

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
SOCIOLOGY 227 (001): CRIMINOLOGY
FALL 2012

Instructor: Prof. A. Nelson

Class Time/Place: Wednesdays 7:00-9:50 RCH 103

Office: PAS 2028

Phone: 519-885-1211 X35190

Office Hours: By appointment (to arrange an appointment, just email, phone or contact me in class)

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Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the theoretical study of crime and delinquency. It seeks to introduce the student to core theories, research methods and questions that have dominated the discipline and, in so doing, to prepare the student for upper level course work. We examine the ways in which theoretical paradigms influence and direct responses to criminal, deviant and/or delinquent behaviour. Students are encouraged to think broadly and critically about the nature of "crime" and "criminals" and to recognize the simplicity and inadequacy of common stereotypes of both.

Required Text:

1. Rick Linden (ed.). 2012. *Criminology: A Canadian Perspective* (7th edition). Toronto: Nelson Thomson Learning

*Please ensure that you buy the **seventh** edition of this text; you will be greatly disadvantaged if you purchase the 6th or earlier editions.

**Two copies of the text are available on a 3-hour loan at the Dana Porter library (at the reserve desk on the main floor).

Course Readings:

The appropriate readings for each lecture are indicated in the outline. Please ensure that you read the assigned chapters carefully and prepared detailed notes on what you have read. It is my experience that no matter how carefully and conscientiously students read assigned material during the course of the term, inevitably information is lost by the time of a midterm or final examination if detailed notes are not used to summarize key concepts and findings.

At first, you may find yourself somewhat confused as theories and theorists are trotted out in seemingly inexhaustible numbers. Just as you find yourself understanding/agreeing with one theory, its limitations are highlighted and another - and another - theorist and theory appears. Do not be discouraged. All theories are valuable - even if only to alert us to what assumptions and ideas have been raised, tested and confirmed/challenged.

CLASS FORMAT

The course is organized in a lecture format; however, students are **most welcome at any time during class** to request clarification, express opinions, disagree with the viewpoints raised (so long as comments are delivered in civil tones) and illustrate concepts with their own observations. Questions may be raised **at any time** during the lecture and it is expected that, as a courtesy to your peers, all students will keep the noise level down to a minimum while questions are asked and/or answered. Any material provided during the course of answering questions will be considered testable material for the purpose of the examinations.

A WORD OF CAUTION: It is inevitable that certain topics or examples may upset or offend some persons. Each student will undoubtedly find topics and theories that are appealing and appalling to them; however, given the subject matter, this is unavoidable. I hope that some of the topics will be of especial interest to you. For those topics which cause you personal discomfort due to past experiences, my apologies in advance. Please do feel free to contact me without hesitation or embarrassment if you anticipate problems or experience difficulties with the subject matter; I will try my best to assist you.

NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline

if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals,
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (University): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

TESTING FORMAT:

There are three, equally-weighted, multiple-choice examinations in this course: 2 midterms and a final. The final examination is **NOT** cumulative (however, see "Missed Exams" below).

Two of the three exams will be given during the term; the third examination will be given during the registrar-scheduled final examination period. Each of the three exams are equal in value; each is worth precisely one-third of your final course grade.

All of the three examinations are identical in format. **Each will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions, 25 of the questions on each exam will be drawn from the assigned readings and 25 from lecture material and/or films presented in class.** The examinations will require each student to select the *best answer* from four possible answers

Please note that: (1) there are no supplemental exams or term paper options available; (2) marks will **not** be placed on a bell-curve distribution; (3) there are no predetermined percentages of students who will necessarily receive grades in the "A-range" "B-range" and so on.

