CCJ-2910 DIRECTED RESEARCH  
HILLSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
SYLLABUS  
(3 credits)

Professor: Dr. Mindy Neal  
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Office Hours: via email, or by appointment  
**Best way to communicate: Email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An individualized research/study project that applies the objective approach in the observation and reporting of information relating to relevant criminal justice issues with a focus on understanding and interpreting data, as well as basic statistics. Documented research paper required, and must relate to the criminal justice/criminology field.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The student will be able to

1. Understand the basic elements of criminological and criminal justice literature search  
2. Identify relevant sociological problems related to criminology and criminal justice  
3. Conduct a basic review of the literature in the field  
4. Produce a simple research proposal  
5. Review and interpret relevant data  
6. Produce a comprehensive report of a criminological phenomena or criminal justice practice  
7. Explain in-depth the purpose, function($s$), procedures, practices and/or programs of the criminal justice subject area that might apply.

TEXT:

No text is required. Material will be derived from the student's individual library research of books, periodicals, professional journals and web sites, interviews and/or other relevant sources as they pertain to the research subject.
**METHOD OF EVALUATION:**

Final Paper = 100%

**FINAL REPORT:**

The final product of this course will be the research paper. This report is to be typewritten and at least 20 pages in length (this may include title page and reference page). This report is to be on standard 8.5" by 11" paper and must be printed in standard size type (oversized print will not be acceptable). The paper should be double spaced. You must follow the prescribed format, which is APA or MLA Style. Further, it must contain a minimum of 5 references, which must include at least one (1) book other than a text book, one (1) professional journal article, and one (1) trade journal article, and one (1) web site.

This paper will be graded on spelling, grammar, and format as well as on content. If you do not use proper APA or MLA citation as well as proper grammar, spelling and format, you will lose points and will put an A out of reach. It is imperative that you do proper citation (this includes citing sources within the body of the paper – not just listing your sources at the end of the paper). You must give appropriate credit to sources in the body of your paper; otherwise, it is plagiarism. If you do not know how to do this, you must visit the writing center or an English teacher for assistance. For proper APA or MLA format, visit: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)

The topic of your paper should pertain to a criminal justice subject area of interest to you. It might focus on a criminological theory, a criminal justice agency (the purpose and operations of an agency – for example, the police, the sheriff’s department, the DEA, the FBI, etc). It may focus on a current issue such as habitual offender laws, capital punishment, the supreme court, police brutality and corruption, prisons, women in prison, organized crime, domestic violence, victimology, criminal profiling, gangs, etc. The topics are endless. These are issues that are particularly relevant or of interest at this time. It may focus on a particular occupation within the criminal justice field, such as a crime scene technician or K-9 officer, or it might involve the in-depth study of a particular offender group, such as teen thrill killers or juvenile offenders. In selecting your topic, keep your focus narrowed to a particular aspect or area that lends itself to formal research. Trying to cover too much or too many areas is frustrating and
counter-productive. Your job is to select a topic, research that topic, and produce a comprehensive report on that topic.

You MUST get approval from the instructor before beginning your research. Email request for approval is fine: please fully explain your topic and how it relates to the field of criminal justice/criminology. The instructor may also help you with selecting and narrowing a topic if you need. Please always contact the instructor with any questions you might have.

**The request for approval must be submitted by _____________ at 5:00 p.m.** Failure to do this by March 1 will result in an automatic reduction of 5 points from your grade and may put an A out of reach.

The instructor **will review your paper** prior to final submission should you choose.

**The paper is due: _______________ by 5:00 p.m.** Any papers received after this date will be accepted at the sole discretion of the instructor; further, they will have an automatic grade deduction of one full grade per day they are late. Hard-copies are due to the Ybor Public Service Technology (YPST) Building on the Ybor Campus, Office 136 (or give them to the person at the front desk and they will put them in my mailbox). Email copies are not sufficient and will be reduced a full letter grade should this be the only submission.

**Grading Rubric: 100 points possible**

1. Request for approval submitted on time: 5 points
2. Paper length - 20 pages (including title and reference page): 10 points
3. Proper APA or MLA format (proper citations in body of paper and at end in reference page): 10 points
4. Grammar and writing (proper grammar, sentence structure, paragraphs, flow of paper, transitions): 20 points
5. Content of paper: 55 points