

SOCY 4014: Criminology
Spring 2014

Instructor: Jennifer Balliet

Office: Armory Trailer

Office Hours: Mondays 1:00-2:00pm and Wednesdays 11:00am-12:00pm and by appointment

Course Description

This course will examine the sociological study of criminal behavior. Traditional *sociological* theories of crime causation – such as social disorganization, strain, social learning, social control, and labeling – will be covered. Special attention will also be given to contemporary interpretations of traditional crime causation theories, and to critical, feminist, and developmental/life-course theories of criminality. In an effort to understand why people commit behavior defined as “criminal,” we will apply these theories to various types of offending (e.g., theft, homicide) and consider empirical tests of these theories. Some attention will be given to the social policy implications in the criminal justice system.

Mandatory Prerequisite: SOCY1001: *Introduction to Sociology* or SOCY1004: *Deviance in U.S. Society*.

Required Reading Materials

Crutchfield, Robert D., Charis Kubrin, George Bridges, and Joseph G. Weis. 2008. *Crime: Readings*, 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. ISBN#: 978-1-4129-4967-5.

DeKeseredy, Walter S. 2011. *Contemporary Critical Criminology*. New York, Routledge.
ISBN# 0-4155-5666-X

Beirne, Piers and James W. Messerschmidt. 2015. *Criminology, A Sociological Approach*. 6th Edition. Oxford University Press. ISBN#:978-0-19-933464-3.

Additional Required Readings on Desire2Learn [D2L]

Class Format

This is a collaborative course. Your active participation is not only desirable, but necessary. I expect you to have completed reading all the materials assigned for each session. At times, we will discuss a number of controversial or sensitive issues for which we will have differing opinions and attitudes. An integral component of higher education is exposure to different perspectives. We will disagree on some issues, but I expect that we can do so respectfully.

Methods of Evaluation

The assignments in this course include: occasional quizzes/participation, weekly reaction papers, discussion leadership, and a final research paper.

	Points Possible	Percent of Grade	Due Dates
Participation/Quizzes	30	10%	Unannounced
Reaction Papers	120	40%	Sundays by 10:00pm
Discussion Leadership Group Work	50	17%	TBA
Research Paper	100	33%	5/5 by 4:00pm
Total	300	100%	

Please Note: A grade is an assessment of your effort and your abilities; therefore, simply fulfilling the course requirements does not constitute an A. Exceptional work will warrant an A; good work will warrant a B; adequate work will warrant a C; below adequate work warrants a D; a final grade of U means that your work has been unsatisfactory. Please note that I am a tough but fair grader.

Grading Scale: Percentage grades will be converted to letter grades using the following criteria: A (93-100), A- (90 – 92.9), B+ (87 - 89.9), B (83 – 86.9), B- (80 – 82.9), C+ (77-79.9), C (73 – 76.9), C- (70 – 72.9), D (60 – 69.9), F (0 – 59.9).

Class Participation/Quizzes

This includes a few different components.

- a. Some class meetings will start with some writing, either a question or comment about the week's reading. These will occasionally be collected.
- b. During many class meetings, you will get into small groups to discuss and answer questions together. Each time you do this, there will be a new "recorder" who will report the group's answer(s) to the whole class. If there is group disagreement the recorder will report the differing views. Another person will be the "checker," whose job is to make sure that everyone contributes. If there are issues regarding group contribution, I expect an email later that day. Otherwise I will assume everyone has contributed adequately. These will occasionally be collected; all notes handed in must have the names of all group members **present** for that discussion.
- c. There will be occasional pop quizzes. They will not be announced in advance and there will not be make-ups.

Reaction Papers

Each student must write and submit short papers that critically respond to the propositions advanced in the weekly readings. Each paper is to a) provide a brief overview of the primary arguments of the theory or theories, b) provide a critical reaction to the theory, including a discussion of the strengths and limitations, and c) end with two good discussion questions rooted in the week's readings.

There are 14 opportunities to submit a reaction paper, and I suggest submitting all of them. However, only 12 reaction papers will be counted in the final grade. If a student submits more than 12 papers, the lowest grade(s) will be dropped. Each reaction paper must use a 10- to 12-point font, double-spacing, and one-inch margins all around, and should be 2 to 3 pages in length. The papers are to be submitted *only* in the relevant D2L Dropbox by 10:00pm every Sunday (except 1/11 and 3/22).

Discussion Leader Groups, Class Participation, and Paper

As we proceed through the assigned readings, we will have groups of five students serve as our discussion leaders on 13 occasions. Each group will be assigned a theory (or set of theories). As discussion leaders, students will be expected to: (a) demonstrate how the assigned theory explains offending behavior with the use of a fiction-based movie or television show and (b) engage the class in discussion about the theory and the example. Each group will have 45 minutes to present the project, should come to class with a well-designed visual aid or handout to share, and should have no more than 12 minutes of video.

