

Fall, 2006 CJ U120 Dr. Jennifer B. Robinson

Northeastern University

College of Criminal Justice

Introduction to Criminology (honors section)

Class Schedule: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 10:30 – 11:35 am

Class Room: 200 CH

Professor's Information: Dr. Jennifer B. Robinson

Office Hours: Monday 1:30 – 3:00

Thursday 1:30 – 3:00

Office: 413 CH

Office Telephone: 617.373.7066

Email: j.robinson@neu.edu

Teaching Assistant: Camie Morris

Office Hours: Monday 11:40 – 1:30; Wednesday 9:15 – 10:25

Office: TBD

Office Telephone: TBD

Email: morris.c@neu.edu

Course Description - See Course Calendar

Goals and Purpose of the Course

This course introduces students to the field of criminology – the scientific study of crime. By now in their undergraduate careers at NEU, criminal justice students are familiar with the workings of the criminal justice system and are acquainted with the basic tenets of criminal law. By the end of this course, the students will be able to explain crime and criminal behavior from a number of theoretical perspectives. The student will be able to explain how crime data are gathered in the United States, and how these data are used to calculate "crime rates" and "statistics." The student will be familiar with the

major bodies of theory in criminology and how theory guides policy decisions.

Required Textbooks

1. Felson, Marcus. (2002). *Crime and Everyday Life*, 3rd Ed. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
2. Messner, Steven; Rosenfeld, Richard. (2001). *Crime and the American Dream*, 3rd Ed. Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.
3. Mosher, Clayton; Miethe, Terance; Phillips, Dretha. (2002). *The Mismeasure of Crime*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
4. Simons, Ronald; Simons, Leslie; Wallace, Lora. (2004). *Families, Delinquency, and Crime*. Roxbury Publishing Co.: Los Angeles, CA.
5. Winfree Jr., L.; Abadinsky, H. (2003). *Understanding Crime: Theory and Practice*, 2nd Ed. Thomson Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.

The books are available for purchase in the NEU bookstore. NOTE: When weekly readings are listed as "Required," this means that you are responsible for the material in the textbook included in that section. You are responsible for completing the readings BEFORE coming to Monday's class that week.

Evaluation

1. Participation – 20%
2. Integrating theory into policy Paper and Presentation – 30%
 - a. Paper component (20%): The integration papers are five to six pages in length, and allow you the opportunity to articulate the policy implications of what you have learned in the class. The first two pages should contain your summary of a single theory. The remaining pages should state how the theory makes sense in terms of preventing and controlling a type of crime or dealing with a particular type of offender. In other words, what is wrong or correct, in your opinion, with the policy implications of the theory? What modifications to the theory would you suggest to improve its ability to inform policy?
 - i. You must select a policy implication by the end of the third week of class. During the second week a list will be circulated for you to pick from and sign up for a policy implication. The list will specify the date for your presentation.
 - ii. The paper is due by the beginning of class on 12/4/06. Papers turned in late will receive a 5% deduction per day.
 - b. Presentation (10%): You will make a 10 minute presentation on the policy question you have chosen and your theoretical integration. You must explain the importance of the policy question and how the theory helps explain it. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY DURING STUDENT PRESENTATIONS. For every class you miss of student presentations you will lose 5% off your final grade.

3. Midterm Examination – 20%
4. Final Examination – 30%
- a. Final examination is cumulative.

Exams will be of mixed question format. They may contain multiple choice questions, short answer, and long answer (essay type) questions. Questions will be based on the required readings and all materials covered in class.

I reserve the right to modify the course requirements during the semester should the need arise.

Grading Scale

A 100%-93%

B+ 89%-87%

C+ 79%-77%

D+ 69%-67%

F 59%-0%

A- 92%-90%

B 86%-83%

C 76%-73%

D 66%-63%

B- 82%-80%

C- 72%-70%

D- 62%-60%

Blackboard – <http://blackboard.neu.edu/webapps/login>

You can find the syllabus for this course on Blackboard. I've also included a few useful WWW links pertaining to Criminology, Criminal Justice, and academic studies in general. From time to time I may post announcements pertaining to the class on the Blackboard site. Check this site regularly to make sure you do not miss anything.

Class Policies

.. If you miss an exam without consulting with me first, you will receive zero. Exams will be rescheduled for those who have a valid medical certificate or some other dire reason and who consult with me before the exam (telephone me at my office and leave a message if need be – or visit me in person). The rescheduled exam

will be different than the original exam.

.. The use of portable electronic devices is not permitted at any time during the class.

If you wish to tape record lectures, please let me know beforehand. Make sure to turn

off all cellular phones, beepers, etc. Five points will be deducted from your exam grade if your cellular phone rings during the examination period.

.. You must adhere to the Northeastern University policy on "Academic Honesty and Integrity." (see <http://www.osccr.neu.edu/policy.html>) Make sure you are familiar with the policy. If you are at all unsure about the requirements of the policy see me

or the TA.

.. Please bring to my attention (as early as possible) any special educational needs you

may have. You may wish to contact the Disability Resource Center that provides services to students needing special accommodations. (see <http://www.access-disability-deaf.neu.edu/>)

Tentