

Survey of Criminological Theory
CCJ5606, Section 01
Spring 2020
Monday 1:00-3:30 p.m., Eppes 214

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to help students understand and evaluate major criminological theories, develop their own perspectives and interests in criminological theory, and identify how theory and policy can or do inform one another. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- trace the history of major criminological theories;
- describe the main concepts and causal logic of the theories;
- summarize the evidence in support of them;
- identify and apply types of causality to crime theories;
- classify theories using different criteria (e.g., the units of analysis to which they apply);
- evaluate theories using different criteria (e.g., predictive accuracy, scope, range);
- develop policy implications from crime theories; and
- describe ways in which theory and policy can inform one another.

Classes will be structured around discussions of class readings. I will facilitate these discussions and ensure that we cover as full a range of issues as possible. We will rely on several books (see below) and a number of articles (which will be available via Canvas). Given the amount of reading, you must learn to skim and focus on critical points and issues. Taking notes on your observations will help you absorb the material. I may include additional readings as the semester progresses. Please bring the assigned material to class, as we will collectively wrestle with specific passages in the readings. Depending on student interest, we can focus on additional or different topics of interest to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are three required texts for the course and, separately, a set of readings that will be available online through the course library. The required books are:

- Akers, Ronald L., Christine S. Sellers, and Wesley G. Jennings. 2016. Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application. Seventh edition. New York: Oxford. Paperback ISBN-13: 9780190455163.
- Decker, Scott H., and Kevin A. Wright, eds. 2018. Crime and Public Policy: Putting Theory to Work. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. ISBN-13: 9781439916582.
- Lilly, J. Robert, Francis T. Cullen, and Richard A. Ball. 2019. Criminological Theory: Context and Consequences. Seventh edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN-13: 9781506387307.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Agnew, Robert. 2005. Why Do Criminals Offend? A General Theory of Crime and Delinquency. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Press.

Bernard, Thomas J., Jeffrey B. Snipes, Alexander L. Gerould, and George B. Vold. 2015. Vold's Theoretical Criminology. 7th edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Observations and questions (5 percent): Each week, a one-page, single-spaced observation is due in class that includes (1) a key idea that interested you in that day's readings, with citations as appropriate to specific passages, and (2) two questions that you have about the readings.

Paper (45 percent): **A one-page outline of your paper idea is due in class on February 10.** Each student will provide a short presentation on their idea. The class and I will provide feedback on it. **Your 10-15 page single-spaced final paper then is due March 9.** A paper copy of it must be submitted in class. It should make an argument that you support using prior theory and research. Include a title page that clearly identifies the focus and main idea of the paper. Include, too, a references section at the end of the paper that includes as many scholarly sources as are needed to support your theoretical or empirical claims. The title page and reference page(s) are not counted as part of the 10-15 text pages that constitute the main document.

The paper should begin with a paragraph that motivates the problem (e.g., what is the research gap that needs addressing). The second paragraph should begin by stating, "In this paper, I argue XYZ for ABC reasons. To this end, I will structure the paper as follows. First, . . . Second, . . . Third, . . . Etc. I then specify the empirical conditions under which my argument would be supported and those under which it would not. I conclude by discussing implications for theory, research, and policy." Use headings to clarify the logical flow of your paper's theory- and research-based argument. It is essential that you make an argument and that you describe (and follow) your outline to support or advance that argument. The grading of your paper will be based on how well you focus your paper's argument, the logic and empirical evidence you bring to bear in developing your argument, the quality of writing (clear and complete sentences, word choice, transitions, etc.), and conformity with formatting requirements (follow the example set out in any recent issue of *Criminology*). In class, near the end of the semester, we will discuss student paper ideas in class; you should feel free to come see me to discuss your idea as well. The grading rubric can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Exam (50 percent): There will be a take-home essay-based exam that will be distributed in class on April 20. **The paper copy of your completed exam is due in my mailbox on April 27 by 5:00 p.m.** The goal of the exam is to help you to understand better the course material and to develop a critical perspective on it. In class, we will discuss the types of questions that likely will appear on the exam. Priority will be given to questions that overlap with the readings and the class discussions. The exam grade will be based on how well you address the specific parts of each question and will take into account the logic and evidence that you present, how well you

incorporate relevant material that was assigned (including material that we discuss and material that we may not have had time to discuss in class), the quality of writing (clear and complete sentences, word choice, transitions, etc.), and conformity with the formatting requirements. The grading rubric can be found at the end of this syllabus.

