University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
5210 Grand Avenue
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649
479-788-7000

General Syllabus

CRJU 39873 Introduction to Research Methods

Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite: ENGL 10203 Composition III or ENGL 24103 Advanced Composition

Effective Catalog: 2025-2026

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Examines methods and techniques of research in the behavioral sciences, historical development of psychological and social research, and techniques and problems. Requires writing research proposal.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define terms related to research methods used in criminal justice studies
2. Analyze the underlying epistemology of quantitative and qualitative research
3. Discuss the basic principles of quantitative and qualitative research and understand how they are applied in actual research projects
4. Design correctly-stated research questions and hypotheses
5. Compose a research proposal
6. Identify the purposes of various statistical tools and select appropriate statistical tools for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method studies
7. Identify appropriate sampling techniques for quantitative and qualitative studies
8. Analyze techniques of collecting research data
9. Discuss assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for quantitative and qualitative studies
10. Perform content analysis on various written works.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills
Critical Thinking Skills: Students will identify problems/issues and develop solutions/analysis.

Communication Skills (written and oral)
Students will communicate proficiently. Students will use essay format for written presentation of research projects and discuss particular aspects of various topics in a seminar setting.

Ethical Decision Making
Students will model ethical decision-making processes. Students will examine ethical dilemmas within the criminal justice field and develop ethical frameworks to resolve specific ethical issues.

Global and Cultural Perspectives
Students will reflect upon cultural differences and their implications for interacting with people from cultures other than their own.

III. Major Course Topics

A. Overview of research concepts, terminology and techniques
B. Sampling and data collection techniques common in Criminal Justice research
C. Issues and challenges facing the Criminal Justice researchers.