

CRIMINOLOGY 262W
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2007

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Class Hours: CJ 262W MWF 10:00-10:50 am.
Classroom: CJ 262W CJC A115
Office Hours: Monday, 2:00 – 3:00 pm and Wednesday, 2:00 – 4:00 pm;
Additional hours by appointment

Required Textbooks:

Seigel, Larry (2006). *Criminology, Ninth Edition*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Companion Website:

http://www.wadsworth.com/cgiwadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&product_isbn_issn=0534645771&discipline_number=23

Glassner, Barry (2006). *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things*. Perseus Book Group

ASA Style Guide, American Sociological Association

Course Description:

Just pick up a current newspaper or turn on the television and you will find a story involving crime. Crime is popular (for good or for bad) and controversial! Newspapers lead with stories of murder, theft, and terrorism. Politicians and policy makers debate over the death penalty, drug legalization, “three strikes” laws, juvenile delinquency, and homeland security. Movies, television shows, and even cartoons are dominated by themes of crime and law enforcement. In the end we are often confused by crime, repulsed by it, and even entertained by it.

However, crime – or the study of crime – is far more complex than it appears on a *CSI* or *Law and Order* episode. The study of crime has evolved from a long historical tradition of thought on morality, the law, and civil responsibility. Criminology is systematic,

scientific, theoretically rich, and relevant! This course serves as a general introduction to the study of crime. It might be summarized by a series of (seemingly) simple questions:

- What is crime?
- How do we study crime?
- What causes crime?
- How do we decide what is criminal?
- How do we react to crime?
- How do we punish crime?

The course has been designed to provide useful skills and knowledge for students with a variety of long-term interests and goals. For those interested in crime research, the course will provide a basic foundation of criminological theory and an introduction to the methods used for studying crime issues. For those students interested in careers related to criminal/legal policy, the course will provide an understanding of how to read and evaluate criminology theory and research, and how theory and research can be applied to policy. For all students, the course will provide a framework for critically assessing media and political discussions of crime and crime policy.

Course Objectives:

We will work together to make sure you walk away from this class:

1. with a good understanding of the “facts” of criminology. By that I mean that you will gain knowledge about the discipline, its terminology, typologies, and research methods.
2. having learned about the fundamental principles and theories of criminology.
3. having learned how to use and apply course material as you think about current events, problems, and decisions.
4. (most importantly) having learned how to *think critically* about current ideas and other points of view.

Remember: “Thinking critically” does not mean that we simply *criticize* other people and ideas. It is a thinking process that allows you to consider multiple points of view, evaluate fact from opinion, validate evidence for an argument, formulate clear reasons for beliefs, and reason with others. A critical thinker can clearly articulate an idea. He or she can also civilly entertain the ideas of others.

Attendance Policy:

As per University policies, regular and punctual attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be recorded in each class session. *Students with more than six unexcused absences will be penalized one letter grade on the final grade in the course.*

You are expected to arrive to class on time and not to leave early. With the exception of an emergency you should let the instructor know ahead of time if you must leave early. Do not interrupt the instructor of the class with your personal entrances and/or exits. If you must be absent, notify the instructor through your student e-mail account prior to the next scheduled class period. Additionally, you are to get two “class buddies” to take notes, inform you of assignments, etc. when you miss class. Catching up on classes that you have missed is your responsibility.

Student Absences/Religious Holidays: Absences may be excused for health, emergency or religious reasons. Absences are considered excused with documentation from a licensed physician confirming illness or family emergency. The note does not need to detail the illness or emergency, simply confirm the general cause of the absence. Documentation from other sources will be accepted at the discretion of the professor.

For more information on absences due to religious holidays please refer to <http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>

Make-Up Exams: Make-up exams will only be offered with an excused absence (see “Student Absences” above). Do not abuse this privilege. Instructions on taking a make-up exam will be posted on blackboard.

General Classroom Policies: There are several classroom policies which will be enforced during the semester:

- **Laptops, cell phones, pagers, MP3 players, text messaging systems, games etc. must be turned off during the class.** *If you are repeatedly asked to put away or turn off the electronic device over the course of the class, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade.*

Not sure if your device is prohibited? Go by this rule of thumb – if you turn it off in a theatre, at church, or on a plane during take off – turn it off in the class!

- **Civility is required.** I want to encourage a lot of classroom discussion. That is what will make this class exciting. However, there may be times when you feel offended, angered, or just plain disagree with someone in class. It is important to remain respectful and civil. That means healthy debate is ok – *fighting* is not! Discuss the merits of an idea – don’t attack someone personally!

If you are persistently unable to remain civil to others in the class, your final grade will be reduced by one letter and you will be referred to the Dean’s Office.

- **Use of tobacco products in the classroom or elsewhere in the building is prohibited.**

- **Sleeping, reading newspapers, books, or studying for other courses during class is prohibited.**
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Grading Policy: Your performance in the class will be evaluated by exams and a writing portfolio. Each exam is worth 150 points, and the writing portfolio is worth 600 points (Each portfolio entry is worth 65 points with the final entry worth 80 points. The exam dates are announced in the course outline below.

