

Criminological Theory
CRM 320.899
Fall 2018

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Office Hours By appointment

Textbook Akers, R. L., Sellers, C. S., and Jennings, W. G. (2016) *Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application*. 7th edition. Oxford University Press: New York.

Course Description: Criminology is a board field focused on the study of crime as a social phenomenon. This course provides an overview of the prevailing and most supported theories of crime causation found in the traditional domains of biology, psychology, and sociology. Each week, students will be introduced to a different criminological tradition, identify and analyze the unique causes and correlates of crime emphasized within that tradition, and analyze how the theories within each tradition might be used to prevent and control crime. Thus, the purpose of this course is to introduce students to the interrelationship between criminological theory, criminal justice practice, and scientific research.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- Identify the causes and correlates of crime
- Analyze the methods used to assess the prevalence and incidence of criminal behavior
- Describe the apply the prevailing theories of crime to theoretical and real world issues
- Understand the relationship between theory, research, and practice
- Analyze the strengths and limitations associated with each theory

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1	August 20	Introduction	Posted on Blackboard
Week 2	August 27	Theory in Criminology	ASJ Chapter 1
Week 3	September 3	Measuring crime and delinquency	Posted on Blackboard Labor Day Sept 3
Week 4	September 10	Rational Choice and Deterrence	ASJ Chapter 2
Week 5	September 17	Exam 1	
Week 6	September 24	Biological and Biosocial	ASJ Chapter 3
Week 7	October 1	Psychological	ASJ Chapter 4
Week 8	October 8	Social Learning	ASJ Chapter 5 Fall Break Oct 11-12
Week 9	October 15	Bonding and Control	ASJ Chapter 6
Week 10	October 22	Exam 2	
Week 11	October 29	Developmental and Life-Course theories	ASJ Chapter 14
Week 12	November 5	Labeling Theory and Reintegrative Shaming	ASJ Chapter 7
Week 13	November 12	Social Disorganization	ASJ Chapter 8
Week 14	November 19		Thanksgiving

Week 15	November 26	Anomie and Strain	ASJ Chapter 9
Week 16	December 3	Exam 3	Classes End Dec 6

Format: This course is taught entirely online in a weekly format which emphasizes lectures, scholarly readings, and online discussions. The course is divided roughly into thirds. The first third provides foundational information that will remain paramount throughout the course, even if not explicitly highlighted. It also serves as the boundary between the classical and the positivist schools of thought. The second third focuses on theories which are primarily individual in nature, while the final third focuses on theories which are broader. Each third will be accompanied by an exam, focused exclusively on that third.

Readings: Each week will include assigned readings from the text in addition to lecture. The schedule above lists the chapter from the text assigned for that week. Any additional readings or resources will be provided to you via the Blackboard page for this course and placed in the folder that corresponds to the week for which they are assigned.

ASSESSMENTS

Exams: There will be three exams which divide the course roughly into thirds. Exams will be posted online through Blackboard. In addition to basic knowledge of each theory, exams aim to assess students' understanding of how crime is explained and possible solutions offered from each theoretical perspective. The first three exams are not cumulative, and will cover all course material (including readings) from either the beginning of class or since the previous exam. Based on interest, I will hold a review session during the week of each exam. Given past experience, these will typically take place near the end of the week. **The final exam will be cumulative** and takes place during finals week. Exams **open on Monday at 12:00 p.m. and close on the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.** as follows:

Exam One – Monday September 7th

Exam Two – Monday October 22nd

Exam Three – Monday December 3rd

Final Exam – Saturday December 8th (closes Thursday the 13th)

Papers: In addition to exams, there are two writing assignments. Instructions and rubrics will be provided for each. The first will focus on theoretical explanations of crime and empirically testing theory. The second will focus on the relationship between criminological theory, solutions to crime, and criminal justice policy. In addition to appropriate content, students will be expected to demonstrate appropriate grammar, spelling, and writing skills for a course of this level. Both papers will be submitted online via Blackboard. **Papers must be submitted before midnight on the due date.** Due dates are as follows:

Paper One – October 10th

Paper Two – December 10th

I will gladly read drafts and provide feedback. In order to have the opportunity to read a draft and allow time to for feedback to be incorporated, please submit all drafts at least two weeks prior to submission

Assignments: With the exception of exam weeks, there will be an assignment each week. Assignments will take a variety of forms, including but not limited to discussion boards, response papers, and quizzes. Each assignment will focus on that week’s theoretical tradition. There will be ten assignments over the course of the semester worth ten points each.

Grammar: All assignments incorporate writing to some degree. In all instances, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate grammar, spelling, and writing skills for a student in an upper-level course. It should also be noted, that plagiarism will not be tolerated. See below for further explanation on the course policy for academic dishonesty, and examples of plagiarism.

Posting Times: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments and exams will be posted at noon each Monday and will remain available until the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. This will be true all semester for all material, including exams. Based on the schedule of finals week, the final exam is an exception to this rule as noted above.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy: In general, excusable absences fall into, but are not necessarily limited to, the following three categories: 1) participation in University-sanctioned activities and programs; 2) personal illness; or 3) family and/or other compelling circumstances. Some form of documentation is required to demonstrate the reason the absence in order to be excused. **Given that this is an online course, and assignments are available for at least a week at a time, extensions and make-ups will only be given under the most unusual of circumstances.**

Grading Policy: Each exam, including the final, is worth 100 points. Each paper is worth 120 points, while each assignment is worth ten points each, totaling 100. Taken together, there are 740 possible points in this course.

