

Western Kentucky University

CRIM 446 & 546: Gender, Crime, & Justice (WEB)

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Catalog Description: Explores how gender shapes reactions toward victims, offenders, and professionals working in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Course Text:

- Chesney-Lind, M. & L. Pasko. 2013. *Girls, Women, and Crime*. 2nd Edition: Sage Publications
- Other articles/videos as assigned on blackboard
- Additional book to be announced on blackboard for Book Review

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to

1. Understand how gender influences individual worldviews
2. Apply the social construction of gender thesis to explain issues and trends related to crime and justice.
3. Compare and contrast the social construction of gender thesis with a biosocial lens to explain issues and trends related to crime and justice
4. Interpret scientific attempts at understanding gendered pathways into crime.
5. Evaluate information on crime and/or justice presented by the popular press.

6. Analyze the institutionalization of women and girls through multiple focal points including race, sexual orientation, social class.

Overview of the Course:

Centering the Criminology lens through gender.

Criminological research and theory has historically been devoted to male criminality. As such, most criminology courses that focus on “Gender” primarily seek to bring gender to the forefront and in so doing, tend to emphasize female/non-binary experiences. Further, the US has experienced significant gender convergence over the past few decades and females easily comprise @ 1/4th of those in contact with the System. Thus, the primary objective in this course is to bring awareness and understanding to female/ non-binary behavior and treatment by the justice system, but also give voice to the influence of gender in male offending and treatment.

Intersectionality: Gender/Sexuality and Race/Ethnicity and Social Class.

While this course is primarily focused on examining the influence of gender on crime and the criminal experience, this is a sociology course and as such we also incorporate issues of “intersectionality.” We begin with the understanding that all “social categories” commonly examined by sociologists (such as race and ethnicity—racism, gender—sexism, class—classism, sexuality—homophobia, nationality—xenophobia, to name a few) never “occur” in isolation from other categories. An intersectional approach allows us to see the interconnections between these different statuses and encourages us to examine ways in which sexism (for example) is experienced alongside racism and classism. To develop this lens via our exploration of gender and crime, students should critically assess how issues of gender vary by other important statuses while critically examining the hierarchical position (i.e., subordination or domination) associated with each status.

Approach to Education

As an instructor I feel it is important for me to share with you my perspective on education. Sociology 446 uses a **participatory, learner-centered, adult education** approach. This approach recognizes that **YOU are responsible** for your own learning. The instructor can only provide **opportunities** to learn, but cannot force you to learn. Course material is presented in **substantive readings** from the text; **structured activities and lecture**. You are expected to work hard in this course.

*You are expected to take **responsibility** for the success of the course*, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as **interest, motivation, creativity, and initiative** are important elements in evaluating your performance in the course and assigning a grade.

This class will be a place for sharing ideas and voicing opinions. Intelligent argument and polite disagreement is welcome. Your papers are a place for situating your own perspective about the problems we will discuss within the context of the field of sociology. **In making an argument it is**

important to remember, that we are focusing on evidence. Thus, what theoretical, observational, experiential, or other evidence do you bring to the table when discussing gender, crime, and justice?

A Note about Spring 2022:

The theme of this spring semester will be flexibility and grace. Given the public health crisis we are facing, I understand that we all may face uncertainties whether it be illness, loss, or additional stress. I just ask that you stay in contact with me about what is happening. I can help with extensions, etc. if I know what is going on. **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO CONTACT ME.** Do not apologize for contacting me. I am here to make sure we are able to be as successful as possible even during a semester that is definitely not typical. So, let's jump into this semester with the best attitude possible and be kind to each other.

Descriptions of Assignments and Grading

As a 400 level class, the work will be intensive. I have high expectations for a course of this nature. You will need to stay on top of your reading, discussions, and projects. I know I am asking a good deal of you, but I believe you can do it. Classes like this push you to a higher level of achievement. I love 400 level classes because of the real conversation we get to have about difficult topics. In a 400 level class, I fully expect each of you to be prepared every week. Even though this is a synchronous class, you will need to be on top of your deadlines so your classmates can also respond to your discussion board posts.

Discussion Boards: Because this is a 400 level class, it will be structured as a seminar. We will use the discussion boards heavily in order to facilitate our conversations. A detailed description of the expectations for the discussion boards will be posted in Blackboard. In the first few weeks, we will post every week to the discussion board. Once book club starts, I will lessen this requirement to a post that helps us summarize the material over two weeks.

Discussion Leader: I will assign you a week to help lead the discussion on Blackboard. More information on this part of the class will be available online.

Essay Based Exams: This semester you will have 3 essay based examinations. Exams will be made available for one week.

Book Review Project

I will assign each class member a book to review for this project. I will also provide the critical review guidelines. More information will be available via Blackboard.

