

## **Criminology and Sociology**

### **Criminology Modules at Level One 2017-18**

#### **Introduction to Criminological Theory**

Credits = 30

The main purpose of *Introduction to Criminological Theory* is to introduce students to the key theoretical approaches within criminology.

The module kicks off by exploring the socio-historical roots of criminology, which actually are to be found in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The main criminological theories of crime are then investigated, and that is the main part of the course. Our main purpose is to explain crime as resulting not from bad individuals, or from psychologically abnormal individuals, but from certain social environments or institutions characteristic of the modern world (for example, the city slum, or a consumer culture that places too much stress on materialism and money-success as markers of status).

However, we don't simply look at the ideas of famous criminologists about crime. Rather, we also look at how these ideas have influenced or shaped government policies to deal with crime or delinquency. We ask the question: how have the ideas been applied in policy, and how successfully?

The module concludes by investigating the socio-cultural origins and development of the key institutions of law-enforcement and punishment – the modern police and the prison. Here we introduce certain sociological debates around ***policing and prisons***. For example, we examine the social and human costs of large-scale imprisonment, and ask whether this is a rational anti-crime policy. For example, we ask whether or not increases in police powers and resources since World War 2 are moving us in the direction of an *over*-policed society in the UK.

#### Recommended books (any one of the following three)

- Downes, D., Rock, P. and McLaughlin, E. (2016), *Understanding Deviance: A Guide to the Sociology of Crime and Rule-Breaking*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, S. (2013), *Criminology*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Newburn, T. (2013), *Criminology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Dr. Sean Creaven (Module Leader)

#### **Introduction to Criminal Justice**

Credits = 30

Welcome to Introduction to Criminal Justice. This module introduces you to the operation of criminal justice in England and Wales, exploring the relevant institutions (Police, Courts, Prisons and more) and the ways in which they contribute to a broader system of criminal justice. We take a look at some of the values underpinning our criminal justice system and

ask some challenging questions about its priorities. For instance, should the system be focused on reshaping offenders' lives, making them into more 'responsible members of society', or should the job of the CJS be simply to punish people for the wrongs that they have committed? Is it possible to achieve both of these objectives in tandem? In addressing these key debates we look at some of the challenges across the system such as the impact of austerity on the police service (i.e. cuts) and the detrimental effects of overcrowding in our prison system. Crucially, we move towards an evaluation of our CJS in assessing the fairness of its operation across the board, particularly in light of the evidence that suggests unequal treatment on the grounds of race, gender and social class. I look forward to meeting you all in September when we can begin to look at some of these critical issues. If you want to get started with some background reading, the open access journal *Criminal Justice Matters*, publishes short consumable pieces on a variety of issues of importance to Criminal Justice such as this one written by Paddy Hillyard:

<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/cjm/article/criminal-obsessions-crime-isnt-only-harm>

Key text/recommended book:

Hucklesby, A & Wahidin, A (eds) (2013), *Criminal Justice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dr. Georgie Benford & Dr. Duncan McPhee (Module Leaders)

## **Sociology Modules at Level One 2017-18**

### **Foundations in Social Theory (30 credits)**

Welcome to the module Foundations in Social Theory. This module will be taught by staff from the Sociology and Criminology subject group at UWE. Please note that the module is compulsory for those of you studying sociology, criminology and the combined award in sociology and psychology. The module is compulsory for students of criminology as well as sociology students because criminology and sociology share the same theoretical frameworks and intellectual origins. Additionally, an understanding of social theory continues to be foundational knowledge for contemporary practitioners of both disciplines.

The module team aim to provide a stimulating and well-organised learning experience and hope you will enjoy studying sociology at UWE. We are aware some of you will be new to the discipline and might be anxious about the prospect of studying sociology. Please try not to be anxious about this: we have a very experienced and helpful module team to support your learning. The module has been constructed to be accessible to students who are completely new to the discipline as well as challenging those students who have already studied Sociology at A-level.

The aim of the module is to help you to develop sociological knowledge and understanding that can be applied to the analysis of real world social institutions and processes. This module also provides an opportunity to investigate the theories that sociologists have developed to support their systematic and rigorous analysis of social life. Sociologists develop theories to about social life from the findings of their investigations and observations e.g. theories about crime and criminality, policing and punishment, social divisions and inequalities and

technological change and globalization. As members of social groups and communities, everyone develops theories to help them to make sense of everyday life, but often without awareness they are actually 'theorising'. Sociologists, on the other hand, develop and deploy theories quite deliberately, in systematic and rigorous ways, in order to understand and explain how social life 'works'.

