

Criminology Syllabus (V1.1)

Welcome to criminology! In this class, we will explore a variety of criminological theories and how to apply them. We will ultimately find ways to answer the question, “Why do people do crime?”

Each class will have a couple of practice questions to help with learning how to apply criminological theories and will end with an optional cumulative problem set to be emailed to students. Solutions for the problem set will be released the following week (with the exception of the last week in which the solutions will be released with the problem set). There will also be “**required**” readings (which are provided, and I plan to have these readings be very short). Topics labeled as **Extra** are for greater insight or for covering theories that we may not necessarily cover in class (these are optional). **Extra** readings are optional.

To summarize, while all “homework” is optional, I plan to have these assignments be short and geared toward helping you become a better critical reader and criminologist.

Since this is a psychology (and ultimately a social sciences course), the primary goal of this class is to help expand your critical thinking skills in the world of crime.

Warning: Some criminal behavior may be disturbing and strong language may be used. If such behavior or language make you uncomfortable, this class may not be right for you.

July 11

- Introduction to the class and overview of syllabus
- What is criminology?
- Micro-Level Individual Theories
 - Rational Choice Theory
 - Routine Activities Theory
 - Psychological Theories
 - **Extra:** Biological Theory

July 18

- (catch-up on any material not covered on the first day)
- Micro-Level Theories (cont.)
 - Social Learning Theory (Social)
 - Differential Association Theory
 - Labeling Theory
 - **Extra:** Self-control Theory

July 25

- Macro-Level Theories
 - Strain Theory
 - Feminist Criminology

- **Extra:** Peacemaking Criminology and Restorative Justice
- **“Required” Reading:** *Seductions of Crime* excerpt by Jack Katz

August 1

- (this is where the fun stuff starts to happen)
- Overview of *Seductions of Crime*
 - Concept of “Righteous Slaughter”
 - Summary of “Sneaky Thrills” from *Seductions of Crime*
 - **Extra:** Cultural Criminology
- **“Required” Reading:** *To Catch a Predator* Wikipedia page (will be useful for the next class) and Crimesploitation (link below)
 - <https://oxfordre.com/criminology/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264079-e-34>

August 8

- Crimesploitation and catch-up
- What does “View Discretion is Advised” actually mean?
- **Extra:** Technique Critique from Wired (forensic science)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHTz66Jq0Dg>

August 15 (subject to change)

- Catch-up on any material
- Zodiac killer case (?)
- **Extra:** BuzzFeed Unsolved, Zodiac Killer
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzlxYdWVbm0>

Emails:

For safety reasons, all email correspondence will be recorded and cc'd to the organizers of HSSP. As such, please do not send any inappropriate emails between classmates, instructors, or anyone associated with HSSP.

While you are allowed to send me emails with questions (and I encourage you to do so), please follow the guidelines outlined in your Student Agreement. Since there are 200 of you and because I want to answer as many of your questions as possible, what I will be doing is compiling all of your questions into a single email that will be sent out to the entire class. This is to have all the information in one place. All questions will be anonymous.

If you do not want your question to be shared with other students, please write in your email, “I do not wish to share this question with other students.” I will email you a response and CC the admins of HSSP so that they have a record of the conversation. Please try to use this option only when necessary as there are a lot of students and some other students may benefit from your question.

Absences:

Unfortunately, classes will not be recorded. However, I will send slides the day after both as a Powerpoint and as a pdf. If you have any questions on what you have missed, please refer to the email section above.