



**Lakehead University, Orillia Campus
Department of Interdisciplinary Studies**

**CRIM 4801 YAO: Honours Research Project
Fall/Winter 2019/2020**

Instructor name: Dr. Raika Abdulahad	Time and date: Tuesday/Thursday:8:30-10:00 am.
Office location: Third floor OA Area B	Classroom location: First Semester: OA2015 Second Semester: OA2019
Email: raabdula@lakeheadu.ca (do not email me through my CourseLink)	Office hours: W 12:00-1:00 PM; or after the class, or by an appointment.

Course Description

The Honours Research Project is a capstone course in Criminology. Its purpose is to teach you to apply the knowledge and skills you have learned over the course of your studies to produce the pinnacle piece of scholarship of your undergraduate career. To wit, you will develop and deliver a research project of your own making, with the aim of replicating past criminological findings or discovering new ones. This will entail identifying a research question, reading and synthesizing the relevant literature, generating hypotheses, designing an empirical methodology, locating appropriate data, developing predictions, analyzing the data, writing up the results, and presenting your project to your peers. In the process, you will gain a deeper understanding of the field and of the practice of conducting criminological research.

Learning outcomes

As a student in this course, you will acquire a variety of research skills, ranging from the integration of past findings to the analysis of data to test your hypotheses. In this way, you will develop a greater appreciation of a topic area of criminology. You will also perform peer review and preregister your hypotheses, methods, and analysis plans, which will help you master critical thinking skills. Finally, you will learn written, oral, and visual communication skills.

Required reading

This course has a textbook, which you are expected to read:

Wang, G. T., & Park, K. (2016). Student Research and Report Writing: From topic selection to the complete paper. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Course Evaluation

Component	Value	Due Date
1.AWARE course	REQUIRED	(Thu Sep. 26)
2.Peer review	10%	Ongoing
3. Thesis topic and bibliography	5%	Peer draft: September 30 Peer comments: October 3 Final draft: October 8
4. Literature review	10%	Peer draft: October 29 Peer comments: October 31 Final draft: November 5
5.Reserch proposal presentations	10%	Nov. 19, 21, 26 and 28, 2019.
6.Written research proposal	20%	Peer draft: December 3 Peer comments: December 6 Final draft: December 11
7. Preregistration	REQUIRED	Peer draft: January 14 Peer comments: January 16 Final draft: January 21
8.Research project updates	5%	(Tue, Feb. 25 - Thu, Feb. 27, 2020)
9.Research project final presentations	10%	March 17, 19, 21, and 26, 2020.
Final Written Research Project: Term 2	30% (Via D2L)	Peer draft: March 31 Peer comments: April 3 Final draft: April 8

More information regarding the format and grading of these components is forthcoming. For the time being, here is a brief summary of each component:

1. In the fall semester, you will first be required to complete the Academic Writing And Research E-learning (AWARE) course. This is mandatory. Its purpose is to ensure that all students know how to perform their writing and research with integrity. Until you have successfully completed the AWARE course, I will not grade any other assignments, and late penalties will apply even if you submit them on time. You must successfully complete the AWARE course by 4:00pm on September 26, 2019.
2. Throughout both semesters, you will perform peer review on your colleagues' work and, likewise, your work will be subject to peer review. This will entail reading and thinking critically about your colleagues' work, providing constructive comments to help them improve, and revising your own work in light of your peers' feedback. The deadlines for your peer comments are given in the relevant components below.
3. For your first written assignment, you will be asked to submit a two-page, single spaced document that describes your thesis topic, asks several research questions, and provides an initial bibliography. The draft for peer review is due by 4:00pm on September 30, 2019, peer comments are due by 11:59pm on October 3, 2019, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on October 8, 2019.
4. Next, you will submit a comprehensive literature review of between three and four single-spaced pages. This will provide depth and clarity to your thesis topic, allowing you to narrow down your research questions. The draft for peer review is due by 4:00pm on October 29, 2019, peer comments are due by 11:59pm on October 31, 2019, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on November 5, 2019.
5. After this, you will present your research proposal to the class in a formal talk with supporting slides. The purpose of the presentation is to explain your proposed thesis topic and research questions to the class, alongside your hypotheses, methods, and analysis plans. You will also get valuable feedback from your peers and, when others are presenting, you will return the courtesy with helpful feedback of your own. Note that it is up to you to ensure that any software used is compatible with the delivery technology (e.g., computer, projector) available in the classroom. The research proposal presentations will take place during the classes of November 19, 24, 26 and 28, 2019.
6. Finally, based on the feedback you have received thus far, you will submit a written research proposal of between six and eight single-spaced pages. This will contain your well-developed literature review, a clear rationale for your hypotheses, detailed methods and predictions, and a carefully specified analytical approach. The draft for

peer review is due by 4:00pm on December 3, 2019, peer comments are due by 11:59pm on December 6, 2019, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on December 11, 2019.

