

**University of Texas at Dallas**  
**Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice**  
**CRIM 7381: Criminological Inquiry**  
**Location: ECSW 2.325**  
**Time: Mondays 4-6:45pm (TBD)**

**Instructor:** Megan Bears Augustyn, PhD  
**Office Hours:** Mondays 12-3pm (if you cannot make it in person-please let me know and we can meet on Teams during that time or set up another time during the week to meet in person)☺  
**Office:** Green Hall 2.828  
**Phone:** 972-883-6842  
**Contact Information:** Email: [megan.augustyn@utdallas.edu](mailto:megan.augustyn@utdallas.edu) (please use **CRIM 7381** as the subject line to increase the probability that your email will be read with urgency and not accidentally overlooked). Please do not email me through Blackboard because I do not trust those emails always go through in a timely manner.

**Course Overview:**

This course is based on the Dissertation Calculator established by the University of Minnesota and the Dissertation Calendar utilized by the University of Kentucky. The goal of this course is to help ABD students make sufficient progress on their dissertation and have a formal working group to facilitate this progress. The instructor serves as the head of the working group and will work with each student individually to establish realistic goals related to the progress of one's dissertation. General topics will be covered in class meetings as well as one-on-one attention to individual dissertations.

Upon successfully completing this course, you will have made sufficient progress on your dissertation in at least some of the following areas (individualized):

- Understand why it is important to write a dissertation
- Selection of topic and identification of data source
- Make research topic and data source align in a meaningful way
- Establish a dissertation committee
- Secure IRB approval for dissertation
- Draft dissertation proposal
- Understand the format and process of a dissertation proposal defense
- Complete dissertation proposal defense
- Analyze data
- Write up results in a detailed, clear manner
- Understand the implications and limitations of dissertation analyses
- Draft discussion for dissertation
- Understand the format and process of a final dissertation defense
- Formatting dissertation for submission at UTD

**Course Grading:**

Course grading is based on individual student progress. Each student will meet with the instructor one-on-one at the beginning of the semester to set REALISTIC goals to accomplish throughout the semester as it relates to one's dissertation. Course grades will be based on progress towards the established goals.

**Grade Distribution**

- A – All individual goals established with professor are accomplished
- B – Student accomplishes most of the established individual goals
- C – Student accomplishes only half of individual goals or less than half of goals

**PLEASE NOTE:** The instructor will work with the students one-on-one to review ideas, outlines, dissertation chapters, analytic strategies and plans, statistical code, and statistical output throughout the semester. Students will submit work to be analyzed by email ([megan.augustyn@utdallas.edu](mailto:megan.augustyn@utdallas.edu)) or will bring materials to class for review with the instructor.

### Schedule\*

**Based on the first class meeting and student feedback, the schedule will be updated to reflect the needs of the students enrolled in the course. The initial schedule is an outline of various topics to be covered.**

Week/Date	Class Topics/Events
Week 1 1.26.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements of a dissertation and their purpose</li> <li>• Individual meetings to set course goals</li> </ul>
Week 2 2.2.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting a topic and finding relevant data</li> <li>• IRB approval</li> </ul>
Week 3 2.9.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of a committee and its selection</li> <li>• Communicating clearly with chair and committee members about expectations</li> </ul>
Week 4 2.16.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline of a dissertation proposal and the goals of each chapter: From the introduction to analytic strategies</li> </ul>
Week 5 2.23.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review chapters: from broad topic to your final research questions</li> </ul>
Week 6 3.2.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear writing for data, measures and analytic plans</li> </ul>
Week 7 3.9.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal defense: What to prepare and what to expect?</li> </ul>
Week 8 3.23.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions: Taking comments from a proposal defense and moving forward with your dissertation</li> </ul>
Week 9 3.30.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analyses</li> </ul>
Week 10 4.6.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to clearly communicate results in written-word and tables?</li> </ul>
Week 11 4.13.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I finished my results, now what?!?</li> </ul>
Week 12 4.20.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy applications as a requirement for dissertations today</li> </ul>
Week 13 4.27.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitations: We all have them and need to communicate them clearly</li> </ul>
Week 14 5.4.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Final Defense, Revisions, and Formatting so I can graduate!</li> </ul>

Week 15 5.11.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="678 226 1386 262">• Professor Meeting to Ensure Goals Have Been Met</li></ul>

### Schedule, Reading, and Assignment List\*

Subject to change as necessary throughout course. Please check Blackboard and UT Dallas email addresses for updates.

