

SOCIOLOGY 249: CRIMINOLOGY

Fall Semester 2018

T/Th 2:30 – 3:45

Atwood Chemistry, 316

Professor: Dr. Sonal Nalkur

Email: snalkur@emory.edu

Office: 213 Tarbutton Hall

Office Hours: T/Th, 11am-noon

Teaching Assistant: Ye Ji Kim

Email: ykim282@emory.edu

Office: 201 Tarbutton Hall

Office Hours: Wed, 1-2pm, and by appoint.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course addresses major themes and questions in the study of criminology. We will examine some of the most influential explanations for criminal behavior, focusing on the ways in which social context shapes beliefs about crime. What are the causes of crime? How can crime be reduced? In what ways is criminal justice decision-making influenced by race, class, and gender biases? To develop a thorough understanding of the nature of crime, we will examine a range of criminal activity, from gang-related crimes to white collar crime.

1. We begin by developing a “vocabulary” that allows us to address such questions as “What is crime?” “How does crime happen?” “Who becomes a criminal and why?” In this section, we will also watch a number of documentaries and meet news reporters who explored prison systems first-hand.
2. We then examine key sociological theories on crime and allow them to inform our understanding of contemporary criminal cases. We will also ask: “How do media messages in the news and in pop culture shape our view of crime?” “What are the dominant understandings of criminals, and how did they come about?”
3. The final section of the course will focus on contemporary empirical scholarship done in the field of criminology. To that end, we will also look at efforts to improve American prison systems and the criminal justice system.

There is a Canvas site devoted to this course (**SOC 249: Criminology**). This site will include all materials that are handed out in class (the syllabus, instructions for the paper, etc.), as well as outlines of the lectures. Any important announcements will also be posted on this site.

COURSE MATERIALS

1. Books:

Adler, Freda, Gerhard Mueller & William Laufer. *Criminology: Ninth Edition*. (Looseleaf or electronic versions are sufficient.)

Stevenson, Bryan. (2015). *Just Mercy: A story of justice and redemption*. Spiegel & Grau.

2. Reserve readings

There are also additional **required** readings, which will be available on our CANVAS site.

Some of the readings are more difficult than others. I will give you guidance on “how” to read the articles, particularly the more difficult ones. I will use lectures to give you additional information not found in the readings, and I will also provide frameworks for understanding and integrating the readings with the lecture material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation (10% of final grade)

All assigned **readings** should be completed **before** class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities.

2. Response Papers (25% of final grade)

Students will be assigned 5 response papers to complete throughout the semester. In most cases, you will be given a question or topic to respond to. The papers will be ~500-600 words in length, and will be worth 5% each. Further instructions will be discussed in class.

3. Exams (45% of the final grade)

The midterm exam will be taken during class time (see following pages for schedule). The exams will consist of a combination of short answer and essay questions, and they will cover both the readings and lecture material.

Midterm Exam #1: 20%

Midterm Exam #2: 25%

4. Group Presentation (20% of final grade)

Presentations will be made at the end of the semester. Further instructions will be discussed in class.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The use of cell phones and/or pagers is not permitted in this class. Please turn OFF your phones and pagers before entering the classroom.

General Communication

I provide very detailed information and instructions in all of the course documents. I will also send periodic Canvas announcements and emails about any further course information.

- **Please read all of the written course communications thoroughly!**
- If you have questions after you have read everything in a particular course document (syllabus, paper instructions, study guide), then feel free to ask me.
- **Do NOT ask/email me questions that I have already answered** in a course document or via posted announcement/emails. I will not respond to these questions.

Email Communication:

I generally try to respond to emails within 1 business day, but I do not guarantee a response within 24 hrs. I do not answer emails after 6pm at night.

General Conduct:

Please be mindful of the general code of conduct that you would use in any classroom setting. I expect us all to be respectful of one another.

- **Please do not arrive late to class.**
- Once in class, please refrain from carrying on private conversations with your neighbor(s). This is distracting for everyone else in the room.
- Please refrain from texting, checking Snapchat/Facebook/Instagram, or any other non-class activities during all class meetings. If you are found to be engaging in these activities, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class.

Missed Classes: You are responsible for missed material. Please get notes from one of your classmates. After you have read all of the missed material, if you still have questions, please come to my office hours. (Do not email me to ask about missed class material.)

Video/Audio: You may not video or audiotape lectures without my express consent.

Extra Credit: There are no extra credit assignments available in this course.

Peer Tutoring Writing Support

Tutors in the Emory Writing Center and the ESL Program are available to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment, at any stage of the composing process. Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. Writing Center and ESL tutors take a similar approach as they work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Students who are currently enrolled in an ESL-supported section of English 101, English 123, or English 221 or who plan to take one of those courses next semester should see ESL tutors, as they are specifically trained to support students in ESL Program courses. To learn more about ESL tutoring or to make an appointment, go to tinyurl.com/eslemory. All other students in the college should see Writing Center tutors who are trained to work with this broader population. Learn more and make an appointment at writingcenter.emory.edu. Please review tutoring policies before your visit.

Accommodating Disabilities:

If you have or acquire any sort of condition that may require special accommodation(s), please inform me as soon as possible so that we may make the appropriate arrangements. Proper documentation from the Office of Disabilities Services will be required. They can be reached at 404-727-1065 or via the web at <http://www.emory.edu/EEO/ODS/>.

Academic Conduct:

All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the policies of Emory

College with respect to conduct and academic honesty. Anyone engaging in acts that violate these policies, such as plagiarism or cheating will be referred to the Honors Council. For more information see: http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html

Late Policy:

Unless otherwise stated on the assignment sheet or in class, an assignment submitted after the deadline will be penalized 5% for each day it is late, from the moment it is past due. If you require an extension due to illness, you must notify Dr. Nalkur *prior* to the deadline, and provide a note from your doctor.