Activity	Possible Points
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Exam 3	100
Final	100
Paper 1	120
Paper 2	120
Assignments	100
TOTAL	740

The standard 10%-based scale will be used to calculate grades as follows:

Grade	Points
A	100-90%

B	89-80%
C	79-70%
D	69-60%
F	< 59%

All grades will be calculated based on the number of total possible points and percentages listed here. Blackboard does not necessary calculate grades correctly, so please do not base your perception of your grade on the percentages generated by Blackboard. **I REPEAT, DO NOT TRUST BLACKBOARD TO CALCULATE YOUR GRADE.** In order to calculate your current grade, simply divide the number of points earned so far by the total number of points possible at that moment. If you have concerns about your grade please email me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the last minute.

Please note that since many of the assignments for this course include a written component, it will naturally take longer to return graded work to students. In most cases, graded work is returned within a week, but in some cases may take longer. Please be patient. Additionally, it is not always possible to provide extensive individualized feedback to each student. However, students are strongly encourage to contact me if they would like more extensive feedback, or discuss ways in which they may improve their grade.

Student Learning Outcomes: The department of criminology assess students in their core courses on a variety of outcomes. In this course students are assessed on their ability to apply theoretical principles to explain crime and identify solutions, recognize the role of research to develop policy, and understand how research is used to test theory, in addition to the appropriate use of grammar and demonstration of proficiency on exams. These outcomes will be primarily assessed using the weekly activities and course papers.

Extra Credit: Extra credit will not be offered on an individualized basis, so please do not ask. If you are concerned about your grade, please contact me as soon as possible because by the end of the semester it will be too late.

Make-up Policy: Since exams will be available for a week at a time, it is expected that all students will be able to complete the exam in that timeframe. Therefore, make-up exams will only be given in the most extenuating of circumstances. But even then, acceptable documentation is of course required. Work schedules and forgetfulness are not acceptable excuses. **Make-up exams will be entirely in short-response format.**

Email Policy: Email is generally the best and most reliable way to contact me outside of the classroom. I strongly encourage all students to email not only about concerns they may have throughout the course, but also things they enjoy or ways the course can be improved. Please use your MSU email for all email correspondence. While I generally respond to emails in a timely manner, usually as soon as I receive them, it is not always possible to respond immediately, especially during the weekend when I am out of the office. **If for some reason I have not responded within two days, please send a follow-up reminder.**

Academic Dishonesty: Missouri State University is a community of scholars committed to developing educated persons who accept the responsibility to practice personal and academic integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following the University's academic integrity policy plus additional more-specific policies for each class. The University policy, formally known as the "Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures" is available online at [the Missouri State Website](#) and also at the Reserves Desk in Meyer Library. Any student participating in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions as described in this policy.

It is the student's responsibility to have read and understood the topics under Academic Misconduct section of the Student Handbook

Plagiarism is particular type of academic dishonesty, and will not be tolerated. Any assignment on which a student is found to have plagiarized will be given a zero. What is plagiarism? By now, everyone should be aware of what is and what is not plagiarism. All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Turning your own work from a different course
- Submitting any portion of the same work to multiple courses
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

For further information and examples of acceptable and unacceptable forms of paraphrasing, Indiana University provides [several good examples](#). This website from [Harvard](#) also provides a good analysis of what constitutes plagiarism.

It is assumed that students are familiar with what constitutes plagiarism. **As in law, ignorance is not an excuse.** Plagiarism will result in an automatic zero for that question or assignment, and appropriate steps will be taken.

Nondiscrimination: Missouri State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, and maintains a grievance procedure available to any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against. At all times, it is your right to address inquiries or concerns about possible discrimination to the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance, Park Central Office Building, 117 Park Central Square, Suite 111, 417-836-4252. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of an academic nature) should be discussed directly with your instructor and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Head. Please visit the OED website at www.missouristate.edu/equity/.

Disability Accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and anticipate barriers related to this course, it is important to request accommodations and establish an accommodation plan with the

University. Please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (<https://www.missouristate.edu/disability/>), Meyer Library, Suite 111, 417-836-4192, to initiate the process to establish your accommodation plan. The DRC will work with you to establish your accommodation plan, or it may refer you to other appropriate resources based on the nature of your disability. In order to prepare an accommodation plan, the University usually requires that students provide documentation relating to their disability. Please be prepared to provide such documentation if requested. Once a University accommodation plan is established, you may notify the class instructor of approved accommodations. If you wish to utilize your accommodation plan, it is suggested that you do so in a timely manner, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Early notification to the instructor allows for full benefit of the accommodations identified in the plan. Instructors will not receive the accommodation plan until you provide that plan, and are not required to apply accommodations retroactively.

Title IX: Missouri State University has a Title IX policy that guides our response to instances of sexual violence. Sexual Violence includes: Rape, Sexual Assault, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Discrimination, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, Sexual Harassment and Pregnancy issues. The Title IX policy can be located on the MSU Title IX website at www.missouristate.edu/titleix/. This website is also a good resource for any questions or issues involving Title IX and contains contact information for the MSU Title IX Office and staff. Read an [overview of the Title IX office](#).

Mental Health and Stress Management: As a student you may experience a range of personal issues that can impede learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. You can learn more about free and confidential Missouri State University Counseling Center services available to assist you at <https://counselingcenter.missouristate.edu/>.

Dropping a Class: It is your responsibility to understand the University's procedure for dropping a class. If you stop attending this class but do not follow proper procedure for dropping the class, you will receive a failing grade and will also be financially obligated to pay for the class. For information about dropping a class or withdrawing from the university, contact the Office of the Registrar at 836-5520.

General Computer and Blackboard Assistance: Only in the most unusual circumstances will computer issues constitute a legitimate excuse for failing to complete an assignment or being unprepared for class. It is every student's responsibility that their computer is in working order, and that they are able to access the internet. Please contact the MSU computer help desk for general computer assistance and technical difficulties with Blackboard: <http://helpdesk.missouristate.edu/get-support.htm>