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for each element of the course and for the course overall is as follows:

A	=	93.0	to	100
A-	=	90.0	to	< 93.0
B+	=	87.0	to	< 90.0
B	=	83.0	to	< 87.0
B-	=	80.0	to	< 83.0
C+	=	77.0	to	< 80.0
C	=	73.0	to	< 77.0
C-	=	70.0	to	< 73.0
D+	=	67.0	to	< 70.0
D	=	63.0	to	< 67.0
D-	=	60.0	to	< 63.0
F	=	<60.0		

COURSE POLICIES

- **University attendance policy.** If you miss class, you will not receive credit for the assignments unless exceptional circumstances exist or you provide prior written notice that attendance to the class is not possible for legitimate reasons, as defined by the University. Students must provide, when possible, advance notice of absences. After an absence, students must provide relevant documentation within one week of missing class; the missed assignment also must be completed within one week of missing class. The University's attendance policy will be followed in determining whether a missed assignment is due to legitimate reasons. The University's attendance policy (<http://facsenate.fsu.edu/Curriculum-Resources/syllabus-language>) states: *"Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness."*
- **Late assignment policy.** Late assignments will not be accepted unless: (1) Notification is provided to the instructor within 24 hours of a missed assignment, and (2) a legitimate reason is provided for why the assignment was late. Written documentation for the excuse may be required. *If you do not follow this procedure, you will receive a zero on the assignment.* When there is a legitimate reason, the assignment must be submitted within one week of the due date for the original assignment.
- **Academic honor policy.** The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the

University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>).

- **Americans with Disabilities Act**. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdr@admin.fsu.edu
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

- **Courtesy, respect, and professionalism**. Please arrive at class on time prepared to discuss the materials assigned. During class, please do not be disruptive or engage in side conversations or activities. Instead, actively contribute to and engage in class discussions.
- **Recording**. Students are not permitted to record (audio or video) class without prior permission from the instructor.
- **Free tutoring from FSU**. On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options—see <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.
- **Syllabus change policy**. Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

COURSE CALENDAR

Week	Date	Topics
Week 1	1/6 (M)	Overview of course and overview of theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Ch. 1) • Lilly et al. (Ch. 1)
Week 2	1/13 (M)	Deterrence and rational choice theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Ch. 2) • Lilly et al. (Chs. 12-13)
<i>MLK Day (January 20) = No Class this Week</i>		
Week 3	1/27 (M)	Biological and psychological theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Chs. 3-4) • Lilly et al. (Chs. 2 and 14-15) • Wright, John P., and Kevin M. Beaver. 2005. "Do Parents Matter in Creating Self-Control in their Children? A Genetically Informed Test of Gottfredson and Hirschi's Theory of Low Self-Control." <u>Criminology</u> 43:1169-1202.
Week 4	2/3 (M)	Social learning theory, social bonding, and control theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Chs. 5-6) • Lilly et al. (Chs. 5-6) • Haynie, Dana L., and D. Wayne Osgood. 2005. "Reconsidering Peers and Delinquency: How Do Peers Matter?" <u>Social Forces</u> 84:1109-1130.
Week 5	2/10 (M)	Labeling theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Ch. 7) • Lilly et al. (Ch. 7) • Bernburg, Jon Gunnar, and Marvin D. Krohn. 2003. "Labeling, Life Chances, and Adult Crime: The Direct and Indirect Effects of Official Intervention in Adolescence on Crime in Early Adulthood." <u>Criminology</u> 41:1287-1318. <p>PAPER OUTLINES AND PRESENTATION DUE IN CLASS</p>
Week 6	2/17 (M)	Social disorganization, strain, and anomie theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Chs. 8-9) • Lilly et al. (Chs. 3-4) • Sampson, Robert J., Jeffrey D. Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley. 2002. "Assessing 'Neighborhood Effects': Social Processes and New Directions in Research." <u>Annual Review of Sociology</u> 28:443-478.
Week 7	2/24 (M)	Conflict, Marxist, critical, and feminist theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Chs. 10-13) • Lilly et al. (Chs. 8-11)
Week 8	3/2 (M)	Developmental theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Ch. 14) • Lilly et al. (Ch. 16)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampson, Robert J., and John H. Laub. 2016. "Turning Points and the Future of Life-Course Criminology: Reflections on the 1986 Criminal Careers Report." <u>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</u> 53:321-335. • Uggen, Christopher. 2000. "Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism." <u>American Sociological Review</u> 65:529-546.
Week 9	3/9 (M)	<p>Theoretical integration; theory and policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akers and Sellers (Ch. 15) • Bernard, Thomas J., and Jeffrey B. Snipes. 1996. "Theoretical Integration in Criminology." <u>Crime and Justice</u> 20:301-348. • Gottfredson, Michael R., and Travis Hirschi. 2016. "The Criminal Career Perspective as an Explanation of Crime and a Guide to Crime Control Policy: The View from General Theories of Crime." <u>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</u> 53:406-419. • Barlow and Decker (Chs. 1-8) <p>PAPER DUE</p>
<i>Spring Break (March 16-20) = No Class this Week</i>		
Week 10	3/23 (M)	<p>Types of crime causation and units of analysis; theory and policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lieberman (1985) (Chs. 4-5) • Barlow and Decker (Chs. 9-14)
Week 11	3/30 (M)	<p>Criteria for evaluating theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gibbs, Jack P. 1997. "Seven Dimensions of the Predictive Power of Sociological Theories." <u>National Journal of Sociology</u> 11:1-28.
Week 12	4/6 (M)	<p>Theory and policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mears, Daniel P., and Mark C. Stafford. 2002. "Central Analytical Issues in the Generation of Cumulative Sociological Knowledge." <u>Sociological Focus</u> 35:5-24. • Miller, Walter B. 1973. "Ideology and Criminal Justice Policy: Some Current Issues." <u>Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology</u> 64:141-162.
Week 13	4/13 (M)	<p>Theorizing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corbin, Juliet, and Anselm Strauss. 1990. "Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria." <u>Qualitative Sociology</u> 13:3-21. • Watts, Duncan J. 2014. "Common Sense and Sociological Explanations." <u>American Journal of Sociology</u> 120:313-351. • Turco, Catherine, and Ezra Zuckerman. 2017. "Verstehen Sociology: Comment on Watts." <u>American Journal of Sociology</u> 122:1272-1791. • Watts, Duncan J. 2017. "Response to Turco and Zuckerman's 'Verstehen for Sociology.'" <u>American Journal of Sociology</u>