Assessment of Student Learning (Undergraduate):

Assignment	Points	Percent of Final Grade
Discussion Board Leader	50	12.5%
Discussion Boards (10 posts)	100	25%

Book Review	100	25%
Essay Exams (3 Exams)	150	37.5%
Total	400	100%

Calculation of Points Needed in Course (Undergraduate)

Points Needed	Percent	Letter Grade
360-400	90%-100%	A
320-359.5	80%-89%	B
280-319.5	70%-75%	C
240-279.5	60%-69%	D
239.5 and below	59% and below	F

Expectations of Students:

Quality of Written Work: This is an academic course. Therefore, I expect you to write with the highest quality. I expect complete sentences in all written work. I expect well thought out responses. Further, I will deduct points if you use text message abbreviations or language in your formal papers or in the discussion boards. I still value proper grammar and expect you to do the same while in this course. This is not the place for “slang” terminology unless you are using it to make a theoretical point.

Further, write in a professional manner. I do not expect your papers to sound like you just sat down at your computer and typed a conversation to me. Avoid phrases such as, “Well, in my personal opinion”—even if I am asking for your thoughts and opinion, that is not a necessary phrase. Think “professional tone” while writing. Also, limit the use of “I.” Once again, even when asking you to respond from your own life you can minimize the first person. There is nothing worse than reading a paper that begins every sentence with “I think”, “I want to discuss”, “I believe”, “I feel”, etc. Please refrain from addressing the reader directly. For example, there is no need to thank me for reading your paper. Finally, proof read all your work. I really hate to read papers that are full of grammatical errors. It takes away from your thoughts and ideas and frustrates me. You do not want me to grade your paper frustrated!

Professional Communication

I prefer to be referred to as Dr. Lovell.

With the use of our personal mobile devices to write and respond to email I’ve noticed a disconcerting trend among students. I will receive emails like the following example (an actual email I’ve received):

To: Donielle.lovell@wku.edu

Subject: NONE

grades are not posted

And that will be it. No salutation, no proper sentences, no closing comments, and not even a name. This is highly unprofessional and sounds rude to the reader. In the work world you will be expected to compose proper messages and you are expected to do so in this course. Therefore, I expect all emails to include greeting, actual sentences that thoroughly explain the purpose of your email and a closing that includes your name. For example:

To: Donielle.lovell@wku.edu

Subject: Grades in CRIM 446

Greetings Dr. Lovell,

I was curious as to when grades for our first reflection paper will be posted.

Thank you for your time,

Jane Doe

I am taking a very strict perspective on this. I will no longer respond to emails that are unprofessional.

I will no longer respond to unprofessional emails.

Academic Honesty: You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the Western Kentucky University College Catalogue (page 42). You are expected to do your **own work** in this course. Plagiarism, fraud and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated. I have the authority to either fail you on the paper plagiarized or even for the course or depending on the seriousness of the offense, to take it to WKU administration which can have serious consequences. Do not test me on this. I have failed students in the past and will continue to do so for academic dishonesty. I take this VERY seriously. **DO NOT TEST ME—THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE. Act with integrity.**

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES. Make sure you know what constitutes plagiarism and cheating **BEFORE** turning in any assignments. Once you turn in an assignment, you are representing it as your own work. If you are suspected of committing plagiarism, pleas of “I didn’t know what plagiarism was” will not be accepted. If you are concerned about your knowledge of plagiarism, please see me and I will give you a handout with examples of plagiarism. **Please note, copying and pasting directly from a website is plagiarism. Copying and pasting directly from a website and changing a few words is STILL plagiarism. Copying and pasting from Wikipedia is also plagiarism and very easy to identify so just don’t do it.**

Instructor Policies:

Office Hours: There will be a link in Blackboard for you to arrange a meeting with me.

WKU Statement on COVID 19: All students are strongly encouraged to [get the COVID-19 vaccine](#). Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with CDC guidelines and practices of all public universities and colleges in [Kentucky](#), the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations can be requested in special cases through the Student Accessibility and Resource Center ([SARC](#)): [270-745-5004](#) (voice), [270-745-3030](#) (TTY), or [270-288-0597](#) (video).

All students must immediately report a positive Covid-19 test result or close contact with a person who has tested positive to the Covid-19 Assistance Line at 270-745-2019. The assistance line is available to answer questions regarding any Covid-19 related issue. This guidance is subject to change based on requirements set forth by public health agencies or the office of the governor. Please refer to the Healthy on the Hill website for the most current information. www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill

ADA Accommodation: In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX/Discrimination & Harassment: Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) (#0.070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Deborah Wilkins, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's [Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "eligible student," and all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student. Therefore, I am unable to disclose information about grades, attendance, class schedule, etc. to parents, spouses and other interested parties. If you would

like to give these rights to your parents or spouse you need to file a waiver with Western Kentucky University. Until I have received such waiver, please discourage other parties from contacting me regarding your status as my student.

Support for Students:

There are a number of resources that as an independent learning student in which you have access. If you need assistance with library sources for your papers, online tutoring, writing help, career services or help with any function in blackboard please check out the “Student Support” tab in blackboard. This is also where you can access the WKU Help Desk for technical issues. Further, if you find you have software needs such as creating capability with Microsoft office, Adobe PDF reader or the latest version of Java you can access those programs through the “software” tab which is located at the top of your blackboard screen.