

CJ 675 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

The final project for this course is the creation of a **solution proposal**. The final product represents an authentic demonstration of competency because you must present an analysis, defend a proposed solution, and illustrate a plan for communicating a proposal to both internal and external audiences. The project is divided into **two milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Five and Seven**. The final product will be submitted in **Module Nine**.

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Determine patterns and trends present in criminal justice data that inform data-driven decision making regarding contemporary criminal justice issues
- Determine appropriate research that supports decision making regarding contemporary criminal justice issues
- Employ strategic methods used by leaders in the field of criminal justice for informing the decision-making process of data-driven solutions
- Propose data-driven solutions that address contemporary issues in criminal justice agencies
- Communicate to diverse audiences data-driven recommendations that address contemporary criminal justice issues using best practices of the field

Prompt

For your final project, you will assume the role of a leader within a criminal justice organization of your choice. Based on your chosen scenario, you will be presented with a specific challenge faced by your organization that is emblematic of wider issues in contemporary criminal justice. Your task is to develop an evidence-based solution for the problem, which will be articulated in a formal **solution proposal** to be presented to your organization's leadership team. You will be given information (including [this data set](#)) for your scenario, but you must also conduct your own research on comparable organizations and trends in the field to determine opportunities and external threats. You will use the data, your research, and your knowledge of theory to develop an informed, data-driven solution to the issue. Finally, you will conclude your solution proposal by identifying internal and external audiences for your solution and creating examples of targeted communications for disseminating your ideas.

Based on the best available data and research, what is the ideal solution for addressing the challenge facing your organization?

Specifically, you must address the **critical elements** listed below. Most of the critical elements align with a particular course outcome (shown in brackets).

- I. **Introduction:** In this section, establish a context that provides your audience with any background information that is necessary for understanding your proposal.

- II. **Theory and Methods:** In this section, explain the theoretical frameworks that underpin your analysis and proposed solution.
- Identify foundational **criminology theories** that apply to your chosen organization and the challenge it faces. Draw connections between the theories and the specific context that will ultimately support your analysis and your proposed solution.
 - Examine the **strategic methods** used by leaders in the field for approaching problems such as yours. For example, what do the current best practices in the field suggest in terms of researching and investigating the issue? Highlight methods that support your proposal.
 - Similarly, identify **best practices** in the field for **communicating** with diverse audiences. Illustrate these practices with specific examples that will ultimately support your communication plan.
- III. **Literature Review:** In this section, present all of the evidence that you have analyzed (including the provided data and your independent research) and that will support your proposed solution.
- Data Analysis:** Using the provided data, determine any patterns and trends that are present. What meaning and significance can you glean from the data?
 - Research:** Present your research on the issue that builds on the patterns and trends you identified in the data. For example, are there prior solutions that similar organizations have implemented in addressing this type of issue? What meaning and significance can you glean from your research?
 - Root Causes:** Based on your data analysis and independent research, explain what you believe to be the root causes of the issue. Logically justify your conclusion using the evidence.
- IV. **Proposal:** In this section, present and defend your plan for solving the issue facing your organization.
- Solution:**
 - Based on your theoretical framework and your analysis and research, propose a **solution** that effectively addresses the issue.
 - Illustrate your proposal with the **specific steps** that the organization would need to take in order to properly execute the solution.
 - Recommend strategic methods that leadership of the organization could apply in effectively **implementing** your proposed solution.
 - Defense:**
 - Explain how your solution will **improve** the situation for both your organization and the community that is affected by the issue. Use specific examples to illustrate.
 - Explain how the **data** you analyzed and the trends you identified have guided you to this solution. In other words, how did your analysis of the data inform your decision making? Use specific examples to illustrate.
 - Explain how your **research** led you to this solution. In other words, how did the evidence in your research inform your decision making? Use specific examples to illustrate.
- V. **Communication Plan:** In this section, explain how you will disseminate the key ideas of your proposal.
- Determine who the key internal and external audiences for your proposal are, and explain how you would **present the information** to them. Your communication plan should reflect the best practices in the field, as discussed in your Theory and Methods section.

- b) Choose one **internal audience** and develop a sample communication for them regarding your proposed solution. Be sure that your communication is appropriate for this audience and is aligned with best practices in the field.
- c) Choose one **external audience** and develop a sample communication for them regarding your proposed solution. Be sure that your communication is appropriate for this audience and is aligned with best practices in the field.

VI. **References:** In this section, cite all of your sources using APA formatting and guidelines.

Milestones

Milestone One: First Draft

In **Module Five**, you will submit the first draft of your final project. This milestone will be graded with the **Milestone One Rubric**.

Milestone Two: Second Draft

In **Module Seven**, you will submit the second draft of your final project. This milestone will be graded with the **Milestone Two Rubric**.

Final Submission: Solution Proposal

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your final project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. This submission will be graded with the **Final Project Rubric**.

