

SPRING 2021 - SOC 441 - CRIMINOLOGY

Instructor:

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Office Hrs.: W on BBCU, 5:30-6:30PM
Meetings by appt.

Teaching Assistant:

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Meeting Times:

Lecture: M,W. 4:00-5:15PM

Discussions: All Tues.: 301 – 9:55AM; 302 – 11:00; 303 – 12:05PM; 304 – 1:20

Location: All meetings held virtually via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course you will develop a sociological understanding of crime by looking over some of the general contours of crime in the world and the major approaches to explaining it. We develop your understanding in three parts. In the first part, we interrogate basic questions of what we mean by studying crime in a sociological way. In the second part, we look at most of the ways that people have attempted to explain crime. In the third part, we consider where the study of crime and related trends might go in the future.

STATEMENT ON COVID 19

This course is occurring in the globally-historic-disaster context of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such we have moved all meetings online for the Spring semester.

Despite these circumstances, we aspire to teach a class which is roughly equivalent both in learning quality and peer engagement to anything you might have had in person. There are some things which cannot be the same, while there are opportunities to try other things which may be better or easier in other ways. Accordingly we have worked hard to think about ways to develop active participation and peer relationships among you all in a safe, virtual manner. Though we want you to be engaged regularly in the live lectures and discussion sections, we understand that these times are anything but normal and will endeavor to be maximally understanding of any issues that arise. There's also a chance that we could encounter some of the same challenges as you, so we hope that you will try to be understanding and empathetic too.

We have had experience teaching in this setting already, and have been impressed by the quality of work that students have been able to achieve. We are excited to conduct a class that could stand alongside one in any other year, so be prepared to think and work as best you can.

However, fix always in your mind that *no* class – not even this one – is more important than your life or the lives of anyone around you. Be well first.

CONTENT ADVISEMENT:

Among its material, this course discusses terrorism, genocide, war, hate crimes, rape, murder, shooting, stabbing, other physical assault, theft, drug use, prostitution, lynching, police violence, incarceration, punitive fines, violations of persons and places which fall under civil law, and

white collar crime. These topics may be difficult for us to think about, but confronting such parts of life is key to a full scientific understanding of society. Please come to us immediately if you expect difficulty with any particular content in the class, and we will happily work with you to ensure you can participate to the fullest extent possible.

REQUIRED TEXT

Crutchfield, Robert D., Charis E. Kubrin, George S. Bridges, and Joseph G. Weis. 2008. *Crime: Readings. Third Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

PREREQUISITES:

This is a 400 level course, so we will assume you have basic familiarity with sociological methods, reading scholarly work, and expressing yourself through writing. Nonetheless, there will be some pedagogical materials in the files on ways to approach reading in order to get the most out of your time, and we will do our best to accommodate any particular difficulties you encounter understanding the course if you have little background in sociology. If you are unfamiliar with the core of sociology, try to pay attention closely in the first few weeks especially – they will help you with the latter work.

GRADING:

First, there is an absolute percentage of content which, when achieved, will certainly grant you a given grade. The absolute percentages and letter grades are as follows:

F<60<D<70<C<78<BC<82<B<88<AB<92<A.

Second, there is a supplementary percentile curve, where landing above a certain percentile of the class will award a certain grade. On this percentile scale,

F<3<D<6<C<25<BC<45<B<65<AB<83<A

Whichever of the two is highest will be your final letter grade.

75% OF GRADE - EXAMS:

- There are 3 Exams
- 20%, 25%, and 30% of the grade
- All occur during class meeting times.
- Duration will be no longer than class.
- All exams are open note and open resources.
- All evaluations will be cumulative.
- All responses are written – no multiple choice or number entry.
- Expect at least one question on every reading, so you should read them all.
- The class meeting prior to any exam will be devoted to review.
- Overall this organization suggests that during the exam the challenge will come from

recalling readings and responding to questions in brief, clear, and original answers.

