

Criminology CLJ/SOC 012

Fall 2007 Syllabus

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Class Location: Wartik 110
Class Meets: T, Th 4:15-5:30

History is nothing but a tableau of crimes and misfortunes.

-Voltaire, 18TH Century Philosopher

COURSE OVERVIEW

What is crime? How do we measure it and what are its causes? Can we do anything to prevent it? Exploring questions such as these will be at the heart of CLJ 012. This course will introduce you to the fundamentals of criminology and the work of criminologists over the last century. We will begin by asking the question "What is Crime?" From there, we will look at how crime is measured and what general patterns emerge from previous surveys of criminal behavior. Next, we will investigate various explanations of crime and the implications these theories have for crime control policies and social change. Finally, we will conclude with a discussion of what the future holds for crime and social control in American society. Throughout the quarter, you will be asked to understand and reflect on the foundations of criminological theory and research. Welcome to Criminology!

OBJECTIVES

The goals emphasized in this course are:

- Learning basic definitions and patterns of crime
- Recognizing and understanding predominant criminological theories
- Connecting sociological ideas with real-world phenomena
- Preparing students for higher-level criminological and sociological courses

REQUIRED TEXTS

Hunter, Ronald D. and Mark L. Dantzker. 2005. *Crime and Criminality: Causes and Consequences*. Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press.

Anderson, Elijah. 1999. *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. New York. W.W. Norton.

Additional readings and lecture notes will be posted on-line (through Angel). Lecture notes will NOT be available prior to class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Reading and Class Participation: The success of this course depends on your prior preparation and attendance in class. The format of the class will vary day-by-day, and will include lectures, audio-visual materials, practical exercises, review sessions, and a mixture of these activities. Do not come to class late!

Two In-Class Examinations: The Midterm and Final exams are each 30% of your final grade and non-cumulative. The exams will consist of objective questions (i.e. multiple choice and true-false). The exams are scheduled for **October 11th** and during finals week, **December 17-21st**. ***We are not planning make-up exams***; please plan accordingly.

Quizzes: There will be six unannounced quizzes during the semester, with five counting toward 10% of your final grade (one quiz will be dropped). The quizzes will cover the week's readings and lectures and consist of five multiple choice questions. The quiz questions will be similar to those on the midterm and final and should help you determine if you are prepared for the exams.

Written Assignments: There are two required writing assignments for this course. The due dates are listed on the class schedule. Both papers must be typed, 11-12 point font, double-spaced, and single-sided. Make sure to proofread your paper, as grammar and spelling will be part of grading. A good strategy is to revise your paper a few times before handing it in and asking a friend to proofread it for errors. Handing in a first draft is likely to result in a poor grade. Include a cover page that has your name, student ID, course number, and date.

The Community Paper: Write a 3-page paper describing a neighborhood that you are familiar with (e.g. where you grew up or where you live now) and what you would predict its crime rate to be relative to other areas in the United States. Use concepts from social disorganization theory to frame your discussion. Make sure that you discuss the characteristics of your neighborhood – including poverty rate, ethnic heterogeneity, residential stability, and social controls – that would inhibit or promote crime. The best papers will also have an appendix with evidence to help describe your neighborhood. The evidence may be census characteristics, photos, newspaper articles, or interviews with local residents. The appendix does not count toward the 3 page limit.

The Code of the Streets Paper: Write a 4-page paper using TWO theoretical perspectives covered in class to explain the criminal behaviors presented in Elijah Anderson's book, *The Code of the Streets*. Be sure to accurately describe the theories that you select and then relate them to evidence in the book. The use of short quotes (1-2 sentences) from the book will strengthen your paper (you must provide the page numbers from which the quotes were taken). You will also be required to cite two articles/books listed in your textbook. Details about this will be provided in class. At the end of your paper, write a concluding paragraph stating which of the two theories you feel is most accurate and why.

