

PSYCHOLOGY OF CRIME

PSYC 3913
Summer, 2018
DAH 217

Course Description: This course will introduce the student to the subject of criminology and its relationship to psychology and sociology. The course will present the major theories that address the causation of crime and criminal thinking and behavior. Discussion will be encouraged as we attempt to focus on contemporary criminal cases to further a philosophical understanding about the nature of crime in our society. We will also focus on the major categories of crime and on the criminal justice system.

Instructor:

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Texts:

Siegel, L.J. (2016). *Criminology : The Core (6th ed.)*.
Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Hickey, T. J. (Ed.). (2008). *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial issues in crime and criminology (8th ed.)*.
Guilford, CT: McGraw Hill Publishing.

**There may be additional readings from other sources throughout the semester.

Office Hours:

By Appointment

Course Objectives and Goals:

1. To develop a broad understanding of criminal behavior
2. To become aware of the different theories that are currently used to explain the etiology of criminal thinking and behavior.

3. To develop increased understanding of the criminal justice system and other treatment options.
4. To learn to think critically about issues and policies related to criminality.
5. To learn how to argue one's opinion – thoughtfully and respectfully.

Student Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation in class discussions are expected, especially since this is a summer class.
2. There will be three exams and Friday will be 'exam day'. The final exam will not be comprehensive. While we may not specifically lecture over material in the texts, students are responsible for reading the assigned chapters throughout the semester and asking questions over any part of the reading that was not clear. All material covered in this class, including the reading and the class discussions will be "fair game" for the examinations.
3. There will be two short writing assignments spaced throughout the intercession, and will be primarily position papers on a particular topic within the field of criminology. These will be approximately 1-2 pages each and will utilize the Hickey text (For which I will provide handouts. More in class).
4. Students shall have the option of either completing a 10 - 12 page research paper, or a twenty hour practicum (You will have the option of completing this assignment throughout the summer - more in class).
5. Each student will make one oral presentation during the semester. The topic will be of the student's choosing, but will require the application of theory (discussed throughout this class) to a current, or recent news story. Let me emphasize that this is NOT a current events presentation, rather I want to see and will grade the presentations on the scholarly application of existing criminal theory to a 'real-life' event. Presentations will be at least 20 minutes but no longer than 30 minutes and will include a handout for the class outlining the important points.
6. Attendance on class tours (if arranged).

Grading:

92% - 100%	A
83% - 91%	B
74% - 82%	C
65% - 73%	D
Below 68%	F

Writing assignments	-	10%
Oral presentation	-	10%
Exam #1	-	20%
Exam #2	-	20%
Final exam	-	20%
Paper/Practicum	-	20%

Papers:

The research paper will be between 10 and 12 pages in length, written in strict APA style. You should have approximately 6 - 8 primary references as sources for your paper. Topics should be related to a specific issue within the field of criminology, i.e., treatment and/or punishment, history, types of criminal behavior, etiology of a criminal, etc.. Topics must be approved by the instructor.

Practicum:

Students will complete a 20 hour practicum within the criminal justice system. Primarily, these twenty hours will be spent observing the court proceedings in criminal and/or civil cases - (I am open to other ideas as far as settings are concerned for a few of the hours, but I am primarily interested in you observing the court system). The student will keep an accurate log, including times and dates and cases observed. A journal will also be turned in with the log recording personal thoughts concerning this experience, as well as summaries of the cases that were observed.

Class Policies:

1. Cheating: Any student found cheating on the exams will receive a grade of 0.
2. Plagiarism: Any student who represents the work of another as his or her own will receive a grade of 0 for that assignment.
3. Attendance: It is the student's responsibility to keep up with lecture and assignments. Missed tests will be made up at the instructor's discretion.
4. Electronic policy: Electronic appliances will **not** be permitted in my classroom unless I specifically request that you bring them for use in a class activity. Any unauthorized use will result in dismissal from class.

- 5. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED IN THIS CLASS. IF ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT TURNED IN ON THE DAY THEY ARE DUE (AT THE START OF CLASS), THEN A SCORE OF ZERO WILL BE RECORDED.**

Course outline and reading schedule:

**The readings listed below are from the Siegel text, but each week we will also be reading an issue from the Hickey text and will be discussing it during Thursday's class period. These readings will be assigned from week to week.

Week of 4/30 - Ch. 1 – Crime and Criminology
 - Ch. 2 – Nature and Extent of Crime
 - Ch. 3 – Victims
 EXAM 1 – Friday, May 4th (Chs. 1 – 3)

Week of 5/7 **Position paper 1 – due 5/7**

 - Ch. 4 – Rational Choice Theory
 - Ch. 5 – Trait Theory
 - Ch. 6 – Social Structure Theory
 EXAM 2 – Friday, May 11th (Chs.4 – 6)

Week of 5/14 **Position paper 2 – due 5/14**

 - Ch. 7 – Social Process Theory
 - Ch. 8 – Social Conflict Theory
 - Ch. 9 – Developmental Theory
 Presentations – TBA
 EXAM 3 – Friday, May 18th (Chs. 7 – 9)

** I will assign readings from Hickey's *Taking Sides* throughout the intercession. Often these articles will initiate our class discussion, so please be sure to read these articles in preparation for class.