Module	Topics	Assigned Readings/Videos	Assignments Due & Date
<p><b>Module 1</b> Aug. 25- Sept.5</p>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Surveys as a form of ethical research</p> <p><b>Special Topic:</b> IRB approval needed</p> <p><b>Qualtrics “How To” Video:</b> Access to Qualtrics (no video, just links)</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>How do you conduct surveys in an ethical manner?</i></li> <li>2. <i>What do you need to do to prepare and submit an IRB protocol at UT Dallas?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Is my Qualtrics account at UT Dallas set-up and ready to go?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Introduction Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch.1 – Read Only 1.1, 1.2, 1.4</p> <p>Groves Ch. 11 (full chapter)</p> <p>Access CITI training: <a href="https://atlas.utdallas.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=981">https://atlas.utdallas.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=981</a></p> <p>Access to Qualtrics Set-up: <a href="https://ets.utdallas.edu/elearning-services/qualtrics/">https://ets.utdallas.edu/elearning-services/qualtrics/</a></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 9/4/2025 by 6pm - CITI Social and Behavioral Sciences Training OR Refresher Course Completion (Upload Certificate with date of Completion in Blackboard). Course or refresher must be completed after 8/25/25 to receive credit to show that this was done as part of class</li> <li>2. 9/5/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #1 in Blackboard</li> <li>3. Sign-up for Instructor Meeting</li> </ol>

<p><b>Module 2</b> Sept. 8- Sept. 19</p>	<p>Theme: Sampling and Survey Research</p> <p>Special Topic: Common/Available Data</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: Introduction to Qualtrics and Sample Lists</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>How do I decide to whom I want to give my survey?</i></li> <li>2. <i>What is the value of a cross-sectional survey vs. a longitudinal survey?</i></li> <li>3. <i>How complex of a sampling strategy should I use?</i></li> <li>4. <i>How does my sample affect the generalizability of my survey results?</i></li> <li>5. <i>How do I enter my sample participants into Qualtrics for dissemination?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Module 2 Introduction Video</p> <p>Qualtrics How To Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch 1 – Only 1.3, 1.5</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 2 (all)</p> <p>*Mulvey, E. P., Schubert, C. A., &amp; Piquero, A. (2014). Pathways to desistance: Final technical report. <i>US Department of Justice</i>, 1-16. (PDF Available in Blackboard)</p> <p>*Mullan Harris (2018) – Power Point available online</p> <p>*Select Chapters: Halfon, N., Forrest, C. B., Lerner, R. M., &amp; Faustman, E. M. (2018). Handbook of life course health development. Required: pp. 561-621 (Book PDF available online)</p>	<p>1. 9/18/2025 by 6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</p> <p>2. 9/19/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #2 in Blackboard</p>
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<p><b>Module 3</b> Sept. 22- Oct. 3</p>	<p>Theme: Survey Design</p> <p>Special Topic: Maltreatment and IPV</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: None</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What are the different ways to administer a survey and how does my topic of interest influence that decision?</i></li> <li>2. <i>How do survey data compare to other data sources?</i></li> <li>3. <i>What can I do to ensure my participants will complete the survey or survey-interview?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Module 3 Introduction Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 5 (all)</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 9 (all)</p> <p>*Smith, C. A., Ireland, T. O., Thornberry, T. P., &amp; Elwyn, L. (2008). Childhood maltreatment and antisocial behavior: Comparison of self-reported and substantiated maltreatment. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i>, 78(2), 173-186. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Widom, C. S. (2024). Childhood maltreatment, revictimization, and partner violence victimization through midlife: A prospective longitudinal investigation. <i>Journal of interpersonal violence</i>, 39(19-20), 4087-4112. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Bachman, R. (2000). A comparison of annual incidence rates and contextual characteristics of intimate-partner violence against women from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS). <i>Violence Against Women</i>, 6(8), 839-867. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p>	<p>1. 10/2/2025 by 6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</p> <p>2. 10/3/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #3 in Blackboard</p>
<p><b>Module 4</b></p>	<p>Theme: Operationalization in</p>	<p>Module 4 Introduction Video</p>	<p>1. 10/16/2025 by</p>

<p>Oct. 6- Oct. 17</p>	<p>Surveys</p> <p>Special Topic: Gangs</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: Question blocks and formatting</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What are the limitations of using surveys to collect data on behaviors? Attitudes?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Are surveys a reliable way to collect information on gang membership?</i></li> <li>3. <i>What is the ordering of my survey instrument and how does that affect participation?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Qualtrics How To Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 7 (all)</p> <p>*Thornberry, T. P., Krohn, M. D., Lizotte, A. J., &amp; Chard- Wierschem, D. (1993). The role of juvenile gangs in facilitating delinquent behavior. <i>Journal of research in Crime and Delinquency</i>, 30(1), 55-87. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Esbensen, F. A., Winfree Jr, L. T., He, N., &amp; Taylor, T. J. (2001). Youth gangs and definitional issues: When is a gang a gang, and why does it matter?. <i>Crime &amp; delinquency</i>, 47(1), 105-130. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Melde, C., Esbensen, F. A., &amp; Carson, D. C. (2016). Gang membership and involvement in violence among US adolescents: A test of construct validity. In <i>Gang transitions and transformations in an international context</i> (pp. 33-50). Cham: Springer International Publishing. (Version of chapter is available for free to download from the internet)</p>	<p>6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</p> <p>2. 10/17/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #4 in Blackboard</p>
<p><b>Module 5</b> Oct. 20-</p>	<p>Theme: Evaluating Survey Questions</p>	<p>Module 5 Introduction Video</p>	<p>1. 10/20/2025 by 6pm Draft Survey</p>

