

SOCIOLOGY 920: 222: 01 CRIMINOLOGY

Course Syllabus

Spring 2024

Time: Mon. & Thurs 10:20 to 11:40 AM

Location: Lucy Stone Hall A142

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Course web-site: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>

https://www.instagram.com/rutgers_sociology/

Office Hours: Monday: 12:00- 1:00, Lucy Stone Hall, A-349 or by appointment. I will also be in Davison Hall #38 on several Wed afternoons, but please make an appointment.

Purpose

This course examines the nature, function, and causes of crime in society. We will trace the development of criminology from the Enlightenment through the present, situating key criminological theories and research in their historical context. Furthermore, the course attempts to bridge criminological theory and contemporary crime and criminal justice issues including mass shootings, gun control, the opioid epidemic, and cyber-crime. While drawing critical attention to prevailing criminological wisdom, the course also attempts to broaden students' understanding of criminality through highlighting oft neglected crimes including those committed by the government and corporate executives.

Learning Goals

This course satisfies the SAS Core Curriculum requirement for the area of Social Analysis. Students will understand the criminological perspective, a distinctly interdisciplinary approach to criminal behavior. They will understand how key questions pertaining to crime and criminal justice in the 21st century can be better analyzed using both sociological and psychological concepts. Students will develop the skills necessary to read and evaluate criminological research in an intelligent and critical manner. They will understand the role of theory and methods in criminological research.

Required Readings

One book is required in this course:

Text: Bohm, Robert M. and Vogel, Brenda L. (2015) *A Primer on Crime & Delinquency Theory* (4th ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 9781-61163-6857. (Available at Rutgers bookstore and on-line).

Other readings will be available as Pdf files through the course web-site under 'Files.' These readings consist of short articles or book chapters.

Course Grade

Your grade will be scored on a 220 point scale (with 230 points possible) and will be apportioned as follows:

First Exam (Feb 19):	apprx. 23% (50 pts.)
Second Exam (Mar 28):	apprx. 27% (60 pts.)
Third Exam (May 6):	apprx. 27% (60 pts.)
Quizzes (8 x 5 pts.):	apprx. 18% (40 pts.)
Attendance:	apprx. 5% (10 pts.)
Participation:	apprx. 5% (Up to 10 pts. Extra Credit)

Grading key (%'s): <60 (F), 60-69 (D), 70-74 (C), 75-79 (C+), 80-84 (B), 85-89 (B+), 90+ (A).

Attendance. I will take attendance for most of the lectures starting 1/29. Please make sure you sign with *the same signature* on all attendance sheets. You may have two unexcused absences and still get a perfect attendance score. You are strongly encouraged to attend every lecture, as much of the material on the exams will be covered *only* in lecture--not in the readings or on any slides posted on the web-site. Furthermore, whether present or not, you are responsible for all information covered and any assignments made in every class. If you have an excused absence, feel free to ask me about the contents of a missed class. I prefer you consult your class "buddy" first (see Buddy System). If you have an excusable absence, you must use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. If your reason for absence is illness you should not provide me medical documentation. However, I may require an [absence and verification notice](#) if absences or requested accommodations are extensive. Documentation of other valid excuses (e.g. airline ticket receipt, court receipt, hospital parking receipt, funeral program) must be provided to me (please provide me a copy) for the excuse to be accepted. Excuses that cannot be verified with documentation (e.g. power outage, traffic jam, car trouble, personal issues) will not be accepted as valid.

Classroom behavior. The Department of Sociology adopted a uniform policy on classroom conduct. Here is a truncated version:

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 during lecture is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone and Internet use and excessive talking or laughing. 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. See [The University Code of Student Conduct](#).

Quizzes. I intend to give 10 short (five questions) timed quizzes based on the readings. My intention is for the quizzes to be taken on Canvas during the 24-hour period prior to class. However, if I have cause to believe that students are sharing answers, I may hold quizzes at the beginning of the class period. Only your top 8 scores will count. If you have technical difficulties during an in-class quiz, please submit written answers on a small piece of paper that includes your name immediately after the quiz concludes. No talking is permitted during quizzes.

Exams. You will be tested three times during the semester. Prior exam review sheets will be posted at the beginning of the semester. Note, however, that I expected to replace more questions than usual--as many as 20% of the exam questions, which will necessitate late revisions to the review sheet. Please submit questions about the review sheet to the designated discussion boards on Canvas. Although the exams will consist of true/false and multiple choice questions, they seek to gauge not only your ability to memorize pertinent facts about crime and criminology but also your ability to recognize real-world examples of concepts and your understanding how particular theories can explain real-world phenomena and patterns. The exams will cover all required readings, lectures, and videos shown in class. Cheating on the exams will result in a failing grade on the exam and a referral to the appropriate Dean's office. Grades on exams will be distributed via Canvas's gradebook.

