

**CRIMINOLOGY 262**  
**SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**SPRING 2008**

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**Class Hours:** TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm  
**Classroom:** C210  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00am to Noon; Wednesday, 2:00 – 3:30pm;  
Additional hours by appointment

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

Selections from Walker, Samuel (2006). *Sense and Nonsense About Crime and Drugs: A Policy Guide*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

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**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.

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### **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.*

**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 are offered at the discretion of the instructor and only with a written and official excused absence (see “Student Absences” above). Do not ask to make-up an exam unless you have documentation. Instructions on taking a make-up exam will be posted on blackboard. There are no make-up quizzes.

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**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, listening to your MP3 player, 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 quizzes. Each exam is worth 150 points and each quiz is worth 50 points. The exam dates are announced in the course outline below. However, the quizzes will be given unannounced.

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

Exam One	150 pts	A	720-800 pts.
Exam Two	150 pts	B	640-719 pts.
Exam Three	150 pts	C	560-639 pts.
Final Exam	200 pts	D	480-559 pts.
Three quizzes	<u>150 pts</u>	F	<479 pts.
	800 pts		

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 and quizzes. Exams and quizzes will be in a multiple choice and true-false format. Therefore, you are required to have a SCANTRON for each exam. Since quizzes are unannounced you must also have an extra SCANTRON available in each class.

**Extra Credit:** There will be three extra credit short essays. The essay questions will be based upon reading in the Walker text. **Each essay will be worth two points toward your final grade.** Essays will be graded on your understanding of the arguments presented in Walker, your reaction to Walker, and your ability to articulate your ideas. (Sentence structure, grammar, and spelling are important.) Everyone is encouraged to complete at least one essay! **Essays must be turned in paper format and students must have an electronic format available upon request.**

**Extra Credit Assignment #1: (Walker, pp. 11-17 and all of chapter 9)** Write a reaction essay (3 pages or appx. 800-1000 words) that addresses one of the following:

- Walker suggests that crime is not a problem for all Americans. In fact, different groups affected by different crimes. Who are the primary victims of violent crimes? How does this differ from stories and images of crime we see in the media? How do you explain this difference? Which “picture” of crime and victimization is more accurate? Why?
- Walker talks about the consequences of the war on drugs on racial and ethnic groups as well as on the criminal justice system. Briefly discuss the major consequences that he addresses. Do you think he is correct in saying that the “war on crime” has had a “terrible effect on society?”

**Extra Credit Assignment #2: (Walker pp.68-80; 150-155)** Write a reaction essay (3 pages or appx. 800-1000 words) that addresses one of the following:

- Walker highlights the difficulties of identifying “career criminals”. Do you think it is a good idea to try and identify criminals that are likely to repeat an offense? Why? What are the benefits and consequences of “predicting” criminal activity?
- Briefly discuss the “three strikes laws”. How should recidivists be treated in the criminal justice system? Do you think the “three strikes” policies

help reduce recidivism? What are the potential benefits and consequences of three strikes?

**Extra Credit Assignment #3: (Walker, Chapter 13).** Write a reaction essay (3 pages or appx. 800-1000 words) that addresses one of the following:

- Briefly define the different types of drug-related crimes that Walker lists. What impact has the government efforts to enforce drug-related laws, had on society? Do police crackdowns and tougher sentences deter people from drug-related crimes? If so why or why not?
- Briefly discuss the varieties of drug legalization presented in Walker. What are the potential positive and negative consequences of drug legalizations? Under what circumstances would you legalize drugs? Why?

**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. <i>If you find that you are having trouble in this area I advise you to take your papers to the writing center.</i>
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.

**Supplies for each class:**

- (1) At least one #2 pencil (remember that this room has no pencil sharpener)**
- (2) At least one large (100 question) Scantron**
- (3) At least one small (20 question) Scantron**
- (4) Your textbook (those of you who have had a course with me before know that your book comes in handy when you least expect it)**

**Academic Honesty:** *Students found cheating will receive a “0” or no credit for the exam, quiz or project in question. Cheating includes bringing your friend’s clicker to class to count his/her attendance or to complete a quiz or exam. Students that misuse the clickers in order to cheat, risk course failure.*

*Students found to have plagiarized any part of an extra credit assignment will fail the course. This means if you copy someone else’s work, an online article (Wikipedia) or fail correctly cite someone else’s writing – you will fail. 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](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.

Information on APA style citation formats can be found online at:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> and  
<http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/apagd.php>

**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/~vaf_www/aps/documents/811006.pdf)  
<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

## COURSE CALENDAR AND OUTLINE:

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
January 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Course /Syllabus Review</li> </ul>	
Week of 1/21 – 1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is Criminology?</li> <li>• Thinking and Working Like a Criminologist</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 1&2
Week of 1/28 - 2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victims and Victimization</li> <li>• <b>Extra Credit Assignment #1 Due</b></li> </ul> <p>Reminder: 2/1 - Last day to drop without a “Q” and receive 100% refund. Twelfth day of class.</p>	Siegel, Chapter 3 <b>Walker, pp. 11-17</b>
Week of 2/4 - 2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Walker and extra credit essays Review for Exam #1</li> <li>• <b>Exam #1 (Siegel 1-3, lecture, Walker)</b></li> </ul>	
Week of 2/11 – 2/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Crime: Choice Theories</li> <li>• Theories of Crime: Trait Theories</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 4 Siegel, Chapter 5
Week of 2/18 – 2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories</li> <li>• Anomie, Strain and Cultural Deviance</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 6
Week of 2/25 – 2/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories</li> <li>• Social Bond and Labeling</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 7
Week of 3/3 – 3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exam Review</li> <li>• <b>Exam #2 (Siegel 4-7, lecture)</b></li> </ul>	
Week of 3/10 – 3/14	SPRING BREAK	
Week of 3/17 – 3/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Crime: Sociological Theories</li> <li>• Marxist, Feminist and other Critical Theories</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 8
Week of 3/24– 3/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Crime: Lifecourse Theories</li> <li>• Recidivism – “Career Criminals”</li> <li>• <b>Extra Credit Assignment #2 Due</b></li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 9 <b>Walker pp.68-80; 150-155</b>

Week of 3/31 – 4/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violent Crimes: Rape, Homicide, Assault and Robbery</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 10
Week of 4/7 – 4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violent Crime: Terrorism</li> <li>• <b>Exam #3 (Siegel 8-10)</b></li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 10
Week of 4/14 – 4/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property Crime</li> <li>• Enterprise Crime: White Collar</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 11
Week of 4/21 – 4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Order Crimes: Morality and the Law</li> <li>• Public Order Crime: Drug Use</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 12
Week of 4/28 – 5/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Order Crime: Drug Use, cont.</li> <li>• <b>Extra Credit Assignment #3 Due</b></li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 13 <b>Walker Ch. 13</b>
Week of 5/5 – 5/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Models of Justice</li> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• The Courts</li> </ul>	Siegel, Chapter 14-16

<b>5/12 – 5/16</b> <b>Finals Week</b>	<b>May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.</b> <b>Siegal chpts. 11-16</b>
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