Midterm Exam: Research Methods Fall 2014

**Format: Take home exam, due next Thursday (2 pages maximum per answer: double spaced, 12 font, standard margins)**

**Answer three (3) of the following questions:**

1. Highlight the ethical controversies faced by criminal justice researchers in (1) *Tea Room Trade*, (2) the Milgram Experiment, and (3) the Zimbardo Experiment, and then describe how you would design a Code of Ethics to address each of these ethical problems.
2. Throughout the first 5 chapters of the text, the authors highlight the research issues associated with studying “ Driving while Black”, while more recently in Boston, the ACLU just released a report documenting the over-representation of minority residents in police stop and search tactics. Describe how you would go about studying racial disparity (and potential racial bias) in police response to minority residents in cars and on the streets. What hypotheses would you test? What operational definitions will you utilize for your key independent and dependent variables? What data sources would you examine? How will you define units of analysis and the time dimension for your research?
3. Design a study to answer the following question: Does drug use cause crime? Be sure to operationalize key independent and dependent variables, describe your decision to employ a cross-sectional or longitudinal design, and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of your choice(s) of data sources (UCR, victimization, self report data).
4. Discuss one of the following statements in terms of what you have learned about the criteria of causation and threats to validity of causal inference. What cause and effect relationship is implied? What are some possible alternative explanations?

Statement: Capital punishment prevents murder by deterring potential murderers.

Statement: Marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to the use of other more harmful drugs.