



## CRIM 4801 YDE: Honours Research Project Fall 2020 and Winter 2021

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Brian Krupp

Office: OA 3021

Meetings: by appointment only

Email: [dbkrupp@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:dbkrupp@lakeheadu.ca) (do not email me through myCourseLink)

Course location: online

Course times: N/A

Course website: available on myCourseLink (if you need assistance with access to the course website, contact [mycourselink@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:mycourselink@lakeheadu.ca))

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The Honours Research Project is a capstone course in Criminology. In it, 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; finding, 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.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

As a student in this course, you will learn to formulate a sophisticated understanding of research on a specific criminological topic through a detailed and critical examination of the scholarly literature; produce hypotheses, design research methods, and generate predictions; develop conclusions to criminological research questions based on personal analysis of empirical data; engage in clear and effective scientific communication through oral presentations and written reports; perform peer-review activities to summarize, synthesize, and critique criminological research; and develop an awareness of limits to one's own knowledge and recognize the implications of those knowledge limitations for our personal decision-making processes and conclusions.

### **REQUIRED READING**

Students are responsible for reading the following textbook, in keeping with the schedule below:

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

## EVALUATION

<b>Component</b>	<b>Grade Value</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>
1. AWARE course	REQUIRED	September 20
2. Peer review	10%	Ongoing
3. Thesis topic and bibliography	5%	Peer draft: October 2 Peer feedback: October 5 Final draft: October 9
4. Literature review	10%	Peer draft: October 30 Peer feedback: November 2 Final draft: November 6
5. Research proposal presentation	10%	Presentation: November 20 Peer comments: November 23
6. Written research proposal	20%	Peer draft: November 27 Peer feedback: December 1 Final draft: December 7
7. Preregistration	REQUIRED	Peer draft: January 15 Peer feedback: January 18 Final draft: January 22
8. Analysis & results	5%	February 22
9. Final project presentation	10%	Presentation: March 22 Peer comments: March 25
10. Written final project	30%	Peer draft: April 2 Peer feedback: April 7 Final draft: April 12

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 upload your certificates of completion by 11:59pm on **September 20**.

You can find the AWARE course on myCourseLink. Simply go to the home screen (where all of your courses are listed), and click on the “Self-Registration: Academic Support and Training” link on the right. From there, you will see the AWARE course listed in a table, with an option to enroll on the right. Click this link and complete each of the modules and every quiz (there are nine quizzes in total). To earn the certificates, **you must score at least 90% on each quiz.** Note that this course may take up to 6 hours to complete, so schedule your time accordingly.

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 feedback to help them improve, and revising your own work in light of your peers’ feedback. The deadlines for your peer feedback are given above, below, and online.
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 11:59pm on **October 2**, peer feedback is due by 11:59pm on **October 5**, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on **October 9**.
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 11:59pm on **October 30**, peer feedback is due by 11:59pm on **November 2**, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on **November 6**.
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 by providing helpful feedback of your own. The research proposal presentations will be due online by 11:59pm on **November 20**. Peer comments on the presentations will be due online by 11:59pm on **November 23**.
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, a carefully specified analytical approach, and your predictions. The draft for peer review is due by 11:59pm on **November 27**, peer feedback is due by 11:59pm on **December 1**, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on **December 7**.

7. In the winter semester, you will preregister your proposed study. This means refining your proposed hypotheses, methods, analyses, and predictions and submitting them in advance of performing data analysis. It is meant (1) to help you think through the details of your study *before* you begin data analysis and (2) as a bulwark against inappropriate research practices. Preregistration does not count towards your grade, but **it is mandatory**. The draft for peer review is due by 11:59pm on **January 15**, peer feedback is due by 11:59pm on **January 18**, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on **January 22**.
8. Once your preregistration has been approved, you will analyze your data and present your results in a short, written document. (There is no peer review of this document at this stage. It will simply be submitted directly.) The analysis and results are due on **February 22**.
9. After this, you will give a formal presentation with slides of your final research project. This should summarise your literature review, hypotheses, methods, analyses, predictions, results, and interpretation. You should also highlight any deviations from your preregistration and the significant limitations of your study. The final project presentations will be due online by 11:59pm on **March 22**. Peer comments on the presentations will be due online by 11:59pm on **March 25**.
10. Finally, 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, analyses, and predictions, 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 11:59pm on **April 2**, peer feedback is due by 11:59pm on **April 7**, and the final draft is due by 11:59pm on **April 12**.