Participation/Q & A. Students have an opportunity to earn up to ten valuable *extra credit* points in the course through participation in class Q & A and the discussion boards on Canvas. I suggest keeping track of when you participate in class. I ask students who have not done the assigned reading to let others respond to questions first. This helps keep the class discussion focused and flowing. Note also that I value good questions as much as good answers. You can also earn participation points through contributing, in a thoughtful, pertinent, and informed manner, to any professor-approved discussion threads on Canvas. Comments that merely echo what other students have said will not earn points. Any class participation that detracts from focused, intellectual discourse will not improve your grade. Please do not ask me about your participation grade before course grades are submitted.

Excessive or unsolicited participation will *reduce* your participation score. Because of time limitations, I will likely be able to call on you no more than 2-3 times per class. If you would like to share your thoughts and opinions in a more elaborate way, please wait until after the lecture is finished, come see me outside of class, or send me a comment to share with the class.

Other Extra Credit. Occasionally, I ask questions during class and provide extra credit to students who send me a correct answer (with documentation). I also award extra credit to students who document non-trivial errors on my part.

Make-up Exams

Students with a valid, documented excuse (see above) who are unable to take the exams may take a make-up exam at the make-up exam sessions designated and administered by the Sociology Department. I will not be present. Except under extremely unusual circumstance, you are expected to notify me of your absence and obtain approval to take the make-up exam *in advance* of the regularly scheduled exam. If you are sick the day of an exam, please contact me

and visit the doctor (just in case you need to get a letter from a Dean). Students without a valid excuse or who miss a departmental make-up exam opportunity may not be permitted to take a make-up exam for full credit.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me *prior* to exams requiring accommodation. Students with disabilities must verify eligibility through the Office of Disability Services (<https://ods.rutgers.edu>).

Communications

The Buddy System. I may not respond promptly to all emailed questions. The buddy system can help you get your questions answered more quickly. A class buddy is your first point of contact should you have a question about something mentioned in class that you missed or did not understand. If you have not found a buddy on your own by the end of the drop-add period, you can sign up for one. I will then randomly assign you a buddy from among those who also indicated that they would like a buddy. Students who do not sign up in class but would like a buddy will be added to a reserve list.

Buddies should exchange contact information, so you are accessible to each other when needed. You should feel some sense of obligation to your buddy, but buddy relationships, like most relationships, are built on trust and reciprocity. If your buddy repeatedly skips class and asks you for your lecture notes, you should feel free to refuse the request with no obligation. Please be respectful of your buddy's time and confidentiality. If you expect to receive help from your buddy, you should be prepared to give it.

Although I will not get involved in disputes between buddies, I will assign people new ones. If you would like a new buddy, let me know via e-mail and I will assign you one from the reserve list. If you are the subject of credible complaints from your buddy, I may not reassign you.

The buddy system is voluntary and for *your* benefit. Those who participate assume any and all risks that such a buddy system may entail. I encourage everyone without a friend in class to use the buddy system.

Communications. Please contact me through my regular email address rather than through Canvas. Please e-mail me from an account that lists your name as the sender. This makes it easier for me to track down your e-mail later. I will not reply to anonymous e-mails.

You should expect a reply within 48 hours. I will not respond to requests for information that I provided in a class that you missed without an excuse. To reply to as many e-mails as possible, I often write very succinct responses. Please do not mistake brevity for discourtesy.

I plan to contact the class via 'Announcements' in Canvas. Do not count on me to inform you and remind you about anything I mention in class. If you are absent from lecture, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from another classmate. Occasionally, I may post

announcements that are relevant to a pending assignment or exam. You are expected to check your e-mail regularly. As a rule, I try to give at least 2 days notice for any changes I make to the readings, exams etc., and to make any important announcements in class.

Canvas: All powerpoint slides from last semester will be posted on Canvas under Files. The night before each lecture (sometimes late) I post updates to the slides. I encourage you to print the slides (notes or handout view only please) and bring them to class or to access them while in class from a laptop and type notes directly into powerpoint.

Lecture Topics, Required Reading and Dates

Please do the reading corresponding to a lecture in advance of the lecture. (Topics and readings are subject to change at least two days in advance of the corresponding lecture date.). If the reading specifies a page range (e.g. 76-82) rather than a whole chapter, begin the reading on the first section that *begins* on the first page in the range and end the reading after the last section that *ends* on the last page in the range. If no section begins or ends on the pages described above, use *paragraphs* as markers instead of sections.

Key: Text: Bohm & Vogel. Canvas: Reading will be available electronically from the course web-site. **Canvas quiz on those readings.