GRADING

Assignments and Points Breakdown			Grading Scale		
			Total Points	%	Grade
Midterm	100 points		282-300	94-100	A
			270-281	90-93.9	A-
Five Quizzes	25 points		261-269	87-89.9	B+
			252-260	84-86.9	B
Written Assignments			240-251	80-83.9	B-
Community Paper	30 points		231-239	77-79.9	C+
Code of the Streets Paper	45 points		210-230	70-76.9	C
			180-209	60-69.9	D
Final Exam	100 points		<180	<60	F
	Total	300 points			

Students with special needs: Pennsylvania State University is committed to providing equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please let me know as soon as possible.

Late Assignment Policy: Although we will take assignments handed in late, they will be penalized. Each assignment will have 10% of its points deducted per day that it is late. For assignments due toward the end of the course, turning them in late may result in your final grade not being completed in time.

Office Hours: We will have weekly office hours that I encourage you to attend if you feel you need additional instruction or have questions on the material. We also check our e-mail regularly and may answer any questions you have in that manner. The key to any problems you may have in this course is early identification and open communication. We are more than willing to help you be successful in achieving your goals for this course.

Student Collaboration: Other students can be an excellent learning resource. We encourage you to get to know your classmates and study together. As you talk with others during the first week, try writing a few names down on the lines below with their phone numbers or e-mail addresses.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Promptness: I expect you to attend class and be on time. If you do not attend regularly, I will be unsympathetic should your grade not be what you expect.

Honesty: There is no excuse for cheating on individual assignments. If it comes to our attention that a student has cheated, we will pursue the matter to its fullest extent. For the university's formal policy regarding academic dishonesty, visit <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html>. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please visit <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/suggestions/cyberplag/cyberplagstudent.html>.

Have Fun!: As a final note, we want us all to try our best to have fun in this course. If there are suggestions which you feel may liven up the classroom, or if you have any other concerns about the way the class is proceeding, please let us know.

PART I: FOUNDATIONS OF CRIMINOLOGY

Week 1: Course Overview and Defining Crime

Aug 28 Introduction to Course/Syllabus
Aug 30 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 1-6

Week 2-3: Measuring Crime Patterns

Sept 4 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 6-15
Sept 6 Anderson, Preface and Introduction
Sept 11 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 38-40
 Anderson, Chapter 1

PART II: CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY

Week 3-4: Criminology and the Classical School

Sept 13, 18 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 23-33

Week 4-5: Positivism and Biological Theories

Sept 20, 25 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 35-37 and Chapter 3

Week 5-6: Neighborhoods and Crime

Sept 27, Oct 2 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 87-90

Week 6-7: Learning and Subcultural Theories

Oct 4 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 103-107

Oct 9 Anderson, Chapters 2-3

*****Midterm October 11 *****

Week 8: Control Theories

Oct 16 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 107-109

Oct 18 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 153-154

Week 9: Anomie/Strain Theories

*****Written Assignment 1 due October 23rd*****

Oct 23, 25 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 91-99, 144

Week 10-11: Labeling and Conflict Theories

Oct 30 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 109-113

Nov 1 Hunter and Dantzker, Chapter 7

Nov 6 **Film, *Hooked: Illegal Drugs and How They Got That Way***

Week 11-12: Developmental Theories

Nov 8 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 139-140

Nov 13 Anderson, Chapter 7

Week 12: Neoclassical and Routine Activities Theories

Nov 13 Hunter and Dantzker, pp. 134-136

Nov 15 No Class, Research Day

*****Nov 20, 22 Thanksgiving, No Classes*****

PART II: DEALING WITH CRIME

Week 13: Crime Policy and the American Penal System

Nov 27 Hunter and Dantzker, Chapter 11

Nov 29 Anderson, Conclusion

Week 14: Crime Victimization and the Politics of Crime

Dec 4 Hunter and Dantzker, Chapter 12

Dec 6 Hunter and Dantzker, Chapter 13

Week 15: Conclusions, the Future, and Course Review

*****Written Assignment 2 due December 11th*****

Dec 11, 13 Course Review and Wrap-up