

INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE CARLETON
UNIVERSITY

CRCJ 4908: Honours Thesis

FALL/WINTER

2025/2026

Professor / Institute Director: Dr. Lara Karaian (she/her)

Email*: lara.karaian@carleton.ca

Office hours: By appointment. Please use this Calendly link to request a meeting:
<https://calendly.com/larakaraian/1-on-1-with-lara>

*You must use your Carleton email address in all academic correspondences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AFFIRMATION

ANISHNABE

Ni manàdjiyàñàníg Màmìwininì Anishinàbeg, ogog kà nàgadawàbandadjig iyo akì eko weshkad. Ako nongom ega wìkàd kì mìgiwewàdj.

Ni manàdjiyàñàníg kakina Anishinàbeg ondaje kaye ogog kakina eniyagizidjig enigokamigàg Kanadàng ejì ondàpinangig endàwàdjin Odàwàng.

Ninisidawinawàñàníg kenawendamòdjig kije kikenindamàwin; weshkinigidjig kaye kejeyàdizidjig.

Nigijewenimàñàníg ogog kà nìgàñì sòngideyedjig; weshkad, nongom; kaye àyànikàdj.

ENGLISH

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded.

We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home. We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old.

And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Honours Thesis is a full-credit original empirical research project conducted under the guidance of a faculty supervisor. The thesis involves designing a research project; undertaking original research, data collection, and data analysis; and writing a detailed final document that summarizes the project's focus, research questions, literature review, methods, results, analysis, and implications.

Prerequisite(s): Fourth-year standing in the B.A. Honours program in Criminology and Criminal Justice with a CGPA of 10.00 or better in the Major and/or permission of the Institute.

Preclusions: None

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Design and conduct scholarship that is well conceptualized, theoretically informed, methodologically rigorous, and that adheres to the ethical conduct required of social science research. Write a long-form essay based on original research that is well supported, organized, synthesized, insightful, rigorous, and clearly written.

REGISTRATION

All Honours theses must be conducted under the guidance of a faculty supervisor (see below).

CRCJ 4908 is presented in both the Fall/Winter and Summer sessions. Your first registration in the course is designated as Section A (*i.e.*, 4908A). You may require more than the first full academic year to complete your Honours thesis. No more than 18 months can elapse between initial registration in Section A and completion of your thesis. You must be registered in all terms that you are working on your Honours thesis with your supervisor.

Regulations concerning the Honours thesis are detailed in the Carleton Undergraduate Calendar.

SUPERVISION

Any faculty member of the Institute of Criminology & Criminal Justice (ICCJ) may serve as a faculty supervisor. Faculty members of other departments (*e.g.*, Law & Legal Studies, Sociology & Anthropology) who are cross-appointed to the ICCJ may also serve as faculty supervisor. Registration in CRCJ 4908 Section A marks the official beginning of your Honours thesis. Some students may have already secured a faculty supervisor by the start of the fall term. If a prior arrangement has not been made, you should contact faculty members in your area of research. Once an appropriate supervisor has been secured the supervisor must email criminology@carleton.ca and CC the ICCJ Director, Lara Karaian, at lara.karaian@carleton.ca confirming that they have agreed to supervise your research.

Students are required to meet with their supervisors on a weekly or bi-weekly basis depending on the specific needs of the student and the availability of the supervisor. Prolonged periods of time without meeting may result in missed milestones and the inability to complete the thesis in a timely manner or within 18 months of registration in the thesis. If more than two weeks has passed without contact the student and/or the supervisor should contact the Institute Director for guidance.

ETHICS

If your proposed research involves human participants, you must submit an ethics application for approval to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB- A; see <https://carleton.ca/researchethics/cureb-a/>).

Be advised that ethics reviews may take a few weeks to complete; CUREB-A meetings dates and submission deadlines can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/researchethics/cureb-a/cureb-a-meetings-and-deadlines/>. The CUREB-A approval is mandatory and must be obtained before research involving human participants can be carried out. A copy of the CUREB-A approval must be provided to your supervisor. Please discuss any questions or concerns about research ethics with your supervisor.

FORMAT

Once initial research steps have been taken, progress will be largely determined by you, your faculty supervisor, and research related contingencies. Be realistic in your timeline expectations.

To assure the highest quality work, you should plan to write your thesis in successive drafts that are reviewed by your faculty supervisor. Writing quality of the Honours thesis will be an important element in the evaluation of your final product. You should consult your faculty supervisor about the style you will use when writing your honours thesis. Different Departments may use different formats. You can choose a style based on journals in which your type of research is typically published. Please note that while there are some variations in style among the disciplines, most follow a generally accepted format (introduction, research questions, literature review, methodology, results, analysis, conclusion). You may also include a separate section on theoretical framework(s).

The final version of your Honours thesis should include an abstract (200-400 words) as well as 5 to 8 keywords. The expected length of the thesis is 40-60 pages.

EVALUATION

The only item graded is the final version of your Honours thesis. You must submit one digital copy of the final version of your Honours thesis directly to your faculty supervisor and one to the Institute Director.

The faculty supervisor must forward a suggested grade and a brief synopsis of their justification for the grade to the Institute Director. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their faculty supervisor submits the grade and rationale for review. Late submission of the thesis and/or the supervisor's evaluation may affect the timing of your graduation.

The Institute Director reviews the thesis, proposed grade, and rationale; determines the final grade; and forwards their recommendation to the Dean of the Faculty of Public and Global Affairs.

