CRIJ/SOCI 4335.001 Criminology

Course Description:
Criminology is designed to offer undergraduate students an introductory understanding of the various biological, psychological, and sociological theories of crime through readings, class lectures, group discussions, and videos. The course will begin with a focus on definitions of crime and law, measuring crime, crime trends, and an overview of criminological theory. This course will then trace the historical development of criminological theory and includes critical discussions of the biological, psychological, and sociological explanations underlying criminal behavior. Readings and class lectures will introduce, describe, and critique the different theories as well as explore empirical examinations and policy implications of these theories. Throughout the course, there will be an emphasis on developing critical thinking skills when evaluating criminological theory, research, and policy.

Learning Objectives:

1. To provide a framework for the study of crime, criminal behavior, and criminal justice with a broad overview of each of the major criminological perspectives of the 18th through the 21st centuries including classical, biological, psychological, and sociological theories of crime and criminality.

2. To introduce students to research, theory, and policies in criminology and sociology that are relevant to the problems of a demanding criminal justice environment and discuss how criminological theory applies to the American Criminal Justice System (policing, courts, and corrections) as well as the administration of justice in the United States.

3. To discuss the nature and extent of crime, known crime correlates, and various factors leading to criminal behavior and develop the knowledge and skills to analyze, critique, and construct criminological theory.

4. To critically analyze and evaluate various criminological theories with an emphasis on understanding the role of social, political, historical, cultural, and economic factors as well as the practical and policy implications of criminological theory.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify and describe the major paradigms from which theories of crime and criminality have emerged;
2. Summarize and critique each major criminological theory;
3. Compare and contrast the relative validity of each theory;
4. Assess the theoretical explanations of crime in relation to the forms of criminality.
Major Course Requirements:

**Exams (250 points)**
Three exams will be administered in this course. Exams will include multiple choice, true/false, and a short essay portion. Exams will cover the assigned readings, class discussions, and videos. Exams **will not** be cumulative. Permission to take an all essay make-up exam must be obtained at least one week prior to the date of the exam and will only be granted under extreme circumstances. Naturally, I am the sole judge of “extreme circumstances” and I’ve heard (and used) every excuse in the book.

**Paper (100 points)**
The paper topic will be assigned in class at the end of October. Papers must be no less than SIX pages, typed and double-spaced (one-inch margins, 12-point font). Plagiarism WILL NOT be tolerated. Late papers will be accepted but you will lose points (five points for each day the paper is late).

**Assignments (100 points)**
Assignment guidelines are discussed in detail below. Assignments must be typed and turned in to the Blackboard dropbox as an attachment on the due date by 2pm. Document sources used in APA (citations and references) for assignments that require outside sources. Late assignments will be accepted but you will lose points (two points for each day the assignment is late).

**Assignment #1: Crime in Corpus Christi: 10 points due on Monday, 9/3**
Search for the most recent statistics pertaining to crime in Corpus Christi. Report the crime statistics and source. Do you think that the crime rate in Corpus Christi is higher or lower than the average crime rate in Texas and the United States? Discuss why you think that the crime rate in CC is higher or lower than the rest of Texas and the United States.

**Assignment #2: Bio/Psych Theories: 10 points due on Monday, 9/15**
Find a current event that relates to biological and/or psychological theories of crime. Describe how the crime(s) and the offender(s) relate to biological and/or psychological theories of crime. Document sources used.

**Assignment #3: Strain Theory: 10 points due on Monday, 9/29**
What is the American Dream? What is YOUR American Dream? What obstacles/barriers must you overcome in order to achieve your American Dream? Can everyone achieve the American Dream? Why or why not?

**Assignment #4: Labeling Theory: 10 points due on Monday, 10/13**
We will be discussing the affect of labels this week. What was your “label” in high school? How did you feel about this label? Do you think that labels affect our perceptions of people? Do you think that labels affect people’s behavior?

**Assignment #5: Social Control Theory: 10 points due on Monday, 10/20**
We will be discussing social and self-control this week. Have you ever felt or acted “out of control”? If so, what factors played a role in your loss of control? Why do you obey laws? Do you think that some laws should be changed or rescinded? If so, which laws would you change and why?
Assignment #6: Social Learning Theory: 10 points due on Monday, 10/27
Describe the first time you tried smoking or drinking alcohol. How old were you? Why did you decide to try smoking or drinking on this occasion? Do you remember how you felt about this decision? Did you enjoy the experience? Why or why not?

Assignment #7: Gladwell Questions (Chapters 1-5): 20 points due on 11/17
Questions will be distributed in class.

Assignment #8: Gladwell Questions (Chapters 6-end): 20 points due on 11/24
Questions will be distributed in class.

Attendance (50 points)
Criminology is a challenging course, which necessitates regular attendance each class period. Attendance will be taken randomly throughout the semester and comprise 10% of your final grade. In-class group activities will count toward your attendance grade.

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A  90-100%       450-500 points
B  80-89%       400-449 points
C  70-79%       350-399 points
D  60-69%       300-349 points
F  59% and below 299 and below

Required Readings:

Website:
Your class will be using the Blackboard platform in order to review PP slides and submit assignments. To access Blackboard and get around in the course beginning August 27, follow the steps below:

Follow the link to TAMUCC Island Online:
https://iol.tamucc.edu/

On the lower right hand side of the screen you will see a log-in for Blackboard. Click on
Blackboard and then enter your log-in information. Your log-in is your Banner ID (A number) and PIN. If you have trouble with your log-in, please contact Island Online Support;

- By Phone:
  - 361-825-2825 (Local)
  - 1-866-353-2491 (Long Distance)
- By E-mail:
  - islandonline@tamucc.edu
- Hours of Operation:
  - 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. Everyday (U.S. Central)

Once in Blackboard, all of the classes you are currently taking will be listed in the middle of the screen.

Course Policies:

Late work and Make-up Exams
Late exams, papers, and discussions will result in an automatic 5-point reduction per day.

Extra Credit
No extra credit will be given. No exceptions!!!

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for that assignment or test.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other
things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Syllabus**

**Course Outline**

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to give me a call/send me an e-mail. I am available to assist you with information pertaining to this course and to the criminal justice system in general.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus throughout the semester. Students will be given advanced notice of any syllabus modifications.

**Note:** Assigned Readings should be completed prior to the date listed on the syllabus.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Course Overview</td>
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<td>9/3</td>
<td>Defining and Measuring Crime</td>
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<td>9/8 &amp; 9/10</td>
<td>Introduction to Criminological Theory</td>
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<td>Social Control/Social Bonding</td>
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<td>Differential Association/Social Learning</td>
<td>W &amp; M: Chapters 5 &amp; 11</td>
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<td>W &amp; M: Chapter 12</td>
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<td>11/24 &amp; 11/26</td>
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