7. In the winter semester, you will preregister your proposed study. This means refining your proposed hypotheses, methods, and analyses and posting them online. It is meant (1) to help you think through the details of your study before you begin data analysis and (2) as a check on inappropriate research practices. Preregistration does not count towards your grade, but it is mandatory. The draft for peer review is due by 4:00pm on January 14, 2020, peer comments are due by 11:59pm on January 16, 2020, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on January 21, 2020.

8. Next, you will present a brief update on your research progress to the class, including the state of data collection and analysis. You are also expected to update the class on any important revisions you have made to your hypotheses, methods, and analyses after receiving feedback in the first half of the course. This is meant to be an informal, oral presentation only—no slides will be needed. Research updates will take place on February 25 and 27, 2020.

9. After this, you will give a formal presentation with slides of your final research project. This should summarise your literature review, hypotheses, methods, predictions, analyses, results, and interpretation. You should also highlight any deviations from your preregistration and the significant limitations of your study. Note again that it is up to you to ensure that any software used is compatible with the delivery technology (e.g., computer, projector) available in the classroom. The final project presentations will take place during the classes of March 17, 19, 21, and 26, 2020.

10. Finally, based on the feedback you have received to date, you will submit a final written report of your research project of about twelve single-spaced pages—not including the title page, abstract, bibliography, or appendices. As with the final project presentations, you are expected to provide a literature review, detail your hypotheses, methods, predictions, and analyses, report your results, and discuss them, all in the light of your preregistration and the limitations of your study's design. The draft for peer review is due by 4:00pm on March 31, 2020, peer comments are due by 11:59pm on April 3, 2020, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on April 8, 2020.

I reserve the right to adjust final grades up or down, on an individual basis, in light of special circumstances and/or the student's total performance in the course. I also reserve the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly (in class and on the course website).

Deadlines and late penalties

For all cases of submitted assignments (components 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 10, above), submissions must be made online via the course website on myCourseLink and peerScholar. Each of these is to be submitted by the deadline listed above. Any items submitted after this time will incur a 5% penalty per day late, including weekend days, for up to one week. After one week has passed, late papers will incur a grade of zero.

Likewise, oral presentations cannot be delayed, and students who do not give their presentations on the assigned date will receive a grade of zero.

If you are unable to submit your work on time for reasons beyond your control, or if you are facing difficulties that put your success in this course at risk, please inform me immediately. Given sufficient notice and appropriate documentation, I may be able to make certain accommodations, entirely at my discretion.

Please note that the final date to drop this course is February 7, 2020.

Grading scale

The official Lakehead University grading scale is as follows: A+ = 90-100%, A = 80-89%, B = 70-79%, C = 60-69%, D = 50-59%, E Failed = 40-49%, F Failed = 1-39%, F Academic Dishonesty = 0%.

Course organization and guidelines

The progression of the course follows the process of designing and executing a research project. We will dedicate more in-class time in the fall semester to learn the basic steps, and you will be given more unstructured time in the winter semester to pursue your research project independently. You are expected to attend every class in which there is a scheduled activity, to participate in the lectures and exercises, and to perform highquality peer review. Here are a few key guidelines to help you with this course:

Independent study. As you are in your final year of your undergraduate degree, you should be able to work as an independent scholar. That is, you are expected to come to class on time and ready to participate, to be on top of your readings and assignments, and to use your time both in and out of class effectively. If you find yourself falling behind, you will need to take the necessary steps to rectify this. I cannot do this for you.

Attendance and meetings. You are expected to attend every scheduled class. We will be devoting time in class to work on your projects. However, there may be occasions in which you will require further assistance outside of class. In such cases, I will be happy to meet with you, provided that you have first brought your questions or problems to class. I will not meet with students outside of class if they have not first earnestly attempted to seek assistance during class time.

Peer review. Over the course of the year, 10% of your final grade is earned through peer review. This will occur with the help of peerScholar, an online peer assessment tool. You are expected, first, to submit your written drafts for peer review by the deadline, or you will be given a late penalty on the assignment for each day late. Second, you are expected to provide feedback on the draft assignments by the peer comments deadline, or you will be given a late penalty on your own assignment for each day late. In addition to the out-of-class time you have allocated for this course, you are also being given class time to use for peer review. Your comments should be respectful, open-minded, and use good judgement. While we will cover best discussion practices in class, it ought to be clear from the outset that critical comments and questions should strive to be collegial.

Preregistration. You will be required to preregister your hypotheses, methods, predictions, and data analysis plans prior to analyzing your data. You are prohibited from analyzing your data until such time as I deem your preregistration acceptable. Consequently, under the circumstances that your preregistration has not been approved, late penalties will apply to assignments even if you submit them on time. I urge you to take this process seriously. The success of your project depends on it.

Presentations. The presentation schedule will be determined by random assignment. If you would like to change your presentation date with another student, please do not ask me to coordinate a change in the schedule. Instead, you may approach the other student(s) and ask politely about the possibility of changing dates. If all parties agree to the change, all parties must email me separately to confirm the change, providing me with the specific details of the schedule change. If any party does not agree to the change, then the schedule will remain as is.