Make-Up Policy:

My permission is needed to makeup exams and assignments. If you are going to miss an exam or assignment, please make every effort to notify me before the missed class and to gather appropriate material to justify your absence. If you are unable to notify me before the class/due date, please try to have a friend, roommate, etc. contact me via e-mail and inform me of your absence. A mutually convenient time will be arranged for you to make up the assignment or exam. Makeup assignments will *only* be allowed in a situation of an excused absence (e.g., illness, family emergency, etc.). A note from the Dean will be required to make up the final exam.

The use of cell phones is not permitted in this class.

You are not permitted to use laptops or other devices in class unless you have special permission from Dr. Nalkur.

Please turn OFF your phones before entering the classroom.

If you are found using phones or devices in class, you will be asked to leave.

COURSE SCHEDULE (*subject to revision*)

SECTION ONE: WHAT IS CRIME?

August 30: Introduction

September 4: “Chapter 1: Understanding Criminology,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology* (focus on pg. 11-22). Questions to think about: What is criminology? What is crime? What is a criminal?

“The Sorrow and the Shame of the Accidental Killer,” in *The New Yorker*, September 18, 2017; pg. 1-13. (note: some of the formatting is off, but continue to read through to the end) Questions to think about: Are “Accidental Killers” criminals? What should their punishment be?

September 6: “The Gangster’s Guide to Upward Mobility” – Malcolm Gladwell in *The New Yorker*, August 11, 2014.

- Pay particular attention to the discussion of Goffman’s study. Describe Goffman’s study. What methods did Goffman use? What was she trying to understand? Discuss your thoughts on the Gladwell’s article and Goffman’s study.
- Note the description of Robert Merton. What is the “crooked-ladder” argument?

“Chapter 2: Defining Crimes and Measuring Criminal Behavior,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology* (pg. 24-29 & pg. 39-42; skim the rest). Questions to think about: What is a criminal?

Response Paper #1 Due!

SECTION TWO: CLASSICAL THEORETICAL TREATMENTS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY COUNTERPARTS

September 11: “Chapter 3: Schools of Thought throughout History” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology*

“Harvey Weinstein’s Army of Spies,” in *The New Yorker*, November 6, 2017.

Cullen and Agnew: “Crimes and Punishments,” Beccaria.
Cullen and Agnew: “The Criminal Mind,” Lombrosio.

September 13: “Chapter 4: Strain and Cultural Deviance Theories,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology*

[“The 9-Billion Dollar Witness: Meet JP Morgan Chase’s Worst Nightmare,” in *Rolling Stone* : <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/the-9-billion-witness-meet-jpmorgan-chases-worst-nightmare-242414/>](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/the-9-billion-witness-meet-jpmorgan-chases-worst-nightmare-242414/)

Prisons & Incarceration

- September 18: “Chapter 7: Social Control Theory,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology*
- “The Caging of America,” in *The New Yorker*, January 30, 2012.
- September 20: “Solitary Confinement in America” in *Los Angeles Times*, 2017.
“Prisons and Inequality,” *Contexts*.
“Who survives Death Row?” *American Sociological Review*

Response Paper #2 Due!

- September 25: “Chapter 6: The Formation of Subcultures,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology*

Film: *The Work*

- September 27: “Chapter 6: The Formation of Subcultures,” in *The Changing Boundaries of Criminology*

Film: *The Feminist on Cellblock Y*

- October 2: **Exam #1**

- October 4-9: **Fall Break – enjoy!**

SECTION THREE: TYPES OF CRIME AND EMPIRICAL EXPLORATIONS

- October 11: Class discussion *The Feminist on Cellblock Y* with film-maker

Response Paper #3 Due!

October 16: *Just Mercy*: Bryan Stevenson

October 18: *Just Mercy*: Bryan Stevenson

October 23: “Chapter 10: Violent Crime”

Hagan, J. (2011). “Voices of the Darfur genocide.” *Contexts*, 10(3), 22-28.

Response Paper #4 Due!

*****Bryan Stevenson, October 24th – CAMPUS VISIT*****

October 25: “Chapter 10: Violent Crime”

Hureau, DM & Braga AA (2018). “The Trade in Tools: The Market for Illicit Guns in high-risk networks.” *Criminology*.

October 30: “Chapter 12: White Collar Crime and Corporate Crime”

“How Elizabeth Holmes’ House of Cards Came Tumbling Down,” *Vanity Fair*, October 2016. *Theranos Scandal*.

November 1: “Chapter 12: White Collar Crime and Corporate Crime”

Reading: TBD

November 6: “Chapter 8: Labeling, Conflict, and Radical Theories”

Response Paper #5 Due!

November 8: “Chapter 9: Theories of Crime, Place, and Victimization”

*****Group project outline due!!*****

November 13: Miller, I. M. (2013). Rebellion, crime and violence in Qing China, 1722–1911: a topic modeling approach. *Poetics*, 41(6), 626-649.
Questions to consider: How have we thought about crime in the past?

November 15: Cybercrime: How should we think about crime in the future?

November 20-22: **Thanksgiving – enjoy!**

November 27: Glassner, B. (2010). *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things: Crime, Drugs, Minorities, Teen Moms, Killer Kids, Muta*. Basic books. <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/why-were-living-in-the-age-of-fear-190818/>

November 29: **Exam #2**

December 4: Group Presentations

December 6: Group Presentations

December 11: Group Presentations & Wrap-up