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 (on the course website).

## **DEADLINES AND LATE PENALTIES**

For all cases of submitted assignments, 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. Students will lose all peer review marks for any peer review draft submitted late, and the drafts will not be accepted. Students will lose one peer review mark for each instance of peer feedback submitted late. Finally, presentations and final

drafts of assignments submitted late will incur a 10% penalty per day, including weekend days, for up to one week. After one week has passed, late presentations and papers will incur 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.

## **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 structured time for readings, lectures, and exercises 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 keep up with the reading, view every lecture, perform every exercise, and to conduct high-quality 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 show self-discipline, to be on top of your readings and assignments, to be organized, and to use your time effectively. If you find yourself falling behind, you will need to take the necessary steps to rectify this. I cannot do this for you.

*Peer review.* Over the course of the year, 10% of your final grade is earned through peer review. For the most part, this will occur with the help of peerScholar, an online peer assessment tool that you will access through myCourseLink. You are expected to submit your written drafts for peer review by their respective deadlines, and you are expected to provide feedback on the draft assignments by the peer feedback deadlines. Your feedback should be respectful, open-minded, and use good judgement. While we will cover best discussion practices in the lecture, it ought to be clear from the outset that critical feedback and questions should strive to be collegial and constructive, at a minimum.

*Preregistration.* You will be required to preregister your hypotheses, methods, data analysis plans, and predictions 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. **Students typically find preregistration to be the single most challenging component**

**of the course, so I urge you to take this process seriously.** The success of your project depends on it.

*Presentations and feedback.* The presentations will be posted on the course website for all students to view. All students are expected to provide constructive comments on all presentations; a portion of your peer feedback grade depends on this.

*Schedule delays.* While we will try to keep to the schedule of meetings and presentations below, it may be subject to some adjustment.

## **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 discover acts of academic dishonesty—some committed 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.

## **COURSE DROP DEADLINE**

Please be aware that the deadline to drop this course is **February 12**.

## **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 I need your help in ensuring that you are properly accommodated. 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) coordinates 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-and-staff/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 2020. Note: readings are presented in boldface.

Week	Activities and Deadlines	Task
September 8–13	Course overview; finding a topic and reviewing the literature <b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 1 and 2</b>	
September 14–20	<b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 3 and 4</b>	AWARE course
September 21–27	Writing for the social sciences	
September 28–October 4	Peer review skills	Thesis topic & bibliography
October 5–11		Thesis topic & bibliography
October 12–18	Fall Break: no lecture or reading	
October 19–25	Causal inference and research design <b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 5 and 6</b>	
October 26–November 1	Finding, coding, and maintaining data	Literature review
November 2–8	Statistics for social science research <b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 9 &amp; 10</b>	Literature review
November 9–15	Presentation skills <b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 7</b>	
November 16–22		Proposal presentation
November 23–29		
November 30–December 4		Research proposal
December 7–13		Research proposal

Winter 2021

Week	Activities and Deadlines	Task
January 4–10	Preregistration and the philosophy of open science	
January 11–17		Preregistration
January 18–24		Preregistration
January 25–31		
February 1–7		
February 8–14	<b>Wang &amp; Park (2016), ch. 11</b>	
February 15–21	Winter Break: no lecture or reading	
February 22–28		Analysis and results
March 1–7		
March 8–14		
March 15–21		Final Presentations
March 22–28		
March 29–April 4		Final Papers
April 5–11		Final Papers
April 12		Final Papers