

## **CRIM 330 – CRIMINOLOGY**

### **ON DEMAND**

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*Office Hours: Office Hours: By appointment only*

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*\*Email is always the best way to reach me!*

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVE**

The first objective of this course is to expose students to both classical and contemporary criminological theories. We will survey several different approaches to defining and explaining crime and criminal behavior. We will also discuss the importance of measuring crime, punishment philosophy as well as historical, political, and empirical trends leading to theory development.

More specifically, during the course we will explore the following questions: How do criminologists define 'crime'? Why do we punish offenders? Is punishment in general (and prison in particular) effective? Do people think before they act? Are some people born with biological predispositions that compel them to commit crimes, or can the root causes of crime be found strictly in the social environment? Are there wider social forces at work that explain why the United States has higher crime rates than other Western nations? The goal of this course is to get students thinking about crime beyond stereotypes and explore the crime problem in society from a new perspective.

Upon finishing this course, students should feel confident in their abilities to engage in intelligent conversation regarding crime and its control.

**Disclaimer:** Because this is a course on theories of crime and the crime problem in the US, some of the lectures may touch upon difficult issues or controversial topics. Please keep an open mind when considering these topics.

#### **COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course is taught entirely through blackboard. If you are unfamiliar with blackboard, have questions about how to submit an assignment, or have any questions about On Demand courses, there is a student support tab on the course menu. That tab will provide you with a variety of tools and tutorials to help you familiarize yourself with online learning.

The course is designed to mimic my full semester based course. You have been given the same amount of material as during a standard semester and are graded according to the same standards. Therefore, upon completing this course - at your own pace - you will still have the same level of knowledge and be expected to display the same mastery of the material as students who take the course over a 15 week semester.

The material for the course is divided into four modules. Each module has its own folder on the course page that contains a lecture that expands or clarifies on the assigned readings. At the beginning of each

module, students will have a study guide for the exam. There are also several writing assignments that should be completed at a certain point within each module as indicated in the course outline.

A separate link can be seen on the course menu labeled 'exams' that contains the four examinations for the course. All examinations are timed and proctored. There is no comprehensive final for the course.

As with any independent learning course, you are free to work at your own pace. However, you must complete the modules in order and you must complete the writing assignments by the point in the module indicated in the table at the end of this syllabus.

**Finally, when you are formally registered for the course, please send me a quick email to notify me! If more than two weeks pass after you submit an assignment or exam and it has not been graded yet, feel free to email (I may have forgotten about it!).**

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

Tibbetts, S.G. & Hemmens, C. (2015). *Criminological Theory: A Text/Reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage. ISBN: 978-1-4522-5815-7

\*Note: You can find copies of the text on amazon.com that are used for around \$40 and can rent it from them for less than that. If you purchase the old edition of the book (2010), please be aware that the page numbers listed in the course outline will not match that version.

All lectures and any additional readings will be posted on the course site. In addition, all assignments and exams will be submitted through Blackboard.

### **FROM THE OFFICE FOR STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES**

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center A-200. The phone number is 745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. Per university policy, please DO NOT request accommodation directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the OFSDS.

### **GRADING:**

Students will be graded on the following criteria. Students should make every effort to keep track of their grade and seek help if the student believes he/she is doing poorly in the course. To help students with this, an excel file is posted on Blackboard that will allow students to track their grade as they progress through the course. ***As a rule, incompletes are not given in this course.***

A = 90 – 100%

B = 80 – 89%

C = 70 – 79%

D = 60 – 69%

F = < 60%

<b>Item</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>
4 Exams (15% each)	60%

Item	% of Grade
Writing Assignment 1	10%
Writing Assignment 2	10%
Writing Assignment 3	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **EXAMS**

There will be four equally weighted exams taken during the course. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and brief essays. Each exam is worth 15% of your grade. *There is no comprehensive final exam.*

The exams are ***timed*** and must be taken at a ***proctored*** testing center. *Students will have 2 hours to take each exam.* The exams must be completed within this time frame. You may not use notes, your text, or any other materials during the test. There are testing centers on the WKU campus and many others around the nation. For more information on finding a testing center close to you and how to schedule an appointment visit the [On Demand website](https://wku.edu/ondemand/exams.php) at (<https://wku.edu/ondemand/exams.php>)

Because all examinations are proctored you must contact a designated testing center to schedule an appointment in advance of the examination. You cannot simply show up at a testing center expecting to take the exam, as the examinations are also password protected.

*Students are advised to prepare for these exams and study.* In an effort to help you with this, study guides will be posted at the beginning of each lecture to help you organize the material.

### **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

There are a total of three writing assignments for this course. There are two brief written assignments of approximately 2 pages in length and guidelines for the papers are posted on the blackboard site. These assignments will require you to read an article and write a response to questions posted or reflect on the top.

There will also be a longer paper that is more comprehensive in nature and is designed to gauge what you have learned throughout the first two-thirds of the course. This assignment will provide you with a hypothetical scenario and you will have to draw on your newly acquired knowledge of criminological theories to explain the behavior of the individuals in this scenario.

### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is representing the ideas of another as your own. Any idea, concept, statement or summary that is taken from or guided by a published source (including internet websites) must be properly cited in all writing assignments. Students are expected to conform to the highest ethical standards regarding academic integrity. Plagiarism will **NOT BE TOLERATED** and will be **DEALT WITH MOST HARSHLY**. ***Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.*** When in doubt – cite a source!! Various computer software programs may be used to check for plagiarized material including [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).

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# COURSE TOPICS, ASSIGNED READINGS, AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

	Topics	Readings & Assignments
<b>Module 1</b>	Introduction to the course	Introduction is not on the exam
	Defining Crime and Deviance	pp. 1-10
	Concept of Law/Punishment	none
	Measuring Crime	pp. 10-26
	<b><i>Writing Assignment #1</i></b>	<i>May be completed at any point in the module - prior to the first exam - but students are advised to read the lecture on punishment prior to completing the assignment.</i>
<b>Module 2</b>		
	Classical and Neo-Classical Theories	pp. 39-58; 73-85
	Biological/Psychological Theories	pp. 133-150; 173-190
<b>Module 3</b>	Social Disorganization Theory	pp. 261-270
	Anomie/Strain Theories	pp. 218-237
	Social Learning Theories	pp. 297-307 & additional reading posted with lecture
	<b><i>Writing Assignment #2</i></b>	<i>Assignment must be completed <b>at the beginning of this module prior to reading the lectures.</b></i>
<b>Module 4</b>	Social Bond/Control Theories	pp. 307-319; 321-323
	Labeling Theory	pp. 357-360 and article posted with lecture
	Conflict / Marxist Theory	pp. 360-363
	Feminist Theory	pp. 363-367 and article posted with lecture
	<b><i>Writing Assignment 3</i></b>	<i>Assignment 3 can be completed once students have completed the lecture on Social Bond/Control Theories. The paper can be submitted before or after the last exam.</i>