SOCI 388 Crime

Winter 2018

Monday and Wednesday: 2:35-3:55pm Rutherford Physics Building 112

Instructor: Dr. Jan Doering Email: jan.doering@mcgill.ca Office hours: Friday, 3:00-4:30pm, Leacock Building, room 826 Please sign up online: <u>https://calendly.com/jandoering</u>

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Course Description

Our society is obsessed with crime, as any visit to a bookstore or an evening spent watching television easily confirms. Conversely, the study of crime is one of the most vibrant areas of social science. In this course, we will survey some major aspects of criminology, including causal explanations of crime, crime over the life course, societal contexts of crime and criminalization, as well as policing, punishment, and the politics of crime. We will place particular emphasis on crime as a social phenomenon.

Learning Goals

After completing this course, you should:

- understand major theories that explain crime and delinquency.
- know key trends in crime rates.
- be able to apply criminological theories to interpret empirical cases.
- be able to critically analyze the political implications of various approaches to crime and criminal behaviour.

Readings

I expect you to read all of the assigned material. Please note that reading the assigned textbook will not suffice. Other required readings will be made available through *MyCourses*. In some cases, the syllabus highlights passages that you should focus on. Occasionally, we may work with the readings in class. In these cases, I will ask you to bring the course material to class.

Required (available at the McGill bookstore): Schmalleger, Frank and Rebecca Volk. 2018. *Canadian Criminology Today: Theories and Applications*. Sixth edition. Toronto, ON: Pearson. <u>NOTE</u>: Prior editions of the textbook are similar, with the obvious exception of reported crime rates. An older version may suffice for your studies, but I cannot guarantee this. The safest thing is to purchase the most recent edition. Copies of the fourth edition are on reserve at the library.

Assignments and Grading

Your grade will be based on a midterm exam, a final exam, a final quiz, four in-class exercises, and a peer evaluation.

A) Midterm exam: 35%

The midterm exam will consist of a list of course concepts that you will be asked to explain in a few sentences. It will be held in class on <u>Monday</u>, February 12 (week 6). Make-up exams will be available only to students who can present proof a medical emergency.

B) Final exam: 40%

The final exam will consist of a list of course concepts and one or more short essay questions. It may include any material covered in class up to that point. The exam will be held in class on <u>Wednesday, March 28 (week 11)</u>. Make-up exams will be available only to students who can present proof a medical emergency.

C) Final quiz: 10%

A quiz will be held during the final course session on <u>Monday</u>, <u>April 16 (week 14)</u>. It will test only the material covered after the final exam.

D) In-class exercises: 10%

Over the semester, we will do several group-based, in-class exercises. The exercises will usually require you to apply course concepts to an empirical prompt, such as a set of newspaper articles. By the end of the class session, your group will submit one written report via MyCourses. These reports will be graded simply on a pass/fail basis with the option of extra credit for exceptionally good reports. Late submissions will not be accepted. This means that you will have to collaborate effectively with your group members and use your time efficiently. <u>Assignments to groups will be strictly random—no reassignments will be made under any circumstances.</u>

E) Peer evaluation: 5%

To encourage everyone's participation during the group exercises, you will be given the opportunity to evaluate your group members' contribution. Each student's peer evaluation grade will be computed as the average of the grades that group members assign to that student. Do not complain to me about your peer evaluation grade—I will not alter it. It is up to you to take a productive role within your group that ensures a good peer evaluation. Note: If you do not submit peer evaluation grades for one or more of your fellow group members by the deadline, you will receive a zero for your own peer evaluation grade, independent of the grade your group members may have assigned to you.