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your solution proposal should be 10–12 pages in length (plus a cover page and references) and should be written in APA format. Use double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, and one-inch margins.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Introduction	Meets “Proficient” criteria and introduction expertly balances detail with the need for concise, clear communication	Establishes a detailed context that provides all background information that is necessary for understanding the proposal	Discusses some background information, but fails to fully establish a detailed context for the proposal	Does not discuss background information	5
Theory and Methods: Criminology Theories [CJ-675-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and discussion reflects keen insight into the strategic methods used by leaders in the criminal justice field	Identifies and draws connections between relevant criminological theories and the specific context in order to support the proposal	Discusses criminological theory, but fails to select relevant theories or connect them to the specific context for supporting the proposal	Does not discuss criminological theories	4.5
Theory and Methods: Strategic Methods [CJ-675-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and examination reflects keen insight into the strategic methods used by leaders in the criminal justice field	Examines strategic methods that apply to the specific problem and highlights those that are considered best practices to support the proposal	Discusses strategic methods, but fails to draw connections to the specific problem or selects methods that would not be considered best practices	Discusses strategic methods, but fails to draw connections to the specific problem or selects methods that would not be considered best practices	4.5
Theory and Methods: Communication Best Practices [CJ-675-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and illustration reflects keen insight into the strategic methods used by leaders in the criminal justice field	Identifies and illustrates best practices in the field for communicating with diverse audiences	Discusses practices for communicating with diverse audiences, but does not identify best practices or does not fully illustrate the practices	Does not discuss practices for communicating with diverse audiences	4.5
Literature Review: Data Analysis [CJ-675-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and analysis reflects sophisticated ability to interpret and translate raw data into meaningful information	Determines accurate and meaningful patterns and trends in the data and explains their significance in detail	Discusses the patterns and trends in the data, but makes misguided interpretations or fails to explain the significance in detail	Does not discuss the patterns and trends in the data	6
Literature Review: Research [CJ-675-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and selection and application of sources reflects advanced research skills for the criminal justice field	Presents relevant, credible research that builds on the information gleaned from the data and supports the proposal	Presents research, but selected sources have issues of credibility or relevance or are not properly used to build on the data analysis and support the proposal	Does not discuss research into the problem in question	6

Literature Review: Root Causes [CJ-675-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and conclusion reflects sophisticated ability to interpret and translate raw data into meaningful information	Presents a logical conclusion about the root causes of the problem based on the data analysis and research	Presents a conclusion, but there are gaps in logic or it is not fully supported by the data or research	Does not present a conclusion about the root causes of the problem in question	6
Proposal: Solution [CJ-675-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates creative or insightful application of data-driven decision making to solve contemporary issues	Proposes an effective solution to the problem that is fully supported by the theoretical framework, data, and research	Proposes a solution to the problem, but it is ineffective or not fully supported by the theoretical framework, data, or research	Does not propose a solution to the problem	6
Proposal: Specific Steps [CJ-675-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates creative or insightful application of data-driven decision making to solve contemporary issues	Illustrates the proposed solution with specific steps that the organization would need to take in order to properly execute the solution	Discusses steps for executing the solution, but there are gaps in necessary detail	Does not discuss the steps for executing the solution	6
Proposal: Implementing [CJ-675-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and recommendation reflects keen insight into the strategic methods used by leaders in the criminal justice field	Recommends strategic methods for leadership to use in effectively implementing the solution	Recommends implementation methods for leadership, but fails to recommend strategic methods for effectively implementing the solution	Does not recommend methods for leadership to implement the strategy	4.5
Proposal: Improve [CJ-675-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates creative or insightful application of data-driven decision making to solve contemporary issues	Defends the likelihood of the solution to substantively improve the situation for the organization and the community using specific examples	Discusses the potential of the solution to improve the situation, but fails to fully defend the solution using specific examples	Does not discuss the potential of the solution to improve the situation for the organization and the community	6
Proposal: Data [CJ-675-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and decision-making process clearly benefited from a sophisticated ability to interpret and translate raw data into meaningful information	Demonstrates conclusively how the data informed the solution and the decision-making process	Discusses the relationship of the data to the solution, but fails to conclusively demonstrate that the data informed the solution and the decision-making process	Does not discuss the relationship of the data to the solution	6

Proposal: Research [CJ-675-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and decision-making process clearly benefited from advanced research skills for the criminal justice field	Demonstrates conclusively how the research findings informed the solution and the decision-making process	Discusses the relationship of the research to the solution, but fails to conclusively demonstrate that the data informed the solution and the decision-making process	Does not discuss the relationship of the research findings to the solution	6
Communication Plan: Present the Information [CJ-675-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and plan reflects nuanced understanding of the best practices for effectively communicating with diverse audiences	Presents a communication plan that applies best practices to effectively present information to internal and external audiences	Presents a communication plan, but it fails to apply best practices to effectively present information to internal or external audiences	Does not present a communication plan	6
Communication Plan: Internal Audience [CJ-675-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and sample reflects nuanced understanding of the best practices for effectively communicating with diverse audiences	Includes a sample communication for an internal audience that reflects best practices in the field	Includes a sample communication for an internal audience, but it does not fully reflect best practices in the field	Does not include a sample communication for an internal audience	6
Communication Plan: External Audience [CJ-675-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and sample reflects nuanced understanding of the best practices for effectively communicating with diverse audiences	Includes a sample communication for an external audience that reflects best practices in the field	Includes a sample communication for an external audience, but it does not fully reflect best practices in the field	Does not include a sample communication for an external audience	6
References [CJ-675-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and selection of source material reflects advanced research skills for the criminal justice field	Includes a complete bibliography of all references used following APA formatting that are each relevant and credible	Includes a bibliography, but it is incomplete, contains irrelevant or non-credible sources, or does not fully follow APA formatting	Does not include a bibliography	6
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy to read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability or articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	5
Total					100%