

University of Manitoba, Department of Sociology

**SOC 3100 A01 – Practicum in Criminological/Sociological Research**  
**Fall 2014 & Winter 2015 (6 credit hours)**

Room 125 St. John's College  
M/W 2:30 – 3:45

**Instructor:** Frank Cormier  
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**Office hours:** By appointment

Overall, this course is intended to provide students with an opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have acquired in this and previous criminology/sociology courses, and to gain experience in the conduct of research in a 'real life' setting. In addition to attending lectures and tutorials dealing with research methods and tools, students will be placed within a justice or other social-service related agency to complete a research project relevant to the agency's mandate.

Research findings often must be filtered through a network of political interests, fiscal realities, and various organizational needs and priorities. Therefore, it is important for students to develop an understanding of the context in which research is interpreted and applied. Through this course, students will gain an understanding of the policy implications that are attached to both criminological/sociological theory and to the results of field research. The field placement will also expose students to the ways in which criminal justice and other agencies define needs and priorities, design and implement strategies, and deliver programs and services. Students will be supported in their projects through lectures, practical exercises, and tutorials in the use of statistical and/or presentation software.

**Required Text:**

Babbie, E. and L. Benaquisto (2014). Fundamentals of Social Research (3<sup>rd</sup> Cdn. Ed.). Nelson.

**Strongly Recommended:**

A research and writing style guide. This is one of the good ones:

Northey, M. et al (2007). Making Sense in the Social Sciences: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Oxford University Press. [Note: other editions are fine as well.]

**Evaluation:**

Grades will be determined on the basis of 3 assignments/exercises, and on the evaluation of various aspects of the field projects. Each of these components is described in more detail below.

- **Assignments and exercises (15%)**

Students will complete three written assignments/exercises over the course of the academic year. These are intended to reinforce the material discussed in the lectures, and to provide students with an opportunity to apply, for example, their statistical and presentation software skills. Each assignment is worth 5% of the final grade.

- **Literature review (5% (outline) + 15% (finished document))**  
The literature review is one of the essential steps in conducting a research project; it summarizes prior research in a given area, and provides a context and rationale for new research. Through the literature review, students will demonstrate their familiarity with the existing knowledge and data that are relevant to their projects. Students must submit a typed, unbound hard-copy version, as well as an electronic version (e-mail is preferred, however any other electronic format is acceptable) in Microsoft Word format.
  
- **Research report (5% (outline) + 35% (finished version) + 5% (revisions))**  
The research report presents a detailed summary of the process and outcomes of the student's project. The report will contain an introductory/background section, a detailed description of the methodology employed, presentation of findings, and a presentation of the conclusions and recommendations that are supported by the research findings. Students must submit an outline (5%), a typed, unbound hard-copy version (35%), as well as an electronic version in Microsoft Word format. Following grading, students must submit a revised version (5%) for binding and presentation to the agency supervisor.
  
- **Power Point presentation (10%)**  
PowerPoint presentation software is commonly used to present the results of research to clients and other audiences. Students will prepare and deliver a presentation (at a time to be arranged by the student and their supervisor) to the agency in which they conducted their research. For grading purposes, students must submit a hard-copy version, as well as an electronic version.
  
- **Poster board presentation (5%)**  
Poster boards are a means to present research findings in a graphical fashion, allowing viewers to quickly grasp the purpose, process, and findings of a project. Students will prepare a poster board for presentation at the year-end exposition for academics and criminal justice personnel.
  
- **Agency evaluation (5%)**  
Each student's performance during the placement will be evaluated by relevant agency personnel.

***Note: With the exception of the assignments/exercises, all of the required course work listed above must be completed in order to pass the course.***

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A+	90 - 100%	C+	65 - 69%
A	80 - 89%	C	60 - 64%
B+	75 - 79%	D	50 - 59%
B	70 - 74%	F	0 - 49%

**Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend all classes. The instructor may initiate debarment procedures when unexcused absences exceed three scheduled classes. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, please inform the instructor prior to the class if possible. In the case of a missed test, exam, or assignment due date, a medical certificate must be provided or a reduction of one

letter grade per day will be applied. In any of the cases above, it is the student's responsibility to *contact the instructor as soon as possible*. There will be no exceptions to the above policy.

**Class Conduct:**

Disruptions such as talking, late arrivals or early departures are especially distracting to the instructor and to other students. Please be considerate of the needs and rights of others. Active cell phones and other electronic devices are not welcome. Laptop computers, tablets, etc. may only be used to facilitate note-taking, and solely at the instructor's discretion.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, exam personation, ("Personation at Examinations" (Section 5.2.9) and "Plagiarism and cheating" (Section 8.1)) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/index.html>. Ignorance of the regulations and policies regarding academic integrity is not a valid excuse for violating them.

**Voluntary Withdrawal:**

Students should be familiar with the rules and procedures for voluntary withdrawal. The final date for withdrawal without academic penalty is March 19, 2015.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

This schedule (other than deliverable dates) is approximate and may be adjusted as the course progresses. Assignments and exercises will be integrated into the course when and where appropriate.

***September***

Introduction to the course  
Project management  
Social science and the research process

***October***

Review of sociological/criminological perspectives  
Literature reviews and secondary research  
Research ethics

Literature review outline due **October 6<sup>th</sup>**

***November***

Concepts and measures  
Research design  
Sampling  
Survey research

Literature review due **November 10<sup>th</sup>**

### ***January***

Qualitative methods and interview research  
Evaluation

### ***February***

Writing a research report  
Preliminary presentations

Research report outline due **February 11<sup>th</sup>**

### ***Mid March/April***

No classes – completion of research reports, finalization of presentations

### **Final Deliverables:**

March 18 – Research reports due (will be returned to you with comments by March 30<sup>th</sup>)

March 30 – Poster boards and PowerPoint presentations due

April 8 – Revised reports due (graded version must also be returned)

April 24 – Research exposition (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

**Note:** Assignments and other deliverables must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on the due date. They must be submitted either directly to the instructor or date-stamped by the Sociology general office. Deliverables submitted by **any other** means will not be accepted.

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### **Unclaimed term work**

*Any term work that has not been claimed by students will be held for four (4) months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. At the conclusion of this time, all unclaimed term work will become property of the Faculty of Arts and be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.*