

Sociology of Deviant Behavior

Spring 2017
Course Syllabus

Course: SOC304:02

Time: Monday/Wednesday 1:40 – 3:00 pm

Location: Lucy Stone Hall B117 (LIV)

Instructor: Steph Peña-Alves

Instructor Contact: salves@sociology.rutgers.edu

Instructor Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:00am and by appointment*

Office Hours Location: Davison Hall #013 (CDC)

**If my scheduled office hours are not doable for you, feel free to email me to set up a meeting. I should be flexible on Wednesdays this semester and, so, could be available to meet on Livingston campus an hour or so before class. I can also set up phone and video calls on other weekdays.*

Course Description and Goals

In this course, we will examine deviance in three distinct ways. In first section of the course, we will treat deviance as a statistical and normative phenomenon and, in so doing, explore the various theoretical explanations developed to understand these deviant aspects of our empirical world. Each theoretical lens will offer a different angle on the basic question of *why* individuals engage in deviant behavior.

In the second section of the course, we will examine several perspectives on *how* deviant acts have come to be treated as “deviant.” Implicit in this analytical pursuit is the argument that certain forms of deviance are social and culturally produced to maintain social control. To explore this argument, we will historicize and contextualize definitions of deviance and normality by analyzing the law, medicalization, surveillance, and policing as some of the institutional means of sustaining those definitions.

In the final, and longest section of the course, we will treat deviance as a constructed phenomenon and apply analytical tools to de-essentialize it. While it is seductive to treat deviant acts and characteristics as unchanging, universal phenomena, *what* is considered categorically “deviant” (or “marked”) and “normal” (or “unmarked”) is often a deeply, if not inherently cultural matter. Drawing from theory and empirical studies in cultural and cognitive sociology, we will practice problematizing and deconstructing these powerful categories that shape our conceptual and social worlds.

The subject of deviance is at once serious, fun, and sensitive. Some topics we will discuss might be uncomfortable and so I ask that you take *active* care to contribute respectfully and mindfully to classroom discussions. Other topics might be ones about which you have strong moral beliefs. However, while our moral responses to competing explanations of social life are important parts of our experience and our thinking, in this course I expect you to be *supremely analytical*, to examine deviance and normality

through multiple theoretical lenses regardless of which view(s) you might ultimately prefer. Such analytical thinking empowers us to move beyond the assumption that a single, ultimate conception of deviance exists and to embrace the deep complexity – and at times arbitrariness – of social life.

Required Readings

There is no textbook for this course. All required readings are posted to our Sakai course site. *You are expected to read all assigned materials at least once before class.* Some of these readings are *difficult* and *dense*, so I encourage you to read through them a couple of times – first, to gain a general sense for the piece, and second, to apply your analytical thinking and take notes. Reading is a necessary prerequisite for comprehension and engagement in this course, so make every effort not merely to do it, but to do it *well*.

Evaluation

The final grade for this course will be measured through your attendance, your classroom presence (active listening, engaging in dialogue), your thinking, and your writing. There are, thus, multiple ways in which you can showcase your knowledge, engagement with the material, and analytical skill. See below the structure of evaluation for this course and the final grading scheme. Note that some of these measures are necessarily hinged on the others. Showing any form of engagement (verbal or non-verbal) in class, for example, requires that you *attend* class.

Evaluation Breakdown

<i>Classroom Engagement</i>	15 points	(15% of grade)
- Attendance (5 points)		
- Active listening (5 points)		
- Participation (5 points)		
<i>Short Essays (3 x 20 points)</i>	60 points	(60% of grade)
<i>Mini-Assignments (5* x 5 points)</i>	25 points	(25% of grade)

Final Grading Scheme

A = 90% to 100%
B+ = 87.5% to 89.9%
B = 80% to 87.4%
C+ = 77.5% to 79.9%
C = 70% to 77.4%
D = 60% to 69.9%
F = below 60%

Short essays will be assigned 2 weeks before they are due and should be roughly 4-5 pages in length (this is a guide – quantity is not measured, but *quality*). Mini-assignments will be assigned sporadically across the semester and will vary in type and format. Write-ups for mini-assignments will be short (a page or two).

I will assign six or seven mini-assignments throughout the course of the semester. You may choose any **FIVE of those assignments to complete toward this part of your grade. That means you may skip any two of these submissions with no consequence. You may also submit mini-assignments beyond those required five to earn extra credit. I encourage you to be strategic with this flexibility whether it is using this leeway to ease your load during a difficult point in the semester or using it to lift your grade. The ideal approach, of course, is to submit all assigned work. After all, the only way I can reward your good thinking is if you showcase it!*

Academic Integrity

I adhere strictly to the university code of academic integrity and, as such, will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in this class. This includes, but is not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and preventing others from obtaining information/material. Academic dishonesty also includes assisting others engaged in these actions. You may find the university's full academic integrity policy at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/> and information about violations and sanctions at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/levels-of-violations-and-sanctions/>. I will not hesitate to report a suspected breach to the Dean of Students.

Student Conduct

The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by individual instructors. Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted.

If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is available at: http://policies.rutgers.edu/sites/policies/files/10.2.11%20-%20current_0.pdf.

Disability Support

If you require accommodations for a disability, please contact me during the first week of class. Note that you must also contact the Rutgers Office of Disability Services. More information about this group and how to request accommodations can be found at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>.

