The research paper should be in an essay format. The minimum length is (double spaced). There is no maximum length. This assignment is worth 25% of your final grade. The purpose of this assignment is to test your critical / analytical thinking and essay writing skills. You will be marked on the following:

* Logical essay structure (beginning, middle, end – see below for more instructions)
* Your ability to articulate a central thesis
* Your ability to back up your thesis with empirical evidence, strong arguments, theories, and  quotes from literature
* Your ability to critically analyze the topic in question
* Your ability to express thoughtful opinions
* Your ability to answer the question correctly
* Evidence that you conducted research to answer the question (You can’t just rely on the  readings and lecture notes in writing your essay. You need to reference at least 6 sources  outside of the textbook and lecture notes)
* Grammar and spelling
* Instructions on and Tips for Writing a Strong Critical Essay/Research Paper  A strong grasp of the literature in your subject area
* o Be as comprehensive as possible in addressing your topic, while being concise; focus on  the major issues of most relevance to the topic and your argument (avoid issues that may be interesting, but not relevant or are secondary)  A sound grasp of all the key issues surrounding your subject area (basic concepts, theories and empirical research)  Proof that you have researched the topic (secondary research is satisfactory) o Proof that you referenced an array of sources (academic books and journal articles  especially, but also media, government reports, general non-fiction crime literature) and a diverse range of opinions (making sure that you factor into your analysis opposing viewpoints)  o This is a research paper! So you must do some research! This means: (1) avoid too much reliance on (quoting) the course notes and (2) avoid relying exclusively on Internet web sites (including Wikipedia!).  o Your grade will benefit from ensuring that you maximize: (1) the quantity of sources and (2) the quality of sources (in other words, scholarly books and articles, government reports, media reports).  Your ability to focus and articulate a central thesis

o Your thesis is the underlying theme of your paper; your major point or argument. Every essay, no matter how long, should have a central thesis

Your ability to back up your thesis with strong arguments and evidence o You are not an Op-Ed writer of a newspaper where you can make arguments with no

supporting evidence o Supporting evidence can take one of three forms: (1) a theory (2) empirical research

(including cases studies and statistics) (3) and opinion/statement/quote from an “expert” (for an honours thesis this can simply be taken from books, articles, etc.

Strong analytical skills (the paper cannot just be descriptive)

o Critical analytical skills (analysis of sources) - You must be able to show that you can analyze information that is presented to you; your critical thinking/analytical skills are also essential when including opposing viewpoints in your paper (i.e., you need to critique these opposing viewpoints to substantiate your arguments/thesis)

o Substantive analytical skills (analysis of your subject) - Dissect and analyze the constituent parts of the topic you are examining in your

essay

o Back up your arguments with evidence. This evidence can be drawn from your readings, theories, lecture notes, specific case studies (i.e., real-life examples), other sources, etc.

o Draw a causal-effect relationship, especially when trying to make a point. For example, one could argue that the decline in the murder rate is the result (effect) of the introduction of capital punishment (cause). Yet, you must make absolutely sure that there are no other factors that produce the effect. In the above example, the government may have introduced stricter gun control laws, which may in fact was the cause of the decline. In short, you will to draw a cause-effect relationship, and then provide evidence of the existence of this relationship, while also considering other factors that may have produced or influenced the effect.``

o Strong, appropriate, logical structure to your paper

Beginning (Introduction)

Introduce your subject Outline the objectives of this paper Discuss your thesis or central argument Outline the structure of your paper

Middle (the body of your paper)

In general the body of your paper is broken into two parts: 1) a description of your research findings

2) a discussion and analysis of your research findings In general, the body of your paper begins broadly and is descriptive

o This means that the very beginning of your paper (or a section within) should start with the most basic information on your broad subject area (or particular focus) such as a definition, a description of its main elements, the scope or impact of this subject or phenomenon

o Then your paper becomes increasingly focused – and more analytical – which means you are increasingly narrowing the scope to the particular focus / thesis of your paper, including arguments and evidence that substantiate and support your thesis

o The conclusion of your paper should directly and concisely address (sum up) the over-arching thesis you articulated at the beginning of the paper and explored in the body of the paper.

End (Conclusion: summarize and conclude your arguments, thesis)

o Make sure there is a “flow” – between each section of the paper; between each paragraph; between each sentence

o Use subheadings to break up different sections of the paper

o Just like every paper has a central thesis (which is then supported by well-researched and deliberative arguments) each paragraph should be restricted to one major point or idea and then supported by arguments and evidence. Specifically: (1) the first one to three sentences in a paragraph articulate your central thesis of that paragraph and then (2) arguments and evidence supporting this thesis are provided in a well-structured, logical, comprehensive way to support that thesis and (3) you present specific evidence to support these arguments (specific evidence can include quotes from literature, statistics, the findings of study, a “case study” – an actual event, or a theory)

o Cite your references properly:

o Refer to the APA style guide (see Writing Centre web site link below) in the text of your answer: (Wincup and Grifiths, 1999, 32), and in your bibliography: Wincup, Emma and Griffiths, Janis. 1999. Crime,

Deviance and Social Control. Conventry: Hodder & Stoghton