Missed Examinations

*Students who miss a **midterm exam** due to illness **that is corroborated by a physician's completion of UW "Verification of Illness" form** will be required to write a modified final exam that consists of both the materials covered on the midterm that they missed as well as the material that will be addressed in the last third of the course. **For those students only**, the final examination will:

- (1) consist of 100 multiple choice questions (versus 50 questions);
- (2) cover the assigned lecture materials/assigned readings for the final third of the course **AND** the lecture materials/assigned readings for the midterm that the student missed (versus only cover lecture material/assigned readings for the final third of the course);
- (3) account for 66.6% of the final grade (versus 33.3%).
- (4) be two hours in length (versus one hour). However, the date/place/start time of the final exam will be the same as for all of the students in this course.

*Students who miss the **final exam** due to illness that is corroborated with a physician's

completion of a UW "Verification of Illness" form will be assigned a grade of "Inc" and required to write a makeup exam when this course is next taught (i.e., in the spring 2013 term). **Exceptions will only be made for students who have filed an "Intent to Graduate Form" and are due to graduate at the end of the Winter 2013 term.**

Accommodation for Students With Disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic programs to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

OUTLINE OF LECTURES

Please note: Lectures are designed to supplement the readings in your text rather than to reiterate what is already contained therein. Accordingly, students are strongly encouraged to attend class regularly and to take notes on materials discussed in class.

September 12, 2012

Topic: Crime, Justice and the Media

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapters #1 ("Introduction") and #4 ("Counting Crime")

September 19, 2012:

Topic: The Elements of Criminal Behaviour

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapter #3 ("Criminal Law")

September 26, 2012:

Topic: The Elements of Criminal Behaviour (cont'd)

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapter #17 ("White-Collar and Corporate Crime")

October 3, 2012:

Topic: Demonic Perspective on Crime/Assessing "Dangerousness"

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapter #2 ("The Origins and Role of Law in Society")

October 10, 2012:

7:00-8:00: **FIRST EXAM:** Bring a pencil, eraser and your WATCARD.

8:15-9:50: Film: From the Mouths of Children

October 17, 2012:

Topic: Classical and Contemporary Choice Theories

Assigned Readings: Linden, Chapters #8 ("Early Theories of Criminology") and #5 ("Correlates of Criminal Behaviour")

October 24, 2012:

Topic: Classical and Contemporary Choice Theories

Assigned Readings: Linden, #15 ("Deterrence, Routine Activity, and Rational Choice Theories") and #16 ("Organized Crime")

October 31, 2012:

Topic: Classical and Contemporary Trait Theories

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapters #9 ("Psychological Perspectives on Criminality")

November 7, 2012:

7:00-8:00: **SECOND EXAM:** Bring a pencil, eraser and your WATCARD

8:15: 9:50: Film: Mind of a Murderer

November 14, 2012:

Topic: Social Structure Theories

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapters #10 ("Strain Theories") and #14 ("Social Control Theories")

November 21, 2012:

Topic: Social Process/Reaction Theories

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapters #13 ("Interactionist Theories")

November 28, 2012:

Topic: Social Conflict Theories

Assigned Reading: Linden, Chapters #11 ("Conflict Theories"), #12 ("Contemporary Critical Criminology") and #6 ("Feminism and Criminology")

Hints for Tired Students Dreading Multiple-Choice Exams

It has been my experience that most students become somewhat anxious wondering what will and will not be on the examinations. For those of you who are, this section is intended to help you focus your energies most efficiently and effectively in preparing for the examinations. I realize that there is a great deal of reading; I also realize that most of you are combining this course with (1) other on-campus courses; (2) distance education courses; (3) paid employment; (4) parenthood or all of the above and more. What follows is a guide to eliminating/reducing some anxiety. Hopefully, some of your questions will be answered herein. If not, please feel to contact me at any time during the course.

I. What's The Format of the Examination?

Each exam consists of 50 multiple choice questions. Each question has four possible answers. You are required to select the **BEST** answer for each question.

Hints:

1. Half of the 50 questions are taken from the assigned readings and the other half come from the lectures; don't focus your attention on simply one of these two sources of information. If you miss a class, I'd strongly encourage you to borrow notes from a classmate. Do NOT rely on what's available to you on-line; the materials that are available on-line are NOT exhaustive.