Diversity Statement

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

Lecture Schedule

Wednesday, 1/18

Introduction to Course

Monday, 1/23

Approaching Deviance Sociologically

Reading: Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema"

Section 1:

Explanations of Statistical and Normative Deviance

Wednesday, 1/25

Anomie, Strain Theory & Social Disorganization

Reading: Merton, "Social Structure and Anomie"

Bursik, "Social Disorganization and Theories of Crime and Delinquency: Problems and Prospects"

Monday, 1/30

Differential Association Theory & Control Theory

Reading: Sutherland, “A Theory of Differential Association”

Hirschi, “A Control Theory of Delinquency”

Wednesday, 2/1

Functionalist Theory

Reading: Durkheim, “Rules for the Distinction of the Normal from the Pathological,” from *Rules of the Sociological Method*

Erikson, *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (selections)

Monday, 2/6

Labeling Theory

Reading: Becker, *Outsiders* (selections)

Becker, “Becoming a Marihuana User”

Wednesday, 2/8

Stigma & Shaming Theory

Reading: Goffman, E. *Stigma* (selections)

Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration* (selections)

1ST SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNMENT POSTED ON SAKAI

Section 2:

The Social and Cultural Production of Order and “Deviance”

Monday, 2/13

Moral Panics and Social Control

Reading: Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (selections)

Wednesday, 2/15

Medicalization and Social Control

Reading: Conrad and Schneider, “From Badness to Sickness: Changing Designations of Deviance and Social Control,” from *Deviance and Medicalization: From Badness to Sickness*

Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (selections)

Isaacson, “The Fetus-Infant: Changing Classifications of *In Utero* Development in Medical Texts”

Monday, 2/20

Surveillance and Social Control

Reading: Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (selections)

Ogle et al., “Watching Over Baby: Expectant Parenthood and the Duty to Be Well”

Wednesday, 2/22

Law and Social Control Part I

In-Class Documentary: “13th”

1ST SHORT ESSAY DUE

Monday, 2/27

Law and Social Control Part II

Reading: Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (selections)

Wednesday, 3/1

Policing and Social Control

Reading: Hirschfield, “Preparing for prison? The criminalization of school discipline in the USA”

Goffman, A. “On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto”

2ND SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNMENT POSTED ON SAKAI

Section 3:	De-essentializing Deviance: The Construction and Maintenance of Marked and Unmarked Categories
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Monday, 3/6

The Sacred and the Profane

Reading: Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (selections)

Wednesday 3/8

Contamination of the Sacred

Reading: Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (selections)

Monday, 3/13

NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

Wednesday, 3/15

NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

Monday, 3/20

From the Sacred and the Profane to the Marked and the Unmarked

Reading: Waugh, “Marked and Unmarked: A Choice Between Unequals in Semiotic Structure”

Zerubavel, “Social Meanings,” from *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*

Wednesday, 3/22

Marked and Unmarked Time

Reading: Foster, “Making Menstrual Time: Looking at Women’s Periodicity Through Various Models of Time”

Zerubavel, *Time Maps* (selections)

Zerubavel, *The Seven-Day Circle* (selections to be posted)

2ND SHORT ESSAY DUE

Monday, 3/27

Marked and Unmarked Space

Reading: Zerubavel, *Terra Cognita* (selections to be posted)

Dinzei-Flores, “Fortress Gates of the Rich and Poor: Past and Present,” from *Locked In, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City*

Wednesday, 3/29

NO CLASS (University is open, but I will be traveling)

Monday, 4/3

Social Marking of Behavior

Reading: Brekhus, “Social Marking and the Mental Coloring of Identity: Sexual Identity Construction and Maintenance in the United States”

Mullaney, “Making it ‘Count:’ Mental Weighing and Identity Attribution”

Wednesday, 4/5

Social Marking of Non-Behavior

Reading: Mullaney, “Like a Virgin: Temptation, Resistance, and the Construction of Identities Based on ‘Not Doings’”

Herman-Kinney and Kinney, "Sober as Deviant: The Stigma of Sobriety and How Some College Students 'Stay Dry' on a 'Wet' Campus"

Monday, 4/10

Negotiating Marked Identities

Reading: Nippert-Eng, *Home and Work: Negotiating Boundaries through Everyday Life* (selections)

Wednesday, 4/12

Negotiating Marked Identities

Reading: Brekhus, *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs: Gay Suburbia and the Grammar of Social Identity* (selections)

3RD SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNMENT POSTED ON SAKAI

Monday, 4/17

Negotiating Marked Identities

Reading: Jackson, *Harlemworld: Doing Race and Class in Contemporary Black America* (2001) (selections)

Wednesday, 4/19

The Marked History of Science

Reading: Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (selections)

Monday, 4/24

**The Marked History of the Sociology of Deviance:
Toward a Sociology of the Unmarked**

Reading: Brekhus, "Sociology of the Unmarked: Redirecting our Focus"

Wednesday, 4/26

**Analytical Mapping Session: Building an Analytical
Vocabulary for the Study of Deviance***

**No reading; bring class notes*

Monday, 5/1

In-Class Mini-Assignment*

**No reading; bring class notes, paper, and pen*

3RD SHORT ESSAY DUE

Enjoy summer and stay in touch!