

Sociology 441: Criminology

180 Science Hall

1:20PM – 2:10PM Mon/Wed/Fri

Instructor: Jason Nolen

Office: 7109 Social Sciences Building

Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays *by appointment* at:
<https://doodle.com/bp/jasonnolen/jason-nolen-office-hours>

Email: janolen@wisc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Criminology! The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the sociological study of crime and criminal justice in the United States.

In this course, we will examine what we do and do not know about crime in the United States, competing explanations for why people commit crimes or are labeled criminals, how we punish those who are identified as having committed crimes, and the impacts of those punishments on individuals, their families, and society.

COURSE MATERIAL

Many of the readings for this course will come from the electronic textbook *Criminology* (2022) by Freda Adler, Gerhard O. W. Miller, and William S. Laufer. Information for accessing the book will be provided during the first week of class.

There will also be a variety of journal articles, book chapters and other material assigned for this course. You will be able find those as PDFs on the course's Canvas page.

Powerpoint slides will be uploaded to Canvas prior to each lecture.

LECTURE ETIQUETTE

Please avoid disruptions such as arriving late, leaving early, or packing up before I finish lecturing. Do not use cell phones, laptops, or tablets to surf the web or check email – it's distracting to your classmates and to me.

Wearing AirPods or headphones during lecture is prohibited. Laptops and tablets will be permitted for taking notes during lecture. However, *I reserve the right to prohibit their use at any time* during the semester if they become a distraction.

Audio- or video-recording lecture without my permission is prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in a failing grade in the course.

OFFICE HOURS

My office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am to 2pm, *by appointment*. Meeting times must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance. Use this link to reserve a time to meet with me:

<https://doodle.com/bp/jasonnolen/jason-nolen-office-hours>

If you'd like to meet with me and my designated office hours don't fit your schedule, please talk to me after class or send me an email and we can arrange another time to meet.

Many students are intimidated by the idea of going into office hours – I know I was as an undergrad. But I encourage you to stop by your TA's or my office hours or make an appointment to meet with one of us. You do not have to be experiencing difficulty or even have profound questions to come to office hours. We are happy to answer questions and discuss ideas stemming from lecture, readings, or current events that relate to the course.

Do not hesitate to contact your TA or me if you need assistance. Head off problems before they turn into emergencies. If you cannot meet with me during my scheduled office hours, send me an email or talk to me after lecture and we can make an appointment to meet at another time.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Due to the large size of this class, please follow the following email etiquette.

1. If you have a question about the course (e.g., grading policy, exam format, course schedule, etc.) always check the syllabus first.
2. If you can't find what you need there, contact your TA.
3. If your TA can't help you, they will contact me on your behalf or you may contact me directly. You are always welcome to come to my office hours or schedule an appointment to speak with me at another time.

Other than stopping by office hours, email is the best way to contact me. You can expect a response within 24 hours, unless the message is received during or just before a weekend or holiday – in such cases, I will respond by the end of business hours on the next business day.

Except for cases of emergencies, do not ask last-minute questions about an assignment (e.g., do not email us after 5:00PM prior to a scheduled deadline for an assignment).

Grading

Final grades will be allocated as follows:

93-100%	=	A
88-92.99	=	AB
83-87.99	=	B
78-82.99	=	BC
70-77.99	=	C
60-69.99	=	D
Under 60	=	F

Your final course grade will be based on the following:

Exam #1	16%
Exam #2	16%
Exam #3	16%
Exam #4	16%
Section Attendance	6%
Section Participation	10%
Section Assignments	10%
<u>Connect Assignments</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

EXAMS

There will be four non-cumulative exams containing multiple choice and short essay questions. They will cover material from readings and lectures. The exams will be administered during lecture on **Wednesday, September 25; Friday, October 18; and Wednesday, November 13, and Wednesday, December 11**. Each exam is worth 16% of your final grade. Contrary to what you see online, **there will NOT be an exam during the final exam period**.

These exams will be taken electronically on Canvas. As such, you will be required to bring a device to class that will allow you to access Canvas and answer both multiple choice and short essay questions (in other words, you will need to be able to type quickly and efficiently on your device). If you are unable to bring a device to class that meets these requirements please let me know prior to the week of the exam.