Policies

- <u>Inclusive learning environment</u>: As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the <u>Office for Students with Disabilities</u>, 514-398-6009. If you want to write your midterm and/or final exams at the OSD, you have to contact OSD several weeks in advance of the exam so the necessary arrangements can be made.
- <u>Academic integrity:</u> McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). If you are caught engaging in fraudulent activity, you may fail the assignment in question or the entire course, and I may report you to the Dean of Students.
- <u>Language</u>: In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.
- <u>Attendance:</u> I do not take attendance. It is up to you to decide whether you want to come to class or not. However, please note that exams and exercises will test not only whether you have done the readings, but will also include material covered only in course lectures and in-course exercises. Neither the teaching assistant nor me will make this material available to you through alternative channels. If you attend class, please ensure that you arrive in time and that you do not have to leave early in order to avoid disrupting class. Furthermore, note that your group members may base their peer evaluation in part on whether you were present during group exercises.
- <u>Make-up policy:</u> Exams will take place in class on the following days: February 12 (midterm), March 28 (final), April 16 (post-final quiz). <u>If you have a conflicting commitment</u> on either of these days (Model UN, athletics tournament, etc.), <u>do not take this course because no make-up exam will be offered to you. An exception can be made only in case of a medical emergency</u> that clearly prevents you from taking the exam. You must provide me with <u>evidence</u> in the form of a valid doctor's note issued on the day of the exam. I reserve the right to reject your request for a make-up exam if I am unconvinced that you had to miss the exam. Make-up exams will usually take the form of an oral exam.
- <u>Extra credit policy</u>: Aside from extra credit for exceptionally good group reports, I never give extra credit as a matter of principle.
- <u>Regrading policy:</u> You have the right to request that your exam be regraded. However, in order to request this, you must submit a written notice that explains and justifies your <u>grievance in detail</u>. A printed copy of this notice must be submitted within a week of the date that we first returned the exams or papers. Please note that I will regrade your entire exam or paper, not just specific passages that you may have flagged. Regrading may improve or lower your grade.
- <u>Course communication:</u> You have to regularly check your email and read course-related email communication. Before emailing me or the teaching assistant, please consult the

syllabus for relevant information. If the answer to your question is in the syllabus, we reserve the right to ignore your email.

Schedule

Week 1. Jan. 8 and 10. Introduction.

- Textbook chapter 1 ("What is Criminology").
- Erikson, Kai T. 1966. *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance*. Chapter 1 ("On the Sociology of Deviance"). New York: Wiley.

Week 2. Jan. 15 and 17. The emergence of criminology: the classical school and positivism.

- Textbook chapter 5 ("Classical and Neoclassical Thought").
- Foucault, Michel. 1995. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Chapter 1 ("The body of the condemned"), pp. 3-16.
- Feeney, Floyd. 1986. "Robbers as Decision-Makers." Pp. 53-71 in Cornish, Derek and Ronald Clarke (eds.), *The Reasoning Criminal. Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending*. New York: Springer.
- Textbook chapter 6 ("Biological Roots of Criminal Behaviour"). Only pp.139-148 are required. Read the rest of the chapter if you like.
- Gould, Stephen Jay. 1993. *The Mismeasure of Man.* New York, NY: Norton. Chapter 4 ("Measuring Bodies: Two Case Studies on the Apishness of Undesirables"). Read pp.122-145. You can skim the rest.

Week 3: Jan. 22 and 24. The explanation of crime (1): learning and control theory. Wednesday session: in-class exercise.

- Textbook chapter 9 ("The Meaning of Crime: Social Process Perspective").
- Akers, Ronald L. and Christine S. Sellers. 2009. *Criminological theories: introduction, evaluation, and application*. Chapter 5 ("Social Learning Theory"), pp.85-122. New York: Oxford University Press. Read pp.85-96. You can skim the rest.
- Hirschi, Travis. 1969. Causes of Delinquency. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Week 4: Jan. 29 and 31. The explanation of crime (2): anomie, strain, and routine activity theory. Wednesday session: in-class exercise.

- Textbook chapter 8 ("The Meaning of Crime: Social Structure Perspective").
- Agnew, Robert. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." *Criminology* 30(1):47–88. Read 47-61. You can skim the rest.
- Cohen, Lawrence E. and Marcus Felson. 1979. "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach." *American Sociological Review* 44(4):588–608.

Week 5: Feb. 5 and 7. Crime over the life-course. Wednesday session: review for midterm exam.

- Chambliss, William J. 1973. "The Saints and the Roughnecks." *Society* 11(1):24–31.
- Katz, Jack. 1988. *Seductions of Crime*. Chapter 2 ("Sneaky Thrills"), pp. 52-79. New York: Basic Books.
- Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 6 ("Why Some Offenders Stop"), pp.114-149.

Week 6: Feb. 12 and 14. Crime, inequality, and power (1) Monday session: midterm exam.