25% OF GRADE – PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:

- 15% attendance, 10% participation.
- Attend section and lecture
- Keep up with readings (finish each week by Tuesday to be prepared for sections).
- Treat others with respect and help one another to learn in this environment
- Engage regularly in your discussion section
- Complete occasional one-off participation assignments (e.g. something like a reading response)

GRADING QUESTIONS AND PROCEDURES:

If you want to talk about grades, wait at least 2 days after the class meeting where the assignment is returned and discussed before contacting us. All exam grades will be addressed in lecture first.

In order to regrade any specific answer (short of basic and non-interpretive errors like miscalculation), we must reassess the entire assignment to remain fair to all students. Since it is possible that we were too generous in one area while being too critical in another, it is unfair for us to look only at content presented by students when looking over an assignment. In practice, a regrade could result in a lower score.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON COMMUNICATIONS

- Contact us via the methods listed here rather than internally through Canvas – the Canvas system is strange and a bit independent from our email.
- If we don't respond to an email within 72 hours: after checking if the issue is discussed in the syllabus, be encouraged to email again, as we may have missed it. Email volume has increased dramatically during the pandemic.
- After the first meeting's review of the syllabus, we generally won't take time to revisit questions explained here. If you are not getting a response from us, check the syllabus.
- If you ask about course content: we will try to answer yes or no questions via email, but longer questions will only be answered via class-wide email if multiple students ask. Most open questions are best discussed in classes or individual meetings.
- If you have trying personal circumstances: There is no need to contact us about missing things here or there – take care of yourself first. If you need help to catch up on content or lenience for missed activity you should contact us whenever it is healthy to do so.
- Finally, keep in mind that online / text-only media seem to have a tendency to reduce one's filter; conduct yourselves with respect and good faith towards us and one another as we will always endeavor to do with you.

READINGS AND SCHEDULE:

Notes: 1) Readings marked with a tilde (~) are to be skimmed only; 2) Each section ends with a question which demonstrates its pedagogical purpose; 3) Readings are loosely sequenced so that they make more sense read in order each week. In other words, read them in order!

PART 1 – WHERE CRIMINOLOGY FITS IN

Week 1 Introduction and Definitions – Jan. 25, 27

- Becker, Howard. 1953. "Becoming a Marihuana User" *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol 59, No. 3, pp. 235-242.
- Durkheim, Emile. 1982. *Rules of the Sociological Method*. The Free Press. New York, NY. [1895] "Preface" 31-33, "Chapter 1" 50-59.
- Sutherland, 1978 *Criminology*. Selections pp 1-23
- Short, "Introduction: On Crime, Criminals, and Criminologists." Pp. xviii-xix in Crutchfield et al. (2008).
- Hagan, John, "Defining Crime: An Issue of Morality." Pp. 1-9 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).
- Huff, "Historical Explanations of Crime: From Demons to Politics." Pp. 10-19 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

-What do we mean when we study crime?

Week 2 Periphery and Limit Cases – Feb. 1, 3

- Sutherland, Edwin H. *White Collar Crime: The Uncut Version*. Pp. 3-10
- ~Fourcade, Marion. 2011 "Cents and Sensibility: Economic Valuation and the Nature of 'Nature'" *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 116, No. 6, pp. 1721-77
- ~Garland, David 2005. "Penal Excess and Surplus Meaning: Public Torture Lynchings in Twentieth-Century America." *Law and Society Review*. Don't skim the closing, 829-830.
- Hagan, et al. "The Criminology of Genocide: The Death and Rape of Darfur." Pp. 144-151 in Crutchfield et al. (2008)
- LaFree and Dugan, "How does Studying Terrorism Compare to Studying Crime?" Pp. 103-112 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

-Where do we draw the line as to what we are interested in?

