

CRM 773
Offender Thinking and Decision Making
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Spring 2017
Course Syllabus

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Office Availability: I will be available typically every day in my office through my role as department head. You should always feel free to email me with any questions or concerns. If desired, you are welcome to set up an appointment to call me or meet with me in person.

Course Description:

This course critically examines the literature related to criminal thinking and decision making. Although given limited attention in traditional coursework, developing an understanding of criminal thinking and perspectives can be an invaluable asset for any practitioner who works with criminal justice clients. We will explore topics related to rational choice and criminal deterrence theories, the role of identity and emotion in decision making, and cognitive aspects of the criminal desistance process. Throughout the course we will discuss the practical applications emanating from our academic knowledge of offender thinking and decision making.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Exams: Students will be evaluated through their performance on a mid-term and final essay exam. The essays will require identification of key course themes and the critically reflective integration and synthesis of course material. The essay exams must be submitted to my email address by the due dates listed below.

Exam 1: March 12th

Exam 2: May 16th

Discussion: This course will utilize Discussion Board (DB) forums within the course Blackboard (BB) site as a mechanism for academically-oriented conversational exchanges. I will provide multiple questions each week for students to consider when reading assigned material to help everyone prepare for the DB sessions. Students are expected to provide thoughtful, critically-reflective responses to DB questions which are grammatically and structurally sound. Guidelines for participating effectively in DB forums and grading criteria for class discussions are posted in BB. Students will be scored on DB participation weekly and these scores will be averaged to calculate an overall average in DB participation at the end of the semester.

Article Reviews: Students are required to write **four** scholarly article/chapter reviews on topics relevant to criminal thinking and decision making. The articles selected for review must be approved by your professor and cannot be listed on the course reading schedule (see below).

These reviews require a summary of the article's main points and themes with a description of the methods and findings and a critical commentary which examines the article/chapter and its conclusions within the broader context of the course and its themes. Each article review must be a minimum of 2 pages in length. Article review due dates will be announced on the BB site.

Course Grade Evaluation Components:

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<u>Evaluation Component</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Class Discussion	100
Article Reviews	100

Course Grading Scale:

A	360-400
B	320-359
C	280-319
F	279 or below

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy: 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 student honor code, Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures at the following website: <http://www.missouristate.edu/academicintegrity/>. Any student participating in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions as described in this policy.

Nondiscrimination Policy: 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, 111 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 Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance website at <http://www.missouristate.edu/equity>

Disability Accommodation: To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Director of the Disability Resource Center, Carrington Hall 302, (417) 836-4192 or (417) 836-6792 (TTY), <http://www.missouristate.edu/disability>. Students are required to provide documentation of disability to the Disability Resource Center prior to receiving accommodations. The Disability Resource Center refers some types of accommodation requests to the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, which also provides diagnostic testing for learning and

psychological disabilities. For information about testing, contact the Director of the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, (417) 836-4787, <http://psychology.missouristate.edu/ldc>.

Emergency Response Statement: Students who require assistance during an emergency evacuation must discuss their needs with their professors and the Disability Resource Center. If you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. For additional information, students should contact the Disability Resource Center, 836-4192 (PSU 405), or Larry Combs, Interim Assistant Director of Public Safety and Transportation at 836-6576. For further information on Missouri State University's Emergency Response Plan, please refer to the following web site: <http://www.missouristate.edu/safetran/erp.htm> If an evacuation should occur we are to go to northeast to Glass Hall and if severe weather comes, we need to go to the basement of the building.

Religious accommodation: The University may provide a reasonable accommodation based on a person's sincerely held religious belief. In making this determination, the University reviews a variety of factors, including whether the accommodation would create an undue hardship. The accommodation request imposes responsibilities and obligations on both the individual requesting the accommodation and the University. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their sincerely held religious belief shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious observances on which they will be absent by submitting a Request for Religious Accommodation Form to the instructor by the end of the third week of a full semester course or the end of the second week of a half semester course.

Cell Phone Use Policy: As a member of the learning community, each student has a responsibility to other students who are members of the community. When cell phones or pagers ring and students respond in class or leave class to respond, it disrupts the class. Therefore, the Office of the Provost prohibits the use by students of cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or similar communication devices during scheduled classes. All such devices must be turned off or put in a silent (vibrate) mode and ordinarily should not be taken out during class. Given the fact that these same communication devices are an integral part of the University's emergency notification system, an exception to this policy would occur when numerous devices activate simultaneously. When this occurs, students may consult their devices to determine if a university emergency exists. If that is not the case, the devices should be immediately returned to silent mode and put away. Other exceptions to this policy may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Policy Regarding 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.

Course Jurisdiction:

The course instructor has original jurisdiction over this class and may deny a student who is unduly disruptive the right to participate in this online class. A class disruption is defined here as anything that distracts the instructor or other students from the learning experience. Class disruptions can involve (but are not limited to) making rude, insensitive, or threatening comments on discussion board. The course instructor may have a student administratively withdrawn from a course upon showing of good cause and with the concurrence of the department head. The appeals process in case of such administrative withdrawal shall be as stated in the academic regulations under "Grade Re-evaluation Based on Performance."

Course Reading Schedule:

Week 2: January 23-27

Clarke, R. V., & Cornish, D. B. (1985). Modeling offenders' decisions: A framework for research and policy. *Crime and Justice*, 6, 147-185.

