Course Description

Life-course criminologists study the onset, maintenance, and cessation of criminal and deviant behavior in the context of people’s lives—their school, work, and family transitions, their broader social contexts, and their biology and general aging processes. Since its importation into the field about 30 years ago, “life course” has become one of the dominant conceptual frameworks in criminology. We life-course criminologists have our own division within the American Society of Criminology, and that division has its own journal. Our own College of Criminology and Criminal Justice faculty members regularly publish within the subarea of life-course criminology. The subarea is growing in Europe, too.

This course is an in-depth survey of foundational issues in life-course criminology. In completing the course, you will:

- Evaluate the major theoretical perspectives in the area
- Synthesize the conclusions of foundational readings in the area
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing life-course data sources
- Develop a thesis on a topic relevant to life-course criminology

If you are interested in the paths people take and the choices they make; if you believe that life is messy, and that events in one life domain can have spillover effects into other domains; and if you are interested in why people change, and why they stay the same; then you will find much of interest in this course!

Required Book


All other readings are available electronically through the library or are linked in the course calendar. Please complete the readings before class.
Course Requirements

Paper (50%). The main course requirement is a 15-20 (double-spaced) page research paper due on the day of the last class meeting. This paper should have a clear hypothesis or research question, should draw on peer-reviewed theoretical and empirical works, and should include a proposed data source and measures that could be used to address the hypothesis or question. If you have taken graduate-level methods and statistics courses, you can also include a proposed design and analytical strategy. High-scoring papers will be well-reasoned and well-argued, will demonstrate knowledge of the topic, and will “read” like the background and methods sections of published articles. This assignment will also be discussed in class.

Topic statement (5%). Prior to the week 5 class meeting, you will submit a paragraph describing your planned research paper topic. I encourage you to read ahead in the assigned reading list if you think that one of the later themes might be of interest to you. Four to six sentences on the unanswered question that you want to write about, and a sentence on a data source that might be a good match to that question, will suffice.

Presentation (15%). In one of the last five weeks of class, you will give a 10-15 minute in-class presentation on your research paper. Your slides will be due before the week 11 class meeting. Treat this like an ASC presentation in that you want to demonstrate your knowledge of and thoughtfulness about your chosen topic, but you can remain open to feedback on your approach. High-scoring presentations will be professional quality and empirically based and will focus squarely on your paper’s hypothesis or question.

Cohort profile discussion leader (15%). In small groups, you will read an extra reading during one designated week (see the course calendar) and educate the class about that reading. The extra readings all concern datasets that are well-suited to answering questions in life-course criminology. Describe the data source to the class, tell us what is it and is not useful for, and encourage the class to come up with empirical uses for it. You do not need to prepare slides or handouts unless they would be helpful to you.

Participation (15%). You can earn these points by attending all class meetings, saying things that show you did the readings, asking thoughtful questions, raising new points, and otherwise being a productive group member. Note that simply attending won’t be enough to earn full credit here; speak up!

Grading scale (percentages and final letter grades)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87-89%</td>
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<td>84-86%</td>
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<td>70-73%</td>
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<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 60%</td>
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Course Policies

Missing and late work. With one exception (see below), missing or late work will receive 0s unless you are unable to complete or submit the item due to an excused absence (per the University attendance policy below). When you email me about your excused absence, please include any documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note, a jury duty summons).

The University attendance policy is as follows: 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.

Here is the exception: You are allowed ONE undocumented absence in this course. This amounts to a free extension on any one assignment. To use your free extension, contact me. The due date for that assignment will be extended by one week. Exceptions include group assignments and assignments due during the last week of classes. If you have an emergency and must request an extension on those, please contact me immediately.

Technology. If you experience internet or Canvas problems while you are submitting something, please email me immediately and attach your 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/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy)

Academic Success. Your academic success is a top priority for Florida State University. University resources to help you succeed include tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. The following information is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Department of Student Support and Transitions to learn more.

Americans with Disabilities Act. Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet integral requirements of the course.
To receive academic accommodations, a student:
(1) must register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS);
(2) must provide a letter from OAS to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and,
(3) should communicate with the instructor, as needed, to discuss recommended accommodations. A request for a meeting may be initiated by the student or the instructor. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services 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 Office of Accessibility Services
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
oas@fsu.edu
https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas

Confidential Campus Resources. Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

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<tr>
<th>Victim Advocate Program</th>
<th>University Counseling Center</th>
<th>University Health Services Health and Wellness Center</th>
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<tr>
<td>University Center A</td>
<td>Askew Student Life Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rm. 4100</td>
<td>2nd floor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(850) 644-7161</td>
<td>942 Learning Way</td>
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<td>Available 24/7/365</td>
<td>(850) 644-8255</td>
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<td>Office Hours: M-F 8-5</td>
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<td><a href="https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap">https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap</a></td>
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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

January 12

Week 1: The life-course perspective


January 19

Week 2: The age-crime curve


Hirschi, T., & Gottfredson, M. (1985). All wise after the fact learning theory, again: Reply to Baldwin. *American Journal of Sociology, 90*(6), 1330-1333. (Can also see Baldwin’s 1985 reply to H&G’s original statement)


January 26

Week 3: Criminal careers


February 2

**Week 4: Childhood**


Read if this is your week to present a cohort profile: Sampson, R. J., Kirk, D. S., & Bucci, R. (2022). Cohort Profile: Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods and Its Additions (PHDCN+). *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology, 1*-17.

February 9

**Week 5: Adolescence**


February 16  
**Week 6: Adulthood**


Read if this is your week to present a cohort profile: Welsh, B. C., Zane, S. N., Yohros, A., & Paterson, H. (2022). Cohort Profile: the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study (CSYS). *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*.

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February 23  
**Week 7: Desistance**


Read if this is your week to present a cohort profile: McCuish, E., Lussier, P., & Corrado, R. (2022). Cohort Profile: The Incarcerated Serious and Violent Young Offender Study. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology, 8*(2), 315-335.

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March 2  
**Week 8: Local life circumstances and role transitions**

Choose three (those with comps in your future might want to include the first two among their three):


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March 9

**Week 9: Collateral consequences**


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March 23

**Week 10: Age-graded social control**

*Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life*, chapters 1 and 6-10
March 30

**Week 11: AGSC, updated**


April 6

**Week 12: Human agency and identity**


April 13

**Week 13: Linked lives**


April 20

**Week 14: Future directions for life-course criminology**


April 27

**Week 15: Other applications of life-course criminology**