The content of the module engages directly with the work of key figures and major schools of thought that have contributed to the development of the discipline. Together, we will reflect on the works of the 'Founding Fathers' of Sociology such as Marx, Weber and Durkheim, as well as covering more recent theoretical perspectives such as feminism, symbolic interactionism, and structural functionalism. We understand that theorising social life can be intellectually challenging, so we have adopted the innovative teaching approach known as 'enquiry based learning' to help you to develop your 'sociological imagination'. This approach to learning will provide you with opportunities to work collaboratively as well as individually, to investigate the relevance of social theory to the understanding of social life.

You might be interested in viewing this brief introduction to Sociology:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5pp\\_fZDU8I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5pp_fZDU8I)

An interesting and informative blog is available at:

<http://sociologicalimagination.org>

Recommended books:

ONE of the following three books

- Allan, K (2013) *Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: seeing the social world (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Dillon, M (2014) *Introduction to Sociological Theory (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell
- Fulcher, J and Scott, J (2011) *Sociology (4<sup>th</sup> edition)* Oxford: Oxford University Press

William Hill  
Module Leader

### **Sociological Practice (15 credits)**

Welcome to the module *Sociological Practice - Becoming a Social Scientist*, which is scheduled for term 2. The module and its syllabus aim at helping you develop and use your 'sociological imagination' and research skills to examine contemporary issues and problems, particularly how best to frame and design possible research projects. This is one of the ways the term practice can be understood: it is about linking theory and research to lived experience and contemporary issues. Sometimes that means looking closely at what is taken-for-granted and rendering it strange and extraordinary, the better to understand *why* things are the way they are. Good powers of observation, interest in the world and the commitment to challenge one's assumptions are fundamental. Knowing how to design a piece of research that might help to shed light into contemporary issues is a fundamental skill not only for any social scientist, but an invaluable skill for future employment. Being able to write and

present one's work to others is also something that will be practiced over this one semester course. A focus on practice fits in really well with the 'real world' applied approach to the discipline that is characteristic of Sociology at UWE. In advance of the module, you may wish to browse this internet site on 'Applied Sociology':

<http://sociologyatwork.org/about/what-is-applied-sociology/>

you could also watch this to get a sense of what is meant by the sociological imagination:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBt95kwNV04>

then you could try to think of how something in your own experience might be thought about in that way: for example how many of your friends come from a traditional nuclear family of mum, dad and two children? Maybe most of them do, if so how does that compare with current statistics? Would you know how to find out about that?

#### Recommended books:

- Gilbert N. and Stoneman P. (2016) *Researching Social Life* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) London: Sage

Alongside the above, these books will be useful (and recommended also for Foundations in Social Theory module, hence no extra cost)

- Dillon, M (2014) *Introduction to Sociological Theory* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell
- Fulcher, J and Scott, J (2011) *Sociology* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press

I am looking forward to the start of the module and to working with you.

Dr. Lita Crociani-Windland

Module Leader

### **Critical Thinking (15 credits)**

Welcome to this module designed to help hone your critical thinking capacity as a crucial aspect of learning at this level of study, whether you are studying Sociology or Criminology. To do well at this level of study it is going to be essential for you to be able to be a good observer, a good thinker and someone who does not take things at face value, as well as understand how these capacities underlie your success in analysing complex social issues. This is what critical thinking is about. While the term and its practice has a long philosophical tradition, the main topics we will focus on will include introducing you to social issues such as inequalities and diversity (class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability), which are going to be key aspects to sociological and criminological study. Such issues and an understanding of how they influence how we live our lives, both in terms of how we might be subject to discrimination or advantage and how that might colour our views, are going to be crucial to future work practice as well as academic success. For example a sociologist who wishes to enter a career focused on alleviating social suffering, will need to understand how it comes about, a criminologist will need to understand how

inequalities may relate to crime and how crime itself is a socially constructed concept. Generally the better able we are to develop and use our critical and reflective skills the better we will be at analysing and understanding the complexities of social systems and structures. The assessment is designed to cater to both Sociology and Criminology students' interests, offering choice as to topics to be explored. This module will also bring you together with students studying other social science disciplines such as Criminology, Politics and Philosophy who also need these critical thinking skills to address important issues facing the world today.

In preparation for this module you might want to get a taste for the subject by looking at the short film at the bottom of this internet page.

<http://philosophy.hku.hk/think/critical/ct.php>

#### Recommended book

- McMillan K. and Weyers J. (2013) *How to Improve your Critical Thinking and Reflective Skills* Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited (this is available in the UWE library as an e-book and so buying your own copy is optional)

I am looking forward to the start of the module and to working (and debating) with you.

Dr. Lita Crociani-Windland (Module Leader)