Paternoster, R. (2010). How much do we really know about criminal deterrence? *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 100, 765-823.

Week 3: January 30-February 3

Walters, G. D. (1990). Cognitive Patterns. From "The Cognitive Lifestyle: Patterns of Serious Misconduct."

Paternoster, R., & Pogarsky, G. (2009). Rational choice, agency and thoughtfully reflective decision making: The short and long-term consequences of making good choices. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 25, 103-127.

Apel, R. (2013). Sanctions, perceptions, and crime: Implications for criminal deterrence. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 29, 67-101.

Week 4: February 6-10

Maruna, S., & Copes, H. (2005). What have we learned from five decades of neutralization research? *Crime and Justice*, 32, 221-320.

Jacobs, B. A., & Copes, H. (2015). Neutralization without drift: Criminal commitment among persistent offenders. *British Journal of Criminology*, 55, 286-302.

Week 5: February 13-17

Paternoster, R., & Bushway, S. (2009). Desistance and the "feared self": Toward an identity theory of criminal desistance. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 99, 1103-1156.

Giordano, P.C., Cernkovich, S. A., & Rudolph, J. L. (2002). Gender, crime, and desistance: Toward a theory of cognitive transformation. *American Journal of Sociology*, *107*, 990-1064.

Week 6: February 21-24

Bouffard, J., Exum, M. L., & Paternoster, R. (2000). Whither the beast? The role of emotions in a rational choice theory of crime. In S. S. Simpson (Ed.), *Crime and criminality: The use of theory in everyday life*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Van Gelder, J., & Vries, R. E. (2012). Traits and states: Integrating personality and affect into a model of criminal decision making. *Criminology*, *50*, 637-671.

Carmichael, S., & Piquero, A. R. (2004). Sanctions, perceived anger, and criminal offending. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, *20*, 371-393.

Week 7: February 27-March 3

Seipel, C., & Eifler, S. (2010). Opportunities, rational choice, and self-control: On the interaction of person and situation in a general theory of crime. *Crime and Delinquency*, *56*, 167-197.

Owen, T., & Fox, S. (2011). Experiences of shame and empathy in violent and nonviolent young offenders. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology*, *22*, 551-563.

Week 8: March 6-10

Mid-Term Essays

Week 9: March 13-17

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

Week 10: March 20-24

Copes, H., Hochstetler, A., & Forsyth, C. J. (2013). Peaceful warriors: Codes for violence among adult male bar fighters. *Criminology*, *51*, 761-794.

Brookman, F., Copes, H., & Hochstetler, A. (2011). Street codes as formula stories: How inmates recount violence. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *40*, 397-424.

Hochstetler, A., Copes, H., & Williams, J. P. (2010). "That's not who I am." How offenders commit violent acts and reject authentically violent selves. *Justice Quarterly*, *27*, 492-516.

Week 11: March 27-31

Beauregard, E., & Leclerc, B. (2007). An application of the rational choice approach to the offending of sex offenders: A closer look at the decision-making. *Sex Abuse, 19*, 115-133.

Burn, M. F., & Brown, S. (2005). A review of the cognitive distortions in child sex offenders: An examination of the motivations and mechanisms that underlie the justification for abuse. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 11*, 225-236.

Week 12: April 3-7

Jacobs, B. A., & Wright, R. (1999). Stick-up, street culture, and offender motivation. *Criminology, 37*, 149-173.

Miller, J. (1998). Up it up: Gender and the accomplishment of street robbery. *Criminology, 36*, 37-66.

Week 13: April 10-12

Nee, C., & Meenaghan, A. (2006). Expert decision making in burglars. *British Journal of Criminology, 46*, 935-949.

Benson, M. L. (1985). Denying the guilty mind: Accounting for involvement in white-collar crime. *Criminology, 23*, 589-599.

Week 14: April 17-21

Cherbonneau, M., & Copes, H. (2006). 'Drive it like you stole it': Auto theft and the illusion of normalcy. *British Journal of Criminology, 46*, 193-211.

Copes, H., & Cherbonneau, M. (2006). The key to auto theft: Emerging methods of auto theft from the offenders' perspective. *British Journal of Criminology, 46*, 917-934.

Week 15: April 24-28

Jacques, S., & Allen, A. (2014). Bentham's sanction typology and restrictive deterrence: A study of young, suburban, middle-class drug dealers. *Journal of Drug Issues, 44*(2), 212-230.

Copes, H., Hochstetler, A., & Sandberg, S. (2016). Identities, boundaries, and accounts of women methamphetamine users. *Justice Quarterly, 33*(1), 134-158.

Week 16: May 1-5

Healy, D. (2013). Changing fate? Agency and the desistance process. *Theoretical Criminology, 17*, 557-574.

Maruna, S. (2001). Making good: The rhetoric of redemption. In *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives* (pp. 85-108). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Week 17: May 8-12

Elliot, B., & Verdeyen, V. (2002). Inmate manipulation based on a sense of entitlement. In *Game Over: Strategies for Redirecting Inmate Deception*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association.

Cornelius, G. F. (2009). Offender Manipulation. In *The art of the con: Avoiding offender manipulation*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association

Week 18: May 15-19

Final Essay