SECTION ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Refer to your section syllabus – which you will receive from your TA – for information about discussion section attendance, participation, and assignments, and how those features of your performance will be graded.

CONNECT ASSIGNMENTS

When parts of the electronic textbook *Criminology* are assigned, you will be required to answer electronic quiz questions as you read.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are the answers to frequently asked questions. If you email me to ask one of these questions, I will respond with the corresponding pre-written emails:

I was absent on [date]. Did I miss anything important?

Hi [student name],

As with every other lecture, we did not cover anything important on [date]. Sorry to have wasted your time on the days that you did come to class.

Best,
Jason

Are there extra credit opportunities in this class?

Hi [student name],

There are no extra credit opportunities in this class.

Sincerely,
Jason

Do you curve the grades?

Hi [student name],

This class is graded on a fixed scale. Grades will not be curved.

Regards,
Jason

My overall score is half a percent below the cutoff for an A. Do you round up?

Hi [student name],

I don't round up to the nearest percentage point. Any score below [x.xx]% will result in a grade of [enter grade here] or lower.

Have a great break!
Jason

Is there any additional work I can do to bump my score up to an A?

Hi [student name],

There are no extra credit or extra work opportunities in this class.

Enjoy your summer!

Jason

COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Accommodations

McBurney Disability Resource Center: Students with disabilities, visible and invisible, should contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center located at 702 W Johnson St #2104, (608) 263-2741. Webpage: www.mcburney.wisc.edu.

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, send an email by the end of the second week of the course stating the specific date(s) for which you request accommodation; campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated if you make a timely request early in the term. See the university's web page for details: <https://kb.wisc.edu/page.php?id=21698>

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It will be detected and detested. It is truly not worth it. Ignorance of the rules is NOT an excuse.

All work that you submit must be your own and must have been done for this class. This means no recycling of old papers or projects (yours or anyone else's) and absolutely no plagiarism. This means no buying papers online, no cutting and pasting chunks of text from other sources and presenting it as your own writing, and no paraphrasing and presenting it as your own ideas. All work will be submitted in electronic form and checked against plagiarism detection software.

All incidences of plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be reported to the Chair of the Sociology Department as well as the Office of the Dean of Students, and you will receive a failing grade for the course. I expect you to acquaint yourself with the University's policy on academic misconduct, found here:

<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/>

If you have questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, the Writing Center has numerous resources and tutorials online on their website

<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/quoting-sources/>

Student Resources

University Health Services (UHS) Mental Health Services: To obtain assistance for personal, social, career, and/or study skills problems, please contact the counseling center at University Health Services: 333 East Campus Mall, 7th Floor. (608) 265-5600 (option 2). For 24/7 crisis support, call (608) 265-5600 and select option 9.

Website: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health>

UHS Medical Services: For health issues ranging from the flu to sexual health testing, UHS offers health services for many student needs. They are located on the 5th and 6th floors of 333 East Campus Mall. You can contact them by calling (608) 265-5600 (select option 1).

Website: www.uhs.wisc.edu/medical

UHS Violence Prevention: Violence can affect university students before they reach campus and throughout their time at college. UHS Violence Prevention services exists to prevent violence as well as to support survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. Please contact them to learn more about their services or to make an appointment.

Location: 8th Floor of 333 East Campus Mall

Website: www.uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/violence-prevention/about-us/

The Writing Center: It is always useful to develop your academic writing skills as early as possible. The UW Writing Center provides you with a diverse range of resources to help you write as a scholar and with style.

Location: 6171 Helen C. White Hall

Website: writing.wisc.edu

Questions and Complaints about Grading

The TAs and I are human, and we do make mistakes in grading. If you have a question about how an assignment was graded, please communicate with us. Note, however, that any time we look back to an assignment to evaluate the grading, your grade may go up or down. Please follow this procedure for grade questions and complaints:

- 1) Wait 24 hours, and review the assignment description – often, students are able to identify why their work was marked down by doing this.
- 2) 24 hours after a grade has been posted, submit to me (not your TA) a one-page paper with the following:
 - a. Clearly and specifically describe your question or complaint (hint: this tends to be better received if you can frame this around *learning* rather than your *grade*)
 - b. Justify any complaints with a description of *how* you believe you met the requirements
 - c. Request a meeting. Include several days and times when you can meet with the grader to discuss the issue.
- 3) I will reply to you within 48 hours (except on holidays or weekends, when it will be by the end of the following business day) to confirm the meeting time.
- 4) Meet with the grader.
- 5) In exceptional cases, when I agree that the original grade is in question, I may re-grade your paper. Note, again, that grades may go up or down.