Week 3 Basic Facts of Crime – Feb. 8, 10

- Hirschi and Gottfredson "Age and the Explanation of Crime" Pp. 167-170 in Crutchfield et al. (2008)
- Junger-Tas. Ribeaud and Cruyff "Juvenile Delinquency and Gender." Pp.171-186 in Crutchfield et al (2008).
- McNulty and Bellair "Explaining Racial and Ethnic Differences in Adolescent Violence: Structural Disadvantage, Family Well-Being and Social Capital." Pp. 161-166 in Crutchfield et al. (2008)
- Zimring "A Youth Violence Epidemic: Myth or Reality" Pp. 23-32 in Crutchfield et al. (2008)

-What are some basic and fairly stable features of this thing we call "crime"?

Week 4: The Practice of Explaining Crime – Feb. 15, 17

- Singleton, Royce A., Jr., and Bruce C. Straits. 1999. *Approaches to Social Research*, Third Edition. New Page 4 York: Oxford, pp. 78-85 on causal relationships and 179-183 on experimentation

Pager, Devah. 2003. "Mark of a Criminal Record." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:937-75
Sampson, Laub and Wimer "Does Marriage Reduce Crime? A Counterfactual Approach to
Within -Individual Causal Effects." Pp. 316-322 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

Elliott and Ageton, "Reconciling Race and Class Differences in Self-Reported and Official
Estimates of Delinquency." Pp. 126-132 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

-How can we try to take stock of human behaviors and contexts which are attached to so-called
crime?

Week 5: Monday review, Wednesday Exam 1 – Feb. 22, 24

PART 2 - CRIMINOLOGY IN PRACTICE AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Week 6: Classical School, Rational Choice and Deterrence – Mar. 1, 3

Wilson and Herrnstein, "A Bio-Psychological Theory of Choice." Pp. 392-94 in Crutchfield et
al. (2008).

Mark Stafford and Mark Warr "Re-Conceptualizing Deterrence Theory" pp. 415-420 in (2006)
Criminological Theory, Past to Present, edited by Cullen and Agnew. Roxbury
Publishing.

Cornish, Derek and Ronald Clarke. "Crime as a Rational Choice" pp. 420-426 in *Criminological
Theory, Past to Present*, edited by Cullen and Agnew. Roxbury Publishing (2006)

Radelet and Berg, "The Changing Nature of Death Penalty Debates." Pp. 448-454 in Crutchfield
et al. (2008).

-Is crime rational?

Week 7: Control Theory – Mar. 8, 10

Hirschi, Travis "Causes and Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency" Pp. 266-271 in Crutchfield et
al. (2008).

Hirschi, Travis. "Causes of Delinquency" pp. 16-34. (2006)

Sampson, Robert and John Laub "Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through
Life." Pp.1-24. (1995)

-Is crime a result of weak bonds to others?

Week 8: Differential Association Theory – Mar. 15, 17

Sutherland, "A Theory of Crime: Differential Association." Pp. 223-25 in Crutchfield et al.
(2008).

Matsueda, "Differential Association Theory"

Hochsteler Copes, and DeLisi "Differential Association in Group and Solo Offending." pp. 226-
in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

-Is crime a result of learning from others?

ASYNCHRONOUS BREAK

– NO CLASS MAR. 17, 22, 23 –
Take care of yourself!

To make up for this, at some point before April 30, do the following:

1. Watch the following film:

Act of Killing. Directed by Joshua Oppenheimer. Final Cut for Real DK, 2012. Available streaming through the UW library.

LINK HERE: <https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/9913009122902121>

2. Write one response note, 250-400 words applying a theory from Part II to this documentary.

Week 9: Neighborhoods: Social Disorganization and Cultural Transmission – Mar. 22, 24

Shaw and McKay, “Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas.” Pp. 187-215 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush, “Neighborhood Inequality, Collective Efficacy, and the Spatial Dynamics of Urban Violence.” Pp. 216-222 in Crutchfield et al. (2008)

Wilson and Kelling, “Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety.” Pp. 438-447 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

~Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen. W. Raudenbusch. 2004. “Seeing disorder: Neighborhood stigma and the social construction of ‘broken windows’”, especially the abstract, their writing on SSO (pp. 325-327), and their conclusion (pp. 336-337)

~Lyons, Christopher J. 2007. “Community (Dis)Organization and Racially Motivated Crime”. *American Journal of Sociology*. Check out the maps and their conclusion.