The breakdown of exam weights and the final grading scale follows:

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---|---------------|-----------|
| Exam One | 150 pts | A | 945-1050 pts. | 90-100% |
| Exam Two | 150 pts | B | 840-944 pts. | 80-89% |
| Writing Portfolio | 600 pts | C | 735-839 pts. | 70-79% |
| Final Exam | <u>150 pts</u> | D | 630-734 pts. | 60-69% |
| | 1050 pts | F | <629 pts. | Below 59% |

Extra Credit will be offered at the professor's discretion.

Students are responsible for the assigned readings and all lecture material covered in the class. Content from the readings and lectures will be included in the exams. Exams will be in a multiple choice and true-false format. They may include essay questions on occasion. Therefore, you are required to have a SCANTRON and an exam booklet for each exam.

Supplies for the class:

- (1) **At least one #2 pencil**
- (2) **At least one pen**
- (3) **At least one large (100 question) Scantron**
- (4) **An exam blue book**
- (5) **Your textbook and other readers (your book comes in handy when you least expect it)**
- (6) **A composition book**

Assessment of Written Work: All written work will be graded based on the following criteria.

Organization of ideas: Essays should be organized in a logical manner and contain a good introduction and conclusion. *If you find that you are having trouble in this area I advise you to take your papers to the writing center.*

Content: Does the essay demonstrate an understanding of the material read? Does the essay address all the questions posed by the assignment? How well does the essay support its argument?

Intangibles: This is the stuff that makes a good essay an excellent essay. This includes, but not limited to: use of outside sources/experiences, incorporating information from class lecture or your textbook, and/or exceptional analysis of subject material.

Academic Honesty: *Students found cheating will receive a “0” or no credit for the exam in question. Students found to have plagiarized any part of an essay for extra credit will be penalized up to three points against their final grade.* If you have questions about how to reference a source in your essay, please consult with the Writing Center (free at Farrington 111) or your professor.

The University’s policy toward cheating and plagiarism can be found at the following website.

http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/810213.pdf

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of not properly crediting your sources of information through the proper utilization of textual citations and a source list. If it is not a product of your own, original research, your own original idea, thought, or words, you must cite your source in your text. You must also include a works cited list. Failure to do so will be considered academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

Disabled Student Policies and Service Information: Students with a disability that affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. The physically impaired may contact the Director of Counseling Services as Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students by telephone (extension 1720)

For more information about University policy’s toward and services to disabled students see the links below.

http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/811006.pdf

<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

Course Calendar and Outline (subject to change):

| DATE | TOPIC | ASSIGNMENT |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| August 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Course /Syllabus Review | |
| Week of 8/22 - 8/24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Criminology? How do we study crime? | Siegel, Chapter 1 |
| Week of 8/27 - 8/31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How we study, cont. Introduction to portfolios and writing assignments Writing Friday – “Reading an academic article: The abstract” | Siegel, Chapter 2 |
| Week of 9/3 - 9/7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MONDAY – NO CLASS Victims and victimization <p>Reminder: 9/5 - Last day to drop without a “Q” and receive 100% refund.</p> | Siegel, Chapter 3 Glassner, Introduction |
| Week of 9/10 – 9/14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Culture of Fear Writing Friday – “Reading an academic article: The introduction” | Glassner, Chapters 1, 2 and 3 |
| Week of 9/17 – 9/21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday - EXAM #1 (Siegel 1-3; Glassner 1&2; lecture) Violent Crime: Rape, Homicide and Robbery | Siegel, Chapter 10 Glassner, 5 and 6 |
| Week of 9/24 – 9/28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent Crime: Assault and Robbery Writing Friday – “Reading an academic article – The literature review” | Siegel, Chapter 10 Glassner, 7 and 9 |
| Week of 10/1 – 10/5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Crimes Film, “Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room” | Siegel, Chapter 12 |
| Week of 10/8 – 10/12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White Collar Crime, cont. Writing Friday – “Reading an academic article – The methodology” <p>Reminder: 10/10 - Last day to drop Fall Semester courses without grade of F. Last day to resign without receiving a mark of W.</p> | Siegel, Chapter 12 |
| Week of 10/15 – 10/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Order Crimes | Siegel, Chapter 14 |

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| Week of 10/22– 10/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday – Exam #2 (Siegel, 10,12, 14; Glassner, lectures) • Introduction to Criminological Theory • Writing Friday – “Reading an academic article – The results and conclusion” | Siegel, Chapter 4 |
| Week of 10/29 – 11/2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of Crime: Choice Theories | Siegel, Chapter 4 |
| Week of 11/5 – 11/9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories (Anomie, Strain and Cultural Deviance) • Writing Fridays – “Working with Criminological Theory” | Siegel, Chapter 6 |
| Week of 11/12 - 11/16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories (Social bond and labeling) • Guest lecturer • Writing Friday – “Working with Criminological Theory” Take-home assignment | Siegel, Chapter 7 |
| Week of 11/19 - 11/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory Review • WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY – NO CLASS/HOLIDAY | |
| Week of 11/26 – 11/30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories (Marxist, Feminist and other Critical Theories) | Siegel, Chapter 8 |
| Week of 12/3 – 12/7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Friday Monday - “Working with Criminological Theory” • Final Exam Review • “Assessment of course, learning, and personal performance” - Take home writing assignment • FRIDAY – STUDY DAY/ NO CLASS | |
| 12/10 11:00 am - 1:00 pm | <p>FINAL EXAM (Siegel 4,6,7,8; lectures) TAKE HOME Writing Assignment due!!</p> | |