Sociology Department Learning Objectives

Beyond the specific substantive and methodological content I will cover in this course, I have designed this course to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of sociology:

- **Communicate Skillfully:** Sociology majors write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- **Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes:** Sociology graduates can look beyond the surface of issues to discover the "why" and "how" of social order and structure and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation, identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena, and develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Unit 1: What is Criminology and How do We Do it?

September 4: Welcome to Soc 441

- No Readings

September 6: The Sociological Imagination

- Mills (1959), "The Promise of Sociology"
- Cohen (2012), "Why Don't Parents Name Their Daughters Mary Anymore?"

September 9: What is Deviance?

- Becker (1963), "Outsiders"

September 11: What is Criminology?

- Hagan and Daigle (2019), "Introduction to Criminology"

September 13: Defining and Measuring Crime

- Connect textbook Chapter 2: "Introduction" through "Self-Report Surveys"

September 16: Some Basic Crime Facts

- Connect textbook Chapter 2: “Measuring Characteristics of Crime” through “Race and Crime”

Unit 2: Why do People Commit Crimes?

September 18, 20, and 23: Classical School, Rational Choice and Deterrence

- Connect textbook Chapter 3: “Introduction” through “The Classical School: An Evaluation”
- Stafford and Warr (2013), “Re-Conceptualizing Deterrence Theory”
- Cornish and Clarke (2013), “Crime as a Rational Choice”

September 25: EXAM 1

September 27 and 30; October 2: Anomie, Strain and Differential Opportunities

- Agnew (1992), “Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency”
- Baron (2004), “General Strain, Street Youth and Crime: A Test of Agnew’s Revised Theory”
 - Read the abstract (p. 457), skim the next 6 pages, then carefully read “Hypotheses” (p. 464) through the end

October 4, 7, and 9: Control Theories

- Connect textbook chapter 7: “Introduction” through “Review”

October 11, 14, and 16: Neighborhoods, Social Disorganization and Broken Windows

- Connect textbook chapter 5: “Social Disorganization Theory” through “Evaluation: Social Disorganization Theory”
- Duck (2015), “Precarious Living”
- Kelling and Wilson (1982), “Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety”

October 18: EXAM 2

October 21, 23, and 25: Differential Association and Social Learning Theories

- Connect textbook chapter 5: “Differential Association Theory” through “Evaluation: Differential Association Theory”
- Becker (1963), “Becoming a Marihuana User”
- Hochsteler et al. (2002), “Differential Association in Group and Solo Offending”

October 28 and 30; November 1: Life Course and Labeling Theories

- Sampson and Laub (1995), *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life*, pages 1-24
- Connect Chapter 8: “Labeling Theory” through “Evaluation: Labeling Theory”
- William Chambliss (1973), “The Saints and The Roughnecks”

Unit 3: Cost and Consequences of Crime and Criminal Justice

November 4 and 6 – Street and Drug Crimes

- Connect Chapter 13: “Introduction” through “Review”

November 8 and 11 – viewing of *The House I Live In*

- No assigned reading

November 13: EXAM 3

November 15 and 18 – White Collar Crime

- Hagan (2016), “White-Collar Crime: Occupational and Corporate.”
- Van de Bunt (2010), “Walls of Secrecy and Silence.”

November 20 and 22 – Mass Incarceration

- Comfort (2016), “A Twenty-Hour-a-Day Job.”

November 25 and December 2 – viewing of *13th*

- Alexander (2010), introduction to *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*
- Eubank and Fresh (2022), “Enfranchisement and Incarceration after the 1965 Voting Rights Act”

December 4 and 6 – Radical Criminology Approaches

- Connect textbook chapter 8: “Conflict Theory” through “Emerging Explanations”

December 9 – To be determined

- No assigned reading

December 11: EXAM 4

******Syllabus may change based on class needs as they arise******