2. When studying for multiple-choice questions, focus in on **concepts, major theories and key findings**.

(1) If a theory/theorist is given substantial attention in the text/lectures, this theory/theorist will probably feature on the exam as well.

(2) Use the "key terms" at the end of each chapter to help you identify important concepts from the text; supplement these key terms with any other concepts that are set apart in quotation marks or in italics or which appear in the context of a typology within each of the assigned text chapters.

(3) Build a glossary of these terms for yourself using the definitions as they appear in the text. The reason? The exam will likely use the verbatim definition; as such, using these terms in your glossary will (hopefully) provide you a memory-jogging prompt when you see these terms on the exam. A second reason for using the verbatim definition: it eliminates the possibility that errors will be introduced by your paraphrasing of what appears in the text.

(4) Don't forget to read the boxed inserts.

(5) Make sure that you are able to summarize key findings of the graphs/tables.

(5) Employ the above principles when studying from your class notes.

II. Do We Have To Memorize Statistics?

The short answer is - no.

The longer answer is: You will never find questions that, for example, ask, "How many young offenders received a closed custody sentence in Kipling, Saskatchewan in 2011?" or "What was the incarceration rate in Russia in 2010?" I will take it as given that, should the need for such rarefied data ever present itself to you in the future, the opportunity will also exist for you to access the Stats Canada website. In consequence, I very much doubt that anything valuable would be accomplished by my asking you to memorize vast amounts of numbers. What you **SHOULD** know is what, in a general way, the statistics tell us. That is, what do the graphs/tables presented on the overheads/text tell us about major trends in crime? Is violent crime increasing, decreasing or staying at a constant rate? Do women account for a greater proportion of convicted adult/young offenders than they did in the past? What types of offences are most commonly committed by adults (females? males?) /young offenders (females? males?)? In what areas of the country are Aboriginal peoples most clearly over-represented within inmate populations? What is the most common reason why people do not report criminal victimization?

III. Do We Have To Memorize The Names Of All The Theorists/Researchers That Are Mentioned In The Text And On The Overheads?

You will never be asked to name who conducted what study or who coined what term. It will, however, be helpful to you if you can link the names of major theorists with the theories they are associated with (e.g., Beccaria with Classical Theory, Merton with Strain Theory, Hirschi with Social Control theory, etc.). Nevertheless, you will find that the exam questions are designed to provide you with certain memory-jogging prompts. For example, a question may read: "According to Sutherland's research on white-collar criminals (discussed in your text), which of the following is correct?" In such cases, the correct answer will often be taken, word for word, from the text. This should, hopefully, provide a second memory-jogging prompt.

IV. I've Never Written A Multiple-Choice Exam Before And Think I'll Panic!

Please don't. Multiple-choice examinations can be somewhat intimidating; however, they can be made less so if you observe the following suggestions:

- (1) Read the exam question carefully. For example, does the question ask you to identify "which of the following is correct?" or "which of the following is NOT correct?"
- (2) Go through the entire exam and circle the answers to the questions you readily recognize as correct on the test booklet. If you cannot answer a question, it may be helpful to simply flag or asterisk it as a reminder to yourself to return to it later - and move on to the next question.
- (3) Social psychologists have repeatedly demonstrated that your **FIRST ANSWER** on a multiple choice test tends to be accurate. If an answer strikes you right away as correct, **DON'T CHANGE IT**. When you change answers on a multiple choice exam you are statistically far more likely to go from a correct to an incorrect answer than the other way round. If you feel intuitively that an answer is correct, don't conclude "nah, it couldn't possibly be that easy" and then, spend the next ten minutes trying to convince yourself that, well, maybe, possibly, perhaps, that another answer is kinda, sorta, the correct answer instead.
- (4) After you have answered all of the questions, if there are still a few that you have absolutely no clue about, you might as well guess at them. Like buying a lottery ticket, it's worth a shot and you might hit it lucky. At worst, you won't get a point for the question; if you leave it blank, you're no further ahead. Another reason for choosing something rather than nothing: when transferring your answers onto the optical scan sheet, blank spaces can confuse you. That is, by omitting to select an answer for question 14 out, you may inadvertently mark the answer for question 15 in the space designated for question 14. Minimize the potential for confusion and answer all of the questions even if it means guessing at some.
- (5) **CAREFULLY** transfer your answer from the test booklet onto the optical scan sheet. You must do this in pencil; pen will not show up on the optical scan sheet. Circle the answer in fully. If

