	<p>Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach</p> <p>Review Chapter 5 Read Appendix B &amp; C</p> <p>Greener, Ian (2011)</p> <p>Read Lesson 4 located in the classroom</p>	<p>Assignment due in Week four:</p> <p>1.) Forum Assignment (non-graded)</p>
5	Hypothesis & Null Hypothesis	<p><b>Wk 5:</b></p> <p><b>CO5</b> Describe the differences between a null hypothesis and an alternative hypothesis.</p>	<p>Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach</p> <p>Chapter 2 and 13 Read Lesson 5 located in the classroom</p>	<p>Assignments due Week five:</p> <p>1.) Forum-(Initial Post due Thursday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week) Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons</p> <p>2.) Submit Rough Draft of Research Proposal</p>
6	Research Instrument & Validity	<p><b>Wk 6:</b></p> <p><b>CO6</b> Examine different types of research</p>	<p>Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach</p>	<p>Assignment due Week six:</p> <p>1.) Forum-(Initial Post due Thursday and 2 replies due Sunday of this</p>

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		instrument validity and reliability measures.	Chapter 6 Walliman (2011)  Read Lesson 6 located in the classroom	week) Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons
7	Design Method: Experimental or Non-experimental	<b>Wk 7:</b>  <b>CO3</b> Differentiate between qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches to research.	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach  Chapters 14 & 15 Read Lesson 7 located in the classroom	Assignments due Week seven:  1.) Forum-(Initial Post due Thursday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week) Please View Grading Rubric in Lessons
8	Understanding Results	<b>Wk 8:</b>  <b>CO8</b> Produce an academic research proposal based on a thorough analysis of a current issue in criminal justice reflecting the need for further study and demonstrating a well thought out research design.	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach  Review Chapters 3 & 4 Read Lesson 8 located in the classroom	Assignment due Week eight:  1.) Final -Research Proposal Due – After Sunday of Week 8 No Student Course Material i.e., assignments shall be accepted by the instructor for grading.



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## **Policies**

Please see the Student Handbook to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

### **Writing Expectations**

Written assignments will be free of English and grammar errors. All in-text citations and references will be properly formatted in based on your academic discipline. Only acceptable scholarly references will be used during the class.

### **Citation and Reference Style**

Attention Please: Students will follow their discipline specific citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University. Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow their discipline specific citation and reference style.

### **Late Assignments**

See the “Student Deadlines” section of your Student Handbook.

### **Netiquette**

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.

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- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-),: ), ☺

### **Disclaimer Statement**

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

### **Online Library**

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to [librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

- ***Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:*** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- ***Electronic Books:*** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- ***Electronic Journals:*** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- ***Tutor.com:*** AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. [Tutor.com](http://tutor.com) connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.

### **Request a Library Guide for your course (<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)**

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.

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- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library: [librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

### **Turnitin.com**

**Turnitin.com** is a tool to detect plagiarism. This tool helps ensure a culture of adherence to the University's standards for intellectual honesty. Turnitin.com also reviews students' papers for matches with Internet materials and with thousands of student papers in its database and returns an Originality Report to instructors.

### **Selected Bibliography**

Dantzker, M. L., & Hunter, R. D. (2006). *Research methods for criminology and criminal justice* (2nd ed.). Jones and Bartlett

Hagan, F. E. (1997). Research methods in criminal justice and criminology (pp. 347-48). Allyn and Bacon.

King, R., & Wincup, E. (2008). *Doing research on crime and justice*. Oxford University

Maxfield, M., & Babbie, E. (2014). *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology*. Cengage Learning.