



AJ 1 - Criminology

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course offers a comprehensive exploration of criminological theories and their application within diverse societal contexts, examining the interaction between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Through a critical lens, students will explore the philosophy of law, the organizational structures of law enforcement at various governmental levels, and the dynamic interrelationships between these entities. Special emphasis is placed on the theoretical underpinnings of criminology, including biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives on crime and criminal behavior. The course critically addresses the influence of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and culture on crime and criminal justice responses. Through an analysis of contemporary issues, historical developments, and comparative criminology, students are encouraged to apply theoretical concepts to understand the complexities of crime in a global context, fostering a deep appreciation for the contributions and perspectives of diverse groups. Graded only.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Critically evaluate the function, process, and impact of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies within the framework of ethical standards, moral responsibilities, and community relationships.
2. Analyze the core theories of criminology and apply these theories to understand criminal behavior in various social constructs and societies.
3. Explore the historical evolution of criminology and its relevance to contemporary issues, emphasizing the interplay between crime, society, and justice across different cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic contexts.
4. Assess the role of diversity in shaping the perspectives and practices within the field of criminology, including considerations of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and culture.
5. Apply interdisciplinary research methods to analyze problems and issues in criminology, demonstrating an ability to synthesize theoretical knowledge with empirical findings.
6. Engage in critical discussions on the challenges and opportunities within the criminal justice system, emphasizing the importance of ethical decision-making, professional responsibility, and societal impact.
7. Extrapolate the learnings from criminological theories and research to broader societal issues, fostering a holistic understanding of the role of criminal justice in addressing and mitigating crime.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
<u>Lecture</u>	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Understanding Criminology	3.00
• Analyze and apply criminology theories to different social constructs • Explore the historical evolution of criminology	
The Changing Boundaries of Criminology	3.00
• Assess the role of diversity in shaping perspectives within criminology • Explore how criminological theories adapt over time and across cultures	
Counting Crime and Measuring Criminal Behavior	3.00
• Apply interdisciplinary research methods to analyze crime measurement data • Critically evaluate the impact of law enforcement on crime statistics	
Schools of Thought Throughout History	3.00
• Explore the historical evolution of criminology • Engage in critical discussions on how historical contexts shape theories	
Explanations of Crime and Criminal Behavior	3.00
• Analyze core theories and apply these to understand criminal behavior complexities • Extrapolate criminological theories to broader societal issues	

Topics	Lec Hrs
Biological and Psychological Perspectives	3.00
- Assess how diverse biological and psychological factors influence criminal behavior - Engage critically with the implications of these theories for justice and ethics	
Strain and Cultural Deviance Theories	3.00
- Apply theories to analyze the relationship between societal structures and criminal behavior - Discuss the societal impact of policies aimed at addressing strain and deviance	
The Formation of Subcultures	3.00
- Analyze how subcultures form and contribute to criminal behavior - Explore the impact of cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic contexts on crime	
Social Control Theory	3.00
- Apply knowledge of social control theory to understand crime prevention and control strategies - Engage in discussions on the ethical implications of social control measures	
Labeling, Conflict and Radical Theories	3.00
- Discuss the effects of societal labels and power structures on criminal definitions and responses - Critically evaluate the justice system through the lens of conflict and radical theories	
Environmental Theory	3.00
- Apply environmental theories to understand the context of crimes and prevention strategies - Explore the interplay between environment, society, and criminal behavior	
Types of Crime	3.00
- Discuss different types of crimes, using interdisciplinary methods to understand each type - Critically evaluate how law enforcement approaches vary across crime types	
Violent Crimes	3.00
- Apply criminological theories to understand and analyze violent criminal behavior - Evaluate the societal and ethical dimensions of responses to violent crimes	
Crimes Against Property	3.00
- Explore theories explaining property crimes in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts - Apply interdisciplinary research methods to analyze property crime trends	
White-Collar and Corporate Crimes	3.00
- Critically discuss the impact of white-collar crimes on society and the justice system - Evaluate ethical standards and moral responsibilities in preventing corporate crimes	
Public Order Crimes	3.00
- Discuss the societal and ethical implications of policing and prosecuting public order crimes - Apply knowledge of social control and labeling theories to public order offenses	
International and Comparative Criminology	3.00
- Engage with comparative studies to understand global criminal justice systems and their impact - Analyze international criminology theories and apply them to different societal contexts	
Total Hours: 51.00	

Methods of Instruction

- Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- Lecture
- Multimedia Presentations
- Reading Assignments

Methods of Evaluation

- Class participation
- Written Assignments
- Written or Oral Examinations
- Research of Current Issues/Prepare Arguments

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Locate and prepare a short summary of a current newspaper article on current events relating to law enforcement. Be prepared to present your summary to the class.
2. Read the article on domestic violence homicide assigned by the instructor and be prepared to discuss the article in class.

Writing Assignments

1. Law Enforcement Agency Project: Starting with an introduction to the chosen agency, analyze its functions, career paths, and the ethical standards expected in a minimum 3-page paper.
2. Theoretical Application Paper: Choose a criminological theory discussed in class and apply it to a current criminal justice issue in a minimum 3-page paper.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Research the State of California written codes regarding justifiable homicide and submit a 1-2 page summary of these codes.
2. Ethical Dilemmas Discussion Forums: Engage in online discussion forums (minimum three posts) where participants debate ethical dilemmas faced by criminal justice professionals. These discussions should integrate criminological theories and consider the impacts of decisions on diverse populations.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Adler, F., Laufer, W., & Mueller, G. (2022). *Criminology*. McGraw-Hill, 10th. 9781264169603.

Other Learning Materials

Handouts, audio visual materials, current newspapers

Minimum Qualifications

Administration of Justice

Law (Masters Required)

Created/Revised by: Flesher, Devin

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