

SOCIOLOGY 249: CRIMINOLOGY

Spring Semester 2022

M/W 10am – 11:15

White Hall, 101

Professor: Dr. Sonal Nalkur

TA: Anqi Hu

Office Hours: schedule via Calendly.com

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 read investigative journalism and examine relevant documentaries.
2. We then examine key sociological theories on crime and allow them to inform our understanding of contemporary criminal cases. “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 look at issues around the problem of mass incarceration, workplace crime, white collar crime, and international courts.

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

Please wait until the first day of class to purchase your books!

1. Books:

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.

All assigned **readings** should be completed **before** class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities. 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 (30% of final grade)

All assigned **readings** should be completed **before** class to ensure active participation in class discussions and activities. Students will be expected to interact with their fellow classmates in an effort to develop their own scholarly and intellectual community (this should be both fun and helpful!).

For the month of January, when the class is being conducted online, short lectures will be posted on Canvas for asynchronous engagement. On Mondays and Wednesdays, students will be assigned to small group discussion sections that will run during class time and will be led by Dr. Nalkur. Students will be expected to participate in real-time (synchronously). Your discussion session will last 15-20 minutes and will have 3-4 other students. Details will be provided in class and on Canvas.

I will post my lecture notes for you at the end of each week.

2. Oral Exam or Final Research Paper (30% of final grade)

Students will have a choice between an taking an oral exam and writing a final paper. I will give details in class. The oral exam will be based on class readings/material, while the final paper will ask students to incorporate additional scholarly work (building on themes and empirical work presented in class) into a research project.

3. Weekly Response Papers (40% of the final grade)

Response papers are due by 8:00am every Monday morning. Papers should be 250-400 words in length and submitted via Canvas. Papers should be well-written and will require engagement with the week's readings. Late papers will receive a zero grade. Students will be able to drop two paper grades over the course of the semester.

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 on weekends.

Zoom Communication

Students are expected to treat Zoom classroom sessions, Zoom calls, and Zoom office hours as professional interactions.

1. Please take your calls in a quiet space that is without distractions.
2. If you do not have a neutral background, or are taking calls from your personal room, please blur your background using Zoom tools.
3. Please try to avoid taking calls outdoors as sound quality diminishes significantly.
4. When you are on a call, please avoid speaking with other people around you and remain focused on our calls.
5. I will do my best to keep calls short and focused, and I expect you to be focused on our calls as well. Thank you!

If you anticipate any of these guidelines to be difficult, please email Dr. Nalkur as soon as possible.

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

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 or during Zoom calls.

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? HOW DOES THE JUSTICE SYSTEM WORK?

- January 12:* Introduction
- January 17:* *MLK Observance – no class*
- January 19:* Film: *The Loving Story*
“The Gangster’s Guide to Upward Mobility” – Malcolm Gladwell in *The New Yorker*, August 11, 2014.
- January 24:* Film: *The Armstrong Lie*
Reading: “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)
- January 26:* Religion, Morality, and Criminal Justice
Ronel, N., & Ben Yair, Y. (2018). Spiritual Criminology: The Case of Jewish Criminology. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(7), 2081–2102.
- January 31:* Clair, M., & Winter, A. S. (2016). How judges think about racial disparities: Situational decision-making in the criminal justice system. *Criminology*, 54(2), 332-359.

SECTION TWO: CLASSICAL THEORETICAL TREATMENTS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY COUNTERPARTS

- February 2: Biological Explanations for Crime
DeLisi, M. (2013). Revisiting Lombroso. *The Oxford handbook of criminological theory*, 5-21.
- February 7: Introduction to the Classical School: Rational Choice Theory
Wright, R. T., & Decker, S. H. (1997). *Armed robbers in action: Stickups and street culture*. UPNE. Chapter 2 and 3 (up to p.77)
- February 9: Cornish, D. B., & Clarke, R. V. (1987). Understanding crime displacement: An application of rational choice theory. *Criminology*, 25(4), 933-948.
- Three short news articles:
“American Exceptionalism and the Problem of Mass Shootings”
“The Caging of America”
“Goodbye to Freddie Gray”
- February 14: Punishment and the Classical School of Criminology
Mühlhahn, K., & Klaus, M. (2009). *Criminal justice in China: A history*. Harvard University Press. (Introduction & Chapter 1)
- February 16: Positivist School: Strain Theory
Contreras, Randol. 2014. [*The Stickup Kids: Race, Drugs, Violence, and the American Dream*](#). Chapter 1. Berkeley: University of California Press.