<p>Oct. 31</p>	<p>Special Topic: Deterrence</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: Embedding Data in a Survey</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>How important is question wording in survey results?</i></li> <li>2. <i>What are the criteria of good survey questions?</i></li> <li>3. <i>How can you ensure reliability and validity in your survey questions?</i></li> <li>4. <i>Are surveys a valid way to collect data on deterrence?</i></li> <li>5. <i>How can Qualtrics help me to ensure that the correct participants answer questions?</i></li> <li>6. <i>How can I include identifiable information in my survey?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Qualtrics How To Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch 8 (all)</p> <p>*Nagin, D. S., &amp; Paternoster, R. (1993). Enduring individual differences and rational choice theories of crime. <i>Law &amp; Society Review</i>, 27(3), 467-496. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Matsueda, R. L., Kreager, D. A., &amp; Huizinga, D. (2006). Deterring delinquents: A rational choice model of theft and violence. <i>American sociological review</i>, 71(1), 95-122.) (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Loughran, T. A., Paternoster, R., &amp; Piquero, A. R. (2018). Individual difference and deterrence. In <i>Deterrence, Choice, and Crime, Volume 23</i> (pp. 211-236). Routledge. (Full book is available online at UTD Library website)</p>	<p>Instrument Due in Blackboard</p> <p>2. 10/30/2025 by 6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</p> <p>3. 10/31/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #6 in Blackboard</p>
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<p><b>Module 6</b> Nov. 3 – Nov.14</p>	<p>Theme: Measurement and Error in Surveys</p> <p>Special Topic: Self-control</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: Responses and Skip Patterns</p> <p><i>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What are the various sources of error in survey data results?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Why is it important to critically analyze survey questions and measurement when evaluating research?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Should there be a single way to measure specific criminological constructs and outcomes?</i></li> <li>4. <i>How can Qualtrics help me to ensure that the correct participants answer questions?</i></li> <li>5. <i>How can Qualtrics help me evaluate the</i></li> </ol>	<p>Module 6 Introduction Video</p> <p>Qualtrics How To Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 12 (all)</p> <p>*Piquero, A. R., &amp; Rosay, A. B. (1998). The reliability and validity of Grasmick et al.'s self-control scale: A comment on Longshore et al. <i>Criminology</i>, 36, 157. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Walters, G. D. (2016). Are behavioral measures of self-control and the Grasmick self-control scale measuring the same construct? A meta-analysis. <i>American journal of criminal justice</i>, 41(2), 151-167. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Jones, S. (2017). Does choice of measure matter? Assessing the similarities and differences among self-control scales. <i>Journal of criminal justice</i>, 50, 78-85. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 11/13/2025 by 6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</li> <li>2. 11/14/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #6 in Blackboard</li> </ol>
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<p><b>Module 8</b> Dec. 1 – Dec. 8</p>	<p>Theme: Cleaning and Analyzing Survey Data</p> <p>Special Topic: Social Networks</p> <p>Qualtrics “How To” Video: Downloading and Cleaning Your data</p> <p>By the end of this module, you should be able to answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What are creative uses of surveys to address commonly asked questions, including the nature and influence of social relationships?</i></li> <li>2. <i>How do I ensure my variables are coded before downloading my data?</i></li> </ol>	<p>Module 8 Introduction Video</p> <p>Qualtrics How To Video</p> <p>Groves et al. Ch. 10 (all)</p> <p>*McGloin, J. M. (2009). Delinquency balance: Revisiting peer influence. <i>Criminology</i>, 47(2), 439-477. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p> <p>*Meldrum, R. C., Young, J. T., &amp; Weerman, F. M. (2012). Changes in self-control during adolescence: Investigating the influence of the adolescent peer network. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i>, 40(6), 452-462. (PDF Available from UT Dallas Libraries)</p>	<p>1. 12/6/2025 by 6pm Article Summaries due in Blackboard (*summaries required)</p> <p>2. 12/7/2025 by 6pm Response to Discussion Board Post #8 in Blackboard</p>
<p><b>Final Qualtrics Project and Data Due December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 by 12pm.</b></p>			