All group members will need to meet with the instructor during office hours or in an appointment the week or two ***before*** the presentation. In addition, on the Sunday before you present, the group will need to send the instructor an email (cc-ing all group members) with a link to the selected video, a copy of the visual aid/handout and an explanation of how the film or tv show relates to the theory. Your grade will be based on your group members' assessment of your contributions and the instructor's assessment of the quality of the work and success of the discussion.

These group presentations will always take place on the Wednesday of the week you are assigned.

Final Research Paper

Each student will prepare a research paper that methodically evaluates and critiques a major theory of crime causation and explores contemporary tests of the theory. The paper is to include the following:

1. *How does the theory explain criminal behavior?* A summary of the theory's intellectual background, major assumptions, and core propositions.
2. *How has the theory been tested?* An analysis of at least three tests of the theory. Not more than one of the theory tests can be by the original theorist(s).
3. *How are the theory and the tests lacking?* Critique of the theory and theory tests.
4. *How can the theory be improved?* Specific suggestions for revisions to the theory.

The research paper must:

1. Use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spacing, and one-inch margins all around
2. Include a cover page with student name and paper title
3. Properly cite resources using only ASA-style, and include a separate "References" section to be included at the end of the paper, not in a separate file.

The final paper is to be submitted only in the D2L Dropbox by 4:00pm on May 5, 2015.

Classroom Behavior

1. Cell phones and laptops (and tablets) are not allowed during class time. All phones must be silenced prior to the start of class.
2. Please let me know immediately if you have a health problem or disability that necessitates leaving the room during class time. Otherwise, please be on time and do not pack up to leave until dismissed.
3. Any lectures will not be repeated during office hours. You must get any class notes from fellow classmates. You are responsible for all information communicated in class (this includes changes to homework, changes to the schedule, or anything, really) whether or not you are in attendance.
4. This is a large class. If we are having a full-class discussion, I expect you to be respectful to other students; no whispering, side conversations, etc when others are talking. Raise your hand to participate in the discussion. Basically, don't be rude. Failure to follow this rule may result in being asked to leave the class session.

5. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. Please let me know early in the semester if you would like me to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun.
6. Any emails to me **must include** the course number in the **subject line**. Emails omitting the number will not be acknowledged.
Ex: "4014 – Question regarding discussion group"

Honor Code

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://honorcode.colorado.edu>. Honor code violations will result in a 0 for the assignment at a minimum and may also result in failing this course, probation, or expulsion.

Discrimination and Harassment:

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/>

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, you should notify me at least two weeks ahead of time to request special accommodation if you have a conflict. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_religh.html.

Students with Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website (<http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/>) and discuss your needs with me.

Course Outline and Reading Schedule

Subject to change. Any significant changes will be announced in class. Students are responsible for these announcements whether they are in class or not.

Week 1 - Introduction to Criminology and Definitions of Crime and Law

1/12 Introduction to the Sociological Study of Crime

Beirne, Piers and James W. Messerschmidt. *Criminology: A Sociological Approach*.

- Chapter 1

Crutchfield, et al.

- Hagan, John. "Defining Crime: An Issue of Morality." Pp. 3-9.

Week 2 - Foundations: Methods and Theories

1/19 NO CLASS MONDAY – MLK DAY

Beirne and Messerschmidt

- Chapter 2

Crutchfield, et al.

- Hirschi, Travis and Michael Gottfredson. "Age and the Explanation of Crime." Pp. 167-170.
- Junger-Tas, Josine, Denis Ribeaud, and Maarten Cruyff. "Juvenile Delinquency and Gender." Pp. 171-185.
- Elliott, Delbert S. and Suzanne S. Ageton. "Reconciling Race and Class Differences in Self-Reported and Official Estimates of Delinquency." Pp. 126-132.

Week 3 - Rational Choice, Deterrence, and Routine Activities

1/26 Crutchfield et al.

- Huff, Ronald C. "Historical Explanations of Crime." Pp. 10-19.

D2L readings

- Cornish, Understanding Crime Displacement
- Griffin, *Random Activities* Theory: The Case for Black Swan Criminology

DUE: DLG #1: _____

Week 4 - Social Disorganization Theory

2/2 Crutchfield, et al.

- Shaw, Clifford R. and Henry McKay. "Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas." ONLY Pp. 187-204.
- Morenoff, Jeffrey et al. "Neighborhood Inequality, Collective Efficacy, and the Spatial Dynamics of Urban Violence." Pp. 216-222.