SECTION THREE: ARCHIVES, MASS INCARCERATION & WHITE COLLAR CRIME

- February 21: Positivist School: Strain Theory (cont'd)
Contreras, Randol. 2014. [*The Stickup Kids: Race, Drugs, Violence, and the American Dream*](#). Chapter 2. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Burt, Callie Harbin, Ronald L. Simons, and Frederick X. Gibbons. 2012. “[Racial Discrimination, Ethnic-Racial Socialization, and Crime: A Micro-sociological Model of Risk and Resilience](#)” *American Sociological Review* 77: 648-657, Table 1, Table 2, 667-670 (Discussion Section) – skim the rest.

- February 23:* What we learn from Archives and Commemoration
- Allyson Hobbson and Nell Freudenberger. “A Visit to Montgomery’s Legacy Museum,” *New Yorker*, July 17 2018.
 - Jeffrey Toobin. “The Legacy of Lynching, on Death Row” *New Yorker*, August 15, 2016.
 - Malcolm Gladwell Podcast: Revisionist History, Season 2: Episode 4 – “The Foot Soldier of Birmingham”
- February 28:* Crime and Commemoration
- Alarid, L. F. (2000). Sexual assault and coercion among incarcerated women prisoners: Excerpts from prison letters. *The Prison Journal*, 80(4), 391-406.
 - Forts, F. (2002). Living with Confederate symbols. *Southern Cultures*, 8(1), 60-75.
- March 2:* Policing
- Stuart, F. (2016). Becoming “copwise”: Policing, culture, and the collateral consequences of street-level criminalization. *Law & Society Review*, 50(2), 279-313.
- March 7-11: Spring Break – Enjoy!!***
- March 14:* Positivist School: Social Context
- Goffman, Alice. 2009. “[On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto.](#)” *American Sociological Review* 74: 339-357.
- March 16:* Positivist School: Differential Association and Peer Effects
- Jones, Nikki. 2004. “[It’s not Where you Live, it’s How you Live](#)”: How Young Women Negotiate Conflict and Violence in the Inner City.” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 595: 49-62
- March 21:* *Just Mercy*: Bryan Stevenson; Chapters 1-4, 6, 10
- March 23:* Mass Incarceration & The Life Course
- Pettit, B., & Western, B. (2004). Mass imprisonment and the life course: Race and class inequality in US incarceration. *American sociological review*, 69(2), 151-169.

Locking Up Our Own, Chapters TBD

- March 28:* Mass Incarceration
Stuart, F. (2016). Becoming “Copwise”: Policing, Culture, and the Collateral Consequences of Street-Level Criminalization. *Law & Society Review*, 50(2), 279-313.
- March 30:* Crime Around the World
Frank, D. J., Camp, B. J., & Boutcher, S. A. (2010). Worldwide trends in the criminal regulation of sex, 1945 to 2005. *American Sociological Review*, 75(6), 867-893
Response Paper #2 Due
- April 4:* The International Criminal Court
Hagan, J. (2011). “Voices of the Darfur genocide.” *Contexts*, 10(3), 22-28.
Reading from Local Life: <https://locallove.ca/life/how-healing-lodges-help-indigenous-women-rebuild-their-lives/#.XhiElBdKifd>
- April 6:* 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.
And: <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/why-were-living-in-the-age-of-fear-190818/>
- April 11:* White Collar Crime
Braithwaite, J. (1985). White collar crime. *Annual review of sociology*, 11(1), 1-25.

“How Elizabeth Holmes’ House of Cards Came Tumbling Down,” *Vanity Fair*, October 2016. *Theranos Scandal*.
- April 13:* White Collar Crime (cont’d)
“Harvey Weinstein’s Army of Spies,” in *The New Yorker*, November 6, 2017.
Excerpt from *Catch and Kill* by Ronan Farrow
Reading 2: TBD
- May 5:* **Final Exam 3:00pm-5:30pm**