-Is crime a product of socio-structural context?

Week 10: Accounting for Interaction – Mar. 29, 31

Cohen and Felson, “Social Change and Crime Rate Trends.” Pp. 323-29 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

Katz, Jack. *Seductions of Crime*. Selected scans to be uploaded.

Collins, Randall. *Violence*. Selected scans to be uploaded.

Anderson, “The Code of the Streets.” Pp. 365-73 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

Stewart and Simon “Structure and Culture in African American Adolescent Violence: A Partial Test of the Code of the Street Thesis.” Pp. 374-89 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).

-Is crime a product of interpersonal interactions?

Week 11: Catch-up, Review, and Exam 2 – Apr. 5, 7

PART 3 – CRIME AND THE FUTURE

Week 12: Desistance, the Life Course, and Stigma – Apr. 12, 14

- Massoglia, Michael and Christopher Uggen. 2010. "Settling Down and Aging Out: Toward an Interactionist Theory of Desistance in the Transition to Adulthood". *American Journal of Sociology*.
- Pager, Devah, Bruce Western, and Bart Bonikowski. "Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment" 2009. *American Sociological Review*. Vol. 74. Pp 777-799

-How does crime fit into the larger life course of individuals?

Week 13: The Present State – Apr. 19, 21

- Western, Bruce, and Becky Pettit, "Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality." Pp. 478-82 in Crutchfield et al. (2008).
- Harris, Alexes, Heather Evans, and Katherine Beckett. 2010. "Drawing Blood from Stones: Legal Debt and Social Inequality in the Contemporary United States"
Read: pp. 1753-1756, 1785-1787. Can skim remainder of article.
- Massoglia, and Schnittker "No Real Release" Pp 426-432 in Context Reader, 2nd edition Uggen and Hartman Eds (2012)
- Eason, John M., Danielle Zucker, and Christopher Wildeman. 2017. "Mass Imprisonment Across the Rural-Urban Interface". *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 672, Issue 1.
(<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0002716217705357>)

-What are the effects of crime and punishment on the larger society?

Week 14: What might be coming ahead? – Apr. 26, Apr. 28

- Chesney-Lind, Meda. 2006 "Patriarchy, Crime, and Justice: Feminist Criminology in an Era of Backlash" *Feminist Criminology*.
Read: "Looking Backward, Looking Forward" pp. 7-8; skim pp. 10-16
- Light, Michael T., Ellen Dinsmore, and Michael Massoglia. 2019. "How Do Criminal Courts Respond in Times of Crisis? Evidence from 9/11" *American Journal of Sociology*.
Read: abstract, pp. 496-499; skim discussion
- Lunstrum, Elizabeth. 2014. "Green Militarization: Anti-Poaching Efforts and the Spatial Contours of Kruger National Park".
Read: abstract, first section ending on p. 818, "Overview..." section on 820-826; skim from "Value and Assumptions..." on p. 826 to p. 830.
- Young, Kathryn M. and Joan Petersilia. 2016. "Keeping Track: Surveillance, Control, and the Expansion of the Carceral State". *Harvard Law Review*
Read from "This Review argues..." on p. 1321, continue to the end of the section on p. 1323. Then see the following sections: Read "The Investigative Stop" pp. 1323-1326, Skim "Keeping Track" pp 1330-1335, Read paragraph on "quasi-criminal 'intelligence' databases" pp 1339.

-What is changing about crime and the way we think about it?

Week 15: Final Exam Period – May 3, 5

A review session will be held on Monday at the usual lecture time.

The final is scheduled for **5/5 - 10:05AM-12:05PM CST**

We will announce the alternate time to those who qualify.