you decide to discard my earlier advice and change an answer after you have selected it, be careful to completely erase your previous answer. DON'T make a slash through it, write me notes saying "THIS ONE" with arrows pointing north and south, and so on. The optical scan marks any double answers as wrong answers.

(6) You are responsible for ensuring that you transfer your answers correctly onto the optical scan sheet. **ONLY THE OPTICAL SCAN CARD IS MARKED.** To be fair to all of my students, I cannot award you a mark for a correct answer that you have circled in your examination booklet if you have marked an incorrect answer on your optical score card. Accordingly, it is your responsibility to ensure that the answer you select as correct is clearly indicated on the optical score card.

V. Can I Bring Any Additional Material Into the Exam Room With Me?

When writing your exam, your desk must be clear of all material other than the exam booklet, the optical scan card, a pencil(s), an eraser and your WATCARD. No supplemental materials (e.g., notes, summaries, laptops, dictionaries, etc.) may be used in the completion of any of the three examinations. You will also be required to turn off and unplug yourself from your cellphones, Blackberries, iPods, MP3 players, etc. before the beginning of the exam. These devices **MUST** be placed off of the desk and out of eyesight for the entirety of the exam.

VI. I Was Sick On The Day of the Midterm - What Do I Do Now?

In cases of medical illness, you must (1) download a "verification of illness" form from the UW website; (2) have your physician complete it, clearly specifying your dates and degree of incapacitation; and (3) provide me with this documentation. Further information is provided on p. 3 of this outline under "Missed Exams."

VII. Where Are The Exam Results Posted?

Midterm results will be posted on the course website as soon as they become available. However, due to university regulations, the results of the final exam cannot be posted until after the university-wide final examination period (December 6 – December 20) has ended. Please note: to ensure confidentiality, I cannot release your exam results over the phone/email nor tell you how your friend performed on the exam.

VIII. I Just Saw My Grade And Can't Understand How I Could Have Done So Poorly; Can I Look Over My Exam?

Absolutely! Just contact me to set up a mutually convenient day/time.

IX. Can I Write My Final Exam Earlier/Later Than Its Scheduled Date?

In a memo dated July 27, 2009, the Associate Dean of Arts, Professor B. Chesney, reminded all Faculty of Arts instructors that “Accommodations for deferred final exams are made only under specific conditions and time restrictions. **Requests for accommodation based on religious holidays must be submitted to the Associate Dean** as soon as the conflict becomes apparent; in any case, no later than one week following the publication of the final exam schedule. It is the student’s responsibility to make him/herself available for the entire examination period, and **travel plans are not a sufficient reason to have a final exam deferred**” (emphasis in original).

X. You Didn't Answer the Question That I Wanted Answered

Please feel free to contact me with your questions at any time during the course of this term. If your question/problem is urgent, you may also wish to leave a message for me with the department of sociology's undergraduate secretary, Mrs. McGinley, at 519-885-1211 ext. 32421. When leaving voicemail messages on my voicemail (at 519-888-4567, ext. 35190), please ensure that you leave a phone number where you can be reached and specify the best time for me to contact you. If leaving an email address, please speak s-l-o-w-l-y and to spell out your email address. When sending emails, please specify “Soc. 227” in the subject line.