Date	Topics/Assignments	Readings
Jan. 18	Introduction to the course.	Bring Syllabus
Jan. 22	The Who, What, Why, and How of crime and criminology	Canvas: Conklin, Ch. 1 (skip p. 5-14); Barkan (p. 38-46).
Jan. 25	Patterns of Crime (note: race & crime will be discussed on 4/15)	Nation's Two Crime Measures (p. 1-2) Barkan (p. 47-52.5; 58-63).
Jan. 29	Enlightenment Thought, rational choice, and deterrence.	Text: Ch. 2. Canvas: Wright and Decker "Armed Robbers in Action" (<i>attendance starts</i>)
Feb. 1	Biological and Psychological Origins of Crime and Criminality	**Text: Ch. 4 (skip 44-45). Ch. 5. (pp. 76-83); 135-137 (Gottfredson & Hirschi).
Feb. 5	The Functions and Consequences of Crime in Society	Text (pp. 91-93 on Durkheim; 102-105 on Functionalism). " In Defense of Looting "
Feb. 8	Anomie, Strain, and crime	**Text: (pp. 105-113). Canvas: Regalado et al (1, 5-7, 9)
Feb. 12	Movie: Films on Organized Crime	Readings for Feb. 15 and any others TBA
Feb. 15	Organized Crime	Canvas: Walsh & Jorgensen, (334-344); Leukfeldt & Holt "Organization Practices of Cybercriminals"
Feb. 19	First Exam	

Date	Topics/Assignments	Readings
Feb. 22	Radical Criminology	Text (pp. 145-147; 156-163). Canvas: Lynch & Groves, "Causes of Crime: A Radical View" (skip p. 60-63).
Feb. 26	Conflict Theory/ Labeling	**Text. (pp. 147-156). Coaston et al. " Jeffrey Epstein "; Canvas: Hirschfield "Declining Significance of Delinquent Labels."
Feb. 29	Social Process Theories	Text: (pp. 121-131; 134-35; 137-139); Canvas: Klenowski "Learning the Good with the Bad"
Mar. 4	Crime over the Life Course.	**Text: (pp. 196-199) Canvas: Laub and Sampson "Why Some Offenders Stop"
Mar. 7	Gender, Feminism and Crime	Text (164-167). Canvas: Beirne & Messerschmidt "Feminist Criminologies"
Mar 11& 14	Spring Break!	
Mar. 18	Guns, Homicide, and Crime	Canvas: McCourt et al "Gun Control and Gun Homicides"; Hirschfield "Why so many Mass Shootings"
Mar. 21	Drugs and Crime	**Canvas: Mohamed & Fritsvold, "Social Organization of the Illicit Drug Trade"
Mar. 25	Schools and Crime	**Canvas: Hirschfield "Schools & Crime" (149-153; 157-59; 162-63) Canvas: Kimmel & Mahler, "Adolescent Masculinity" p. 1440-1443, p. 1450-1454
Mar. 28	Second Exam	
Apr. 1	Media Effects on Crime	Bushman & Romer, Screen Violence Canvas: Busching et al. "Violent Media Content" (pp. 8-11; rest is optional)
Apr. 4	Film (TBA)	
Apr. 8	Crime in the News Media	**Carlson "News Coverage of Self-Defense Cases"; Yahr, "Doing no Harm"

Date	Topics/Assignments	Readings
Apr. 11	Gangs and Subcultural Theories (guest speaker)	Text (131-134); Canvas: Anderson. <i>Code of the Streets.</i>
Apr. 15	Race and Crime	**Hasset-Walker " Racist Roots "; Canvas: Unnever et al "Building a Black Criminology"; Kennedy, "Getting Beyond Ferguson"
Apr. 18	White Collar and Corporate Crime	Canvas: Griffin, "Theranos Scandal"; Venard, " Airbus "
Apr. 22	State Crime and Corruption	**Canvas: Pontell et al "In-your-face Watergate"
Apr 25	Police and Crime.	Barkan, " Impact of Slowdown "; Heath ; Desmond & Papachristos Rosenberg, " Personal Deterrence "
Apr 29	Incarceration and Crime	**Canvas: Clear, "Imprisoning Communities" (649-655.5); Yi, " NJ Released Thousands " Canvas: (in Johnson, <i>Crime and Punishment</i>) Hargrove, "A Single Unheard Voice" and Elam, "My Rehabilitation"
May 6	Final Exam, 9:30-11:00	90 min. exam; regular classroom.

Student Support and Mental Wellness

- Student Success Essentials: <https://success.rutgers.edu>
- Student Support Services: <https://www.rutgers.edu/academics/student-support>
- The Learning Centers: <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>
- Bias Incident Reporting: <https://studentaffairs.rutgers.edu/bias-incident-reporting>
- Dean of Students – Student Support Office: <https://success.rutgers.edu/resource/dean-students-student-support-office>
- Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>
- UWill: free immediate access to teletherapy <http://health.rutgers.edu/uwill/>
- Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: www.vpva.rutgers.edu/
- Basic Needs Assistance (food, housing, and other essentials): <https://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/basic-needs>
- Rutgers Student Food Pantry: <https://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food-pantry>