

01:920:304:02 (Spring 2018)

SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

Monday/Wednesday 1:40–3pm, Lucy Stone Hall B117

Instructor: Wenbo Lu

Office hour: after class/by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

During the semester, we will investigate together critical sociological questions such as: What is deviance? Is it an objective quality or is it subjectively defined? Is deviant behavior “caused” or “constructed”? What/who decides what is deviant and what is not? How and why do people become deviant? How do we respond to deviance, and what do we learn from different patterns of responses?

We will begin with a detailed overview of key theories and concepts in the sociological studies of deviant behavior. In this light, we will go ahead to explore a series of specific experiences of deviance in the real world, such as crime, pornography, drug use, mental illness, etc. Hopefully, by the time this course ends, we will have found some tentative answers to many (if not all) of the above questions, and, more importantly, an educated, sophisticated, and sociologically informed view of deviant behavior.

TEXTBOOK

(available from the Rutgers University Bookstore)

Clinard, Marshall B., and Robert F. Meier. 2016. *Sociology of Deviant Behavior (Fifteenth Edition)*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be determined by a weighted synthesis of the following factors:

Exam 1 – 30%

Exam 2 – 30%

Exam 3 – 15%

In-class assignments – 15%

Film commentaries – 10% (5%×2)

☛ The three exams are expected to consist of all or mostly multiple choice questions. Each exam will only cover materials from the corresponding weeks, but please note that many basic concepts/theories you learn during the initial weeks will be repeatedly referred to throughout the semester. No comprehensive final exam is scheduled for this course.

☛ At the end of some class meetings, I may let you complete one or two short essay questions in class. These written exercises are designed to consolidate your understanding of the lecture materials,

and to encourage you to think beyond the specific points debated in class by incorporating your own life experience and personal insights. The questions will be open-ended and open-book, and will be graded according to a PASS+/PASS/FAIL scheme. If you manage to make some particularly original or thoughtful points in the answers, you will be awarded a “+” in addition to a PASS grade. At the end of the semester, a considerable collection of +’s will earn you favorable consideration in the final grade. Please note that these in-class assignments will not be announced in advance, and cannot be made up. In other words, consistent class attendance is your single best strategy to secure the credits.

☞ We will watch three films together that are deliberately selected to illustrate and complement the lecture materials. At the end of each film, I will provide a couple of guiding questions to initiate a discussion session, then the floor will be open. You will have one week afterwards for writing a commentary of the film, which may either be a further exploration along the lines of our class discussion, or be based on entirely different perspectives in relation to the themes of the course. You are required to complete two film commentaries for the semester, and have the option of completing a third for extra credits (5% of final grade). Each of your commentary paper should be 2 to 3 pages long and printed in 12-pt font. No late submissions will be accepted. The abovementioned PASS+/PASS/FAIL grading scheme also applies here.

☞ Attendance is mandatory for every class meeting. No absence will be excused unless a legitimate reason is presented and supported by appropriate documentations. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email will be automatically sent to me.

☞ Please notify me as early as possible if there are any class-related problems, or any special arrangement is needed.

CLASS ETHICS

This course is administered in conformity with the policy on academic integrity enforced by Rutgers University, which can be accessed at <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity>.

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. Instructors may specify other consequences in their syllabi. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of

Student Conduct can be accessed at <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/university-code-of-student-conduct>.

CLASS SCHEDULE (tentative)

01/17 First meeting
Introduction

01/22 Lecture
The nature and meaning of deviance (Chapter 1)

01/24 Lecture
Deviant events and social control (Chapter 2)

01/29 Lecture
Deviant events and social control (Chapter 2)

01/31 Lecture
Becoming deviant (Chapter 3)

02/05 Lecture
Becoming deviant (Chapter 3)

02/07 Film
Jagten [*The Hunt*] (2012)

02/12 Film
Jagten [*The Hunt*] (2012)

02/14 Lecture
Major theories of deviance (Chapter 4)

02/19 Lecture
Major theories of deviance (Chapter 4)

02/21 Exam 1

02/26 Lecture
Crimes of interpersonal violence (Chapter 5)

02/28 Lecture
Nonviolent crime (Chapter 6)

03/05 Lecture
White-collar and corporate crime (Chapter 7)

03/07 Lecture
Suicide (Chapter 10)

~Spring recess~

03/19 Film
Bowling for Columbine (2002)

03/21 Film
Bowling for Columbine (2002)

03/26 Lecture
Drug use and addiction (Chapter 8)

03/28 Lecture
Drunkenness and alcoholism (Chapter 9)

04/02 Lecture
Heterosexual deviance (Chapter 11)

04/04 Exam 2

04/09 Lecture
Gays, lesbians, and homophobia (Chapter 12)

04/11 Lecture
Physical disabilities (Chapter 13)

04/16 Film
The Elephant Man (1980)

04/18 Film
The Elephant Man (1980)

04/23 Lecture
Mental disorders (Chapter 14)

04/25 Lecture
Recent forms of deviance (Chapter 15)

04/30 Exam 3