- Textbook chapter 10 ("The Meaning of Crime: Social Conflict Perspective").
- Sutherland, Edwin. 1940. "White-Collar Criminality." *American Sociological Review* 5 (1):1-12.

Week 7: Feb. 19 and 21. Crime, inequality, and power (2)

- Anderson, Elijah. 1990. *Code of the Street*. Chapter 2 ("Campaigning for Respect"), pp. 66-106. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Hagan, John, John Simpson, and A. R. Gillis. 1987. "Class in the Household: A Power-Control Theory of Gender and Delinquency." *American Journal of Sociology* 92(4):788–816.
- Ferrell, Jeff. 1995. "Urban Graffiti: Crime, Control, and Resistance." *Youth & Society* 27(1):73–92.
- Rusche, Georg. 2014. "Labor Market and Penal Sanction: Thoughts on the Sociology of Criminal Justice." *Social Justice* 40:252–64.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2002. "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration." *New Left Review* (13):41–60.

Week 8: Feb 26 and 28. Patterns and perceptions of crime. Wednesday session: in-class exercise.

- Textbook chapter 2 ("Crime Statistics").
- Textbook chapter 3 ("Patterns of Crime").
- Ouimet, Marc. 1999. "Crime in Canada and in the United States: A Comparative Analysis." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 36(3):389–408.
- Warr, Mark. 2000. "Fear of Crime in the United States: Avenues for Research and Policy." Pp. 451–89 in *Criminal Justice 2000: Measurement and Analysis of Crime and Justice*, vol. 4, edited by D. Duffee. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

March 5-11: No classes (study break).

Week 9: March 12 and 14. Policing and the police.

- Kelling, George and James Q. Wilson. 1982. "Broken windows. The police and neighborhood safety." *The Atlantic*, March edition. (http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/)
- Moskos, Peter. 2009. *Cop in the Hood: My Year Policing Baltimore's Eastern District.* Chapter 5 ("911 Is a Joke"), pp. 89-110. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wortley, Scot and Akwasi Owusu-Bempah. 2011. "The Usual Suspects: Police Stop and Search Practices in Canada." *Policing and Society* 21(4):395–407.
- Selection of newspaper articles.

Week 10: March 19 and 21. Gangs and their environments Wednesday session: review for final exam

- Venkatesh, Sudhir. 2008. *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets*. Chapter 4 ("Gang Leader for a Day"), pp.113-143. New York: Penguin.
- Comack, Elizabeth, Lawrence Deane, Jim Silver, and Larry Morrissette. 2013. "Indians Wear Red": Colonialism, Resistance, and Aboriginal Street Gangs. Halifax, NS: Fernwood. Chapter 3 ("The Trouble with Normal").

Week 11: March 26 and 28. Drugs Wednesday session: final exam.

- Becker, Howard S. 1963. *Outsiders. Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. Chapter 8 ("Moral Entrepreneurs"), pp.147-163.
- Owen, Frank. 2007. *No Speed Limit. The Highs and Lows of Meth.* Chapter 4 ("A wonder drug is born), pp.79-106. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Bourgeois, Philippe and Jeffrey Schonberg. 2009. *Righteous Dopefiend*. Chapter 8 ("Everyday Addicts"), pp.241-270. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Week 12: April 4 only. Politics and policy No class on April 2 (Easter Monday).

- Textbook chapter 11 ("Criminology and Social Policy")
- Western, Bruce. 2006. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. Chapter 3 ("The Politics and Economics of Punitive Criminal Justice"), pp. 52-81. New York, NY: Russell Sage.

Week 13: April 9 and 11. Prosecution and punishment Monday session: in-class exercise.

- Lemert, Edwin M. 1972. *Human Deviance, Social Problems, and Social Control.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Chapter selection TDB.
- Braithwaite, John and Stephen Mugford. 1994. "Conditions of Successful Reintegration Ceremonies: Dealing with Juvenile Offenders." *British Journal of Criminology* 34(2):139-171.

• Frohmann, Lisa. 1991. "Discrediting Victims' Allegations of Sexual Assault: Prosecutorial Accounts of Case Rejections." *Social Problems* 38(2):213–26.

Week 14: April 16 only. Post-final quiz.