Schedule delays. While we will try to keep to the schedule of meetings and presentations below, it may be subject to some adjustment. In particular, if the weather forces the campus to close and class to be cancelled, we may move the dates of certain activities and/or increase the number of presentations given in subsequent classes to compensate.

Ethics approval

Given the subject matter, restrictions in accessing relevant populations, and the tight timeline of the course, I strongly encourage the use of secondary, publicly available sources of data as the basis of your research. Conversely, I discourage the collection of data from human participants (in the form of interviews, surveys, or direct observation). If, after consultation with me, you nevertheless decide to collect such data, you will be required to complete ethics training in accordance with the TCPS2 guidelines and to get approval from the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies Undergraduate Research Ethics Committee at Lakehead University prior to beginning data collection.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Students are expected to know the University Regulations and, in particular, to heed the Student Code of Conduct on Academic Integrity:

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/106/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf>

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Nevertheless, every year I find students who have committed plagiarism in their work—some on purpose and others by accident. The consequences, however, are the same: I will report any case of suspected plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty, as I am obligated to do, and a grade of zero at a minimum will be assigned to the work. If, after reading the Student Code of Conduct linked above, you are still unsure whether you may be plagiarizing or committing an act of academic dishonesty, contact me to ask.

Disability accommodation

If you have a disability that requires accommodations, I strongly encourage you to make use of those accommodations. I am here to assist you, but need your help in ensuring that I accommodate you properly. More generally, Lakehead University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) coordinate services and facilitates reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Academic accommodations are provided on the basis of documentation of a disability. Additional information is available at the following campus website: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>

Lakehead University Resources

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, do not hesitate to ask for help. Come to me, or if it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your academic advisors or get help from any number of other support services on campus, including:

The Student Success Centre has many programs and support services in place to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while studying at Lakehead University. They provide academic support through tutoring services, career exploration, cooperative opportunities, and leadership development. More information is available here <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre>.

The Lakehead University Library provides access to resources, study rooms, and research support both online (via chat) and in person. More details are available here: <https://library.lakeheadu.ca/>.

Public Computer Labs are available on campus, where you may write and print out your work. For more details, go to: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-andstaff/departments/services/helpdesk/computer-labs>.

Student Life and Services offers health and wellness resources both on and off campus, as well as opportunities for involvement in health and wellness activities. More information is available here: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/> or.

The Office of Human Rights and Equity: You have the right to an education that is free from any form of discrimination. A wide variety of resources are available here: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity/resources>.

Schedule

Fall 2019. Note: WP indicates Wang & Park (2016)

Dates	Activities and Deadlines
September 3	Course overview
September 5	Introduction: The Importance of Academic Research
September 10	Finding a topic and reviewing the literature (WP chapters 1 and 2)
September 12	Finding a topic and reviewing the literature (WP chapters 3 and 4)
September 17	Writing for the social sciences
September 19	Writing for the social sciences
September 24	Independent research day: no class AWARE course completion deadline
September 26	Peer review skills
October 1	Peer review day: no class Thesis topic and bibliography peer draft due
October 3	Peer review day: no class Thesis topic and bibliography peer comments due
October 8	Causal inference and research design (WP chapter 5) Thesis topic and bibliography final draft due
October 10	Causal inference and research design (WP chapter 6)
October 15	Fall break: no class
October 17	Fall break: no class
October 22	Finding, coding, and maintaining data
October 24	Finding, coding, and maintaining data

October 29	Peer review day: no class Literature review peer draft due
October 31	Peer review day: no class Literature review peer comments due
November 5	Visualizing data Literature review final draft due
November 7	Statistics for social science research (WP chapter 9)
November 12	Statistics for social science research (WP chapter 10)
November 14	Presentation skills (WP chapter 7)
November 19	Research proposal presentations
November 21	Research proposal presentations
November 26	Research proposal presentations
November 28	Research proposal presentations
December 3	Peer review day: no class Written research proposal peer draft due
December 6	Exam period: no class Written research proposal peer comments due
December 11	Exam period: no class Written research proposal final draft due

Winter 2020

Dates	Activities and Deadlines
January 7	Preregistration and the philosophy of open science
January 9	Independent research day: no class
January 14	Peer review day: no class Preregistration peer draft due
January 16	Peer review day: no class Preregistration peer comments due
January 21	Independent research day: no class Preregistration final draft due
January 23	Independent research day: no class
January 28	Independent research day: no class
January 30	Independent research day: no class
February 4	Independent research day: no class
February 6	Independent research day: no class
February 11	Individual meetings (WP chapter 11): no class
February 13	Individual meetings: no class
February 18	Winter break: no class
February 20	Winter break: no class
February 25	Research updates
February 27	Research updates
March 3	Independent research day: no class
March 5	Independent research day: no class

March 10	Independent research day: no class
March 12	Independent research day: no class
March 17	Final project presentations
March 19	Final project presentations
March 24	Final project presentations
March 26	Final project presentations
March 31	Peer review day: no class Written project peer draft due
April 2	Peer review day: no class
April 3	Written project peer comments due
April 8	Written project final draft due