



Special Topics in Sociology – Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Professor: Dr. Deric Shannon

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Office hours: M/W/F 10:45am-12:30pm, 2:00pm-3:30pm; or by appointment

Course Overview:

This course examines various areas of norm violations and rule-breaking behaviors. It focuses heavily on the social construction of deviance and the ways that those constructions vary throughout different cultures and subcultures. Further, it examines moral panics and what sociologists call “positive deviance”—or the use of rule-breaking behaviors to bring about positive changes in society and its institutions.

Books:

Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. *Constructions of Deviance: Social Power, Context, and Interaction*, 7th edition.

Guidelines:

1. We will be discussing sensitive topics this semester and critiquing institutions and ways of life that all of us are very familiar with and some of us have a vested interest in. Please be sensitive to differences of opinion.
2. Along with number 1, remember that you can have any opinion you want on these subjects and should never hesitate to express it. This is regardless of what you think my own positions are and those of your classmates. Open dialogue is an important feature of any democracy, and we will have open dialogue in my classroom.
3. That said, there is no reason to state things in an offensive way. Be respectful.

4. Our class schedule is **SUBJECT TO CONSTANT CHANGE**. It is of the utmost importance that you come to class. If you often skip classes, this one is not for you. (Note also the attendance policy).

5. We may watch films in this class with disturbing content and images. Feel free to leave anytime if you must.

6. Try to have a good time and think critically.

Honor Code:

All aspects of the course are governed by the Oxford College Honor Code as is articulated on the relevant pages of the Oxford College Catalog.

Attendance Policy:

Everyone can miss class two times throughout the semester. Students will be penalized by 2 percentage points toward their grade for every missed class after that.

Students with Disabilities:

Accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. Students who need documentation or other disability-related services are advised to visit the Student Health/Counseling Center: <http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/catalog/educational-resources/disability-services/>.

Grades:

Grades for this course will be based on participation, five reflection papers, a short midterm paper, a midterm test, and a final paper as outlined below:

Participation: 25%

Five reflection papers: 25%

Small paper: 12.5%

Midterm exam: 12.5%

Final paper: 25%

Participation:

Students will be graded on participation based on attendance and meaningful contributions to class discussions.

Reflection Papers:

Students are required to hand in a two-page reflection paper five times throughout the course. These papers can be in any format and cover any topic, provided they are related to the course. Prompts will be given to provide guidance for at least two of the papers. No, you may not email them to me.

Small Paper:

Students will be given optional questions in class to take home and write a 3-4 page paper answering. This small paper will demonstrate students' familiarity with material discussed in class and in the readings. No, you may not email it to me.

Midterm Exam:

We will complete an in-class mid-term exam to test students on basic concepts and analytic skills in the sociology of deviant behavior. This exam will range from multiple choice questions to short answers.

Final Paper:

Final papers will be 8-10 pages long. They should demonstrate critical thought about what the student has learned in class. They can take any format the student likes and suggested topics will be handed out in class the week before the due date. No, you may not email them to me.

Schedule:

Week 1 – Aug 29: Introductions and course construction

Week 2 – Sept 3/5: Pp. 1-40 Foundational theories and concepts

Week 3 – Sept. 10/12: Pp. 41-56 Relativism, Moralism, and Social Power

Week 4 – Sept. 17/19: Pp. 159-170, Pp. 181-188 Moral Entrepreneurs and Social Panic

Week 5 – Sept. 24/26: Pp. 189-222 The Power of Labels

Week 6 – Oct.1/3: Pp. 223-246 Resisting Labeling, **Small Paper Questions Handed Out**

Week 7 – Oct. 8/10: MOVIE, WEED, **Small Papers Due**

Week 8 – Oct. 17: Pp. 257-278 Identity Development, **Midterm Exams**

Week 9 – Oct. 22/24: Pp. 331-360 Stigma Management

Week 10 – Oct. 29/31: Pp. 409-432 Subcultures and Gangs

Week 11 – Nov. 5/7: MOVIE, MADE IN AMERICA

Week 12 – Nov. 12/14: Pp. 446-458 State-Corporate Crime

Week 13 – Nov. 19/21: Pp. 475-484 Cooperation, Gender, and Power

Week 14 – Nov. 26: Pp. 526-535 Entering Deviance

Week 15 – Dec. 3/5: Pp. 536-549 Managing Deviance

Week 16 – Dec. 10: Everything due!