D2L reading

- Stark, "Deviant Places: A Theory of the Ecology of Crime."

DUE: DLG #2: _____

Week 5 - Anomie/Strain Theory

2/9 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 4

Crutchfield, et al.

- Agnew, Robert. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." Pp. 339-347.
- Broidy, Lisa M. "A Test of General Strain Theory." Pp. 348-362.

DUE: DLG #3: _____

Week 6 - The Learning Perspective

2/16 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 6, Pp. 141-150

Crutchfield, et al.

- Sutherland, Edwin H. "A Theory of Crime: Differential Association." Pp. 223-225.
- Hochstetler, Andy et al. "Differential Association in Group and Solo Offending." Pp. 226-231

D2L reading

- Sykes and Matza, Techniques of Neutralization

DUE: DLG #4: _____

Week 7 - Societal Reaction/Labeling Perspective

2/23 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 5, Pp. 127-135

- Chapter 6, Pp. 150-160

Crutchfield, et al.

- Hirschi, Travis. "Causes and Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency." Pp. 266-271.
- Gottfredson, Michael and Travis Hirschi. "The Nature of Criminality: Low Self-Control." Pp. 303-306
- Schur, Edwin M. "Labeling Criminals." Pp. 281-283.

D2L reading

- Lemert, Edwin. "Primary and Secondary Deviance"

DUE: DLG #5: _____

Week 8 - Life-Course

3/2 Crutchfield, et al.

- Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub. "Life Course Criminology." Pp. 312-315.
- Sampson, Robert, J., John H. Laub, and Christopher Wimer. "Does Marriage Reduce Crime." Pp. 316-322.

D2L reading

- Laub, John H., and Robert J. Sampson. "Explaining the Life Course of Crime." (from Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives. 2003. Harvard Press.)

DUE: DLG #6: _____

Week 9 - Cultural Adaptation Theories

3/9 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 5, Pp. 113-127.

Crutchfield, et al.

- Wolfgang, Marvin E., and Franco Ferracuti. "The Subculture of Violence" Pp. 252-260.
- Anderson, Elijah. "The Code of the Streets." Pp. 365-373

D2L reading

- Sampson, Robert J., and William Julius Wilson. "Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality."
- Anderson, Elijah. "Drugs, Violence, and Street Crime." (from Code of the Street. 1999. Norton.)

DUE: DLG #7: _____

Week 10 - Cultural Theories continued

3/16 D2L reading

- Alexander, Michelle. "The New Jim Crow" (from The New Jim Crow. 2012. The New Press.)
- Kirk, David S. "A Natural Experiment on Residential Change and Recidivism: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina."
- TBA

DUE: DLG #8: _____

SPRING BREAK: 3/23-3/27

Week 12 - Contemporary Critical Perspectives

3/30 DeKeseredy, Walter S. Contemporary Critical Criminology

DUE: DLG #9: _____

Week 13 - Theories of Conflict and Power

4/6 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 7

Crutchfield, et al.

- Chambliss, William. "Crime and Structural Contradictions." Pp. 289-295.
- Jacobs, David, Jason Carmichael, and Stephanie Kent. "Vigilantism, Current Racial Threat, and Death Sentences." Pp. 296-300.

DUE: DLG #10: _____

Week 14 - Penal Effects

4/13 D2L reading

- Braithwaite, John "Crime, Shame, and Reintegration."
- Messner, Steven F., and Richard Rosenfeld. "Strengthening Social Institutions and Rethinking the American Dream." (from Crime and the American Dream 2007. Wadsworth.).
- TBA

DUE: DLG #11: _____

Week 15 - Feminist Theories

4/20 Beirne and Messerschmidt.

- Chapter 8, Pp. 185-195

Crutchfield, et al.

- Hudson, Barbara. "Beyond White Man's Justice: Race, Gender, and Justice in Late Modernity." Pp. 380-385.
- Potter, Hillary. "An Argument for Black Feminist Criminology: Understanding African American Women's Experiences with Intimate Partner Abuse Using an Integrated Approach." Pp. 386-391.

D2L reading

- Chesney-Lind, Meda. "A Feminist Theory of Female Delinquency."

DUE: DLG #12: _____

Week 16 - Masculinities Theory

4/27 D2L reading

- Messerschmidt, James W. "Masculinities and Crime."
- Martin, Patricia Yancey and Robert A. Hummer. "Fraternities and Rape on Campus."
- Messerschmidt, James W. "Assaultive Violence: Lenny and Kelly." (from Gender, Heterosexuality, and Youth Violence. 2012. Rowman and Littlefield.)

DUE: DLG #13: _____

5/5 Research paper due on D2L by 4:00pm