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B = 73-76	C - = 60-62	F = 0-49 (Failure. No credit.)
A = 85-89	B - = 70-72	D+ = 57-59	
A - = 80-84	C+ = 67-69	D = 53-56	
B+ = 77-79	C = 63-66	D - = 50-52	

Standing in a course is determined by the Institute Director subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the Director may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

DEADLINES

The last date to submit the thesis is **April 8, 2026**. If you are registered in Section A or B and have not submitted the thesis by this date a grade of IP (In Progress) will be submitted to the Dean. If you are registered in Section C and fail to submit the completed thesis (and faculty supervisor's evaluation) by the last acceptable date, a grade of 'F' will be submitted.

If you are thinking of applying for a master's scholarship, the deadline for the Ontario Graduate Scholarship

[\$5,000/term, max: 3 terms] is November 13, 2025, and the deadline for the Canadian Graduate Scholarship [\$17,500 for 12 months, non-renewable] is December 1, 2025.

Deadline for applications to graduate programs vary (they usually are around mid-January).

LATE PENALTIES

Typically, late assignments will be deducted a penalty of 2% for each day submitted after the due date (including weekends) except under exceptional circumstances. If you require an extension, please contact your supervisor and the Institute Director ahead of time to discuss options.

MINI CONFERENCE

Depending on the number of students enrolled in the Honours Thesis students may be provided with an opportunity to present their thesis in a mini conference at the end of the term, and prior to submitting their final version. Typically, all graduating students and all faculty members of the ICCJ and of contributing units will be invited to attend this mini conference. More details about the conference will be communicated during the year.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as *“presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.”* This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own failing to acknowledge sources with proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

The Honours thesis cannot involve group or collaborative work. Students are permitted to draw on research design and content conducted in their criminology methods courses. Data for the Honour’s Thesis cannot be obtained at any agency that a student is currently enrolled in for their Field Placement.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative schedule and set of steps for designing and conducting original research over the Fall and Winter terms. This schedule is not exhaustive nor universal. You should determine your specific schedule and steps in collaboration with your supervisor.

- **September, Week 1:** Identify your general topic, begin preliminary research in the area, identify and annotate a minimum of 3 scholarly sources associated with your topic.
- **September, Week 2:** Identify and annotate 3 additional scholarly sources associated with your topic. Brainstorm research questions. Brainstorm preferred methods (obtrusive vs unobtrusive; qualitative vs quantitative) and theoretical frameworks.
- **September, Week 3:** Identify and annotate an additional 2 scholarly sources associated with your topic, 2 with your method, and 1 with your theoretical framework. Narrow the scope of your thesis by identifying what you would like to examine/contribute to the existing scholarly conversation.
- **September, Week 4:** Begin developing your Thesis Proposal. Identify your specific topic, 1-2 research questions, proposed methods, and theoretical framework(s). Provide a short literature review (i.e. a synthesis, not an annotated bibliography) of 7-10 academic sources. Identify ethical issues related to your project (Your proposal should be approx. 10-12 pages in total).
- **October, Week 1:** Submit initial draft of the Thesis Proposal for review to your supervisor.

- **October, Week 2:** Continue researching and refining your literature review and proposed methods. Start working on ethics application, if relevant.
- **October, Week 3:** Receive comments from Supervisor on proposal. Begin revision process. Complete 1st draft of ethics application and submit to your supervisor for review, if relevant.
- **October, Week 4:** Fall break! Take a break and/or continue revisions process.
- **November, Week 1:** Submit revised proposal to supervisor. Receive comments on ethics application from supervisor, if relevant. Revise ethics application--develop consent form, interview questions, and data management protocols, if necessary. Continue researching your topic and methods while awaiting comments on your revised proposal.
- **November, Week 2:** Further develop research methods, data collection process, and theoretical frameworks.
- **November, Week 3:** Receive final set of comments on proposal. Submit revised ethics application, if relevant to supervisor for final review. Keep researching your topic and methods.
- **November, Week 4:** Receive final set of comments on ethics application from supervisor. Finalize ethics application for submission. Continue synthesizing sources for your literature review and methods sections.
- **December, Week 1:** Submit ethics application to Carleton Office of Research Ethics, if relevant. Submit revised proposal, if necessary. Continue to synthesize your literature review, methods section. Summarize 1-2 applicable theoretical framework(s).
- **December, Week 2:** Submit expanded and revised draft of your literature review to supervisor.
- **December, Week 3:** Submit expanded and revised draft of methods sections and theoretical framework to your supervisor.

*****Winter Holiday-Take a break! You deserve and need it!*****

- **January, Week 1:** You should have your ethics application back, respond to any questions/ requested changes. Receive feedback on literature review, methods, and theoretical framework. If appropriate, start data collection and recruitment.
- **January, Week 2:** Data collection. Revise literature review, methods, and theoretical framework(s).
- **January, Week 3:** Data collection, preliminary coding.
- **January, Week 4:** Data collection, coding, begin analysis. Write first draft of findings and implications

- **February, Week 1:** Submit a complete first draft of your thesis to supervisor, including introduction, research questions, literature review, methods section, theoretical frameworks(s), initial findings (findings can be bullet points, but all other sections should be relatively well thought out).
- **February, Week 2:** Continue analysis and implications of data while awaiting comments.
- **February, Week 3:** Receive comments on draft of your thesis/begin revision process. Finalize analysis and discussion section of your thesis.
- **February, Week 4:** Continue to integrate feedback, finalize 2nd draft of thesis. This draft should be in a polished and close to completion.
- **March, Week 1:** Submit 2nd draft of thesis to supervisor. Develop PowerPoint presentation on thesis (if participating in mini conference).
- **March, Week 2:** Receive comments on 2nd draft/begin revision process
- **March, Week 3:** Continue revision process.
- **March, Week 4:** Continue revision process.
- **April, Week 1:** Submit final draft of Honours Thesis. YOU DID IT!
- **Early April:** Supervisor provides final thesis grade and justification to the Institute Director.

*Date of mini conference, if applicable, TBD.