		122:1292-1299.
Week 14	4/20 (M)	Concluding Comments EXAM DISTRIBUTED
Week 15	4/27 (M)	EXAM DUE BY 5:00 PM EST.

PAPER GRADING RUBRIC

	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Improvement Needed (C)	Poor to Failing (D-F)	Points (100)
Argument	Essay contains a clear argument.	Argument is not clearly conveyed.	Argument is difficult to discern.	No argument presented.	15
Evidence	Provides compelling and accurate evidence, including theory and research, with no gaps in reasoning, that convinces reader to accept argument.	Provides necessary evidence, with few gaps in reasoning, to convince reader of most aspects of main argument.	Not enough evidence is provided to support argument, or evidence is incomplete, incorrect, or oversimplified.	No evidence is provided, or there are numerous factual mistakes, omissions or oversimplifications.	20
Counter-argument	Counter-evidence and alternative interpretations of theory, research, and logic are discussed and evaluated.	Counter-evidence and alternative interpretations acknowledged but not systematically or carefully discussed.	Counter-evidence or alternative interpretations acknowledged but discussed only partially.	Limited to no acknowledgement of counter-evidence or alternative interpretations is provided.	15
Organization and presentation	Clear introduction, including roadmap for paper. Effective use of headings and sub-headings, as well as tables or figures, to convey argument and main points. Topic clearly conveyed to class.	Introduction conveys argument and structure, but not clearly. Headings and sub-headings present but do not clearly convey argument and main points. Topic moderately well-conveyed to class.	Introduction does not clearly convey argument or roadmap. Headings and sub-headings missing or do not logically convey argument and main points. Topic not clearly conveyed to class.	Paper has no clear introduction and/or is poorly organized, with few or no headings or devices to convey argument and main points. Topic not presented to class.	20
Sources	Evidence is used from a wide range of sources, including scholarly books and journal articles. All evidence is properly cited and referenced.	Evidence is used from many sources, but few scholarly sources or too much reliance on a limited few sources. Some incomplete citations or references.	Uses only a few scholarly sources. Some pieces are unreferenced or inaccurately referenced. Incomplete citations and references.	Minimal to no use of scholarly sources. Citations and references missing or incomplete.	10
Writing, clarity, and style	All sentences are grammatically correct and clearly written. Clear transitions. Key terms defined. No writing errors. Objective (scientific) presentation of information.	All but a few sentences are grammatically correct and clearly written. Good transitions. Most key terms defined. A handful of writing errors. Largely objective tone.	Many sentences are grammatically incorrect or unclearly written. Weak transitions. Key terms left undefined. Tone is not objective in many places.	Grammatical errors permeate paper. Key terms unmentioned or undefined. Tone is not objective (scientific).	20

EXAM GRADING RUBRIC

Each objective below is worth a maximum of 20 percent of the exam grade (per question)	20 points =	10 points =	0 points =
1. Effectively addresses all parts of question(s).	Excellent job of directly answering all parts of question logically, completely, and in detail.	Addresses only some parts of the question, the logic is incomplete, and/or provides insufficient detail.	Does not address the question being posed.
2. Cites all relevant assigned readings.	All assigned readings are included in posting. Any additional material is directly relevant to the question.	Some relevant assigned readings are cited, but others are missing. Extraneous information included.	No assigned readings are cited.
3. Discusses all relevant cited and assigned readings.	All cited materials are discussed and coherently integrated into the answer. Logical and clear and complete, using theory, research, and other evidence to support answer.	Some of the cited materials are discussed, but other relevant readings not discussed. Unclear logic and incomplete explanation of argument and supporting theory, research, or other evidence.	None of the cited materials are discussed.
4. Writing is clear, concise, and professional in nature; no grammatical errors.	Clearly expressed ideas. No grammatical errors or other writing problems.	Difficult-to-follow post; disorganized; some grammatical errors and writing problems.	Major grammatical errors; incomplete sentences; difficult to understand.
5. Organization.	Exam is well-organized, using clear headings, sub-headings, and transitions. Answers flow in a linear manner that addresses the question directly.	Exam is choppy and lacks coherent organization. Limited or no headings or sub-headings or clear transitions. Question not directly answered.	Exam is difficult to follow; ideas are not well linked together. No headings, sub-heading, or transitions. Question not answered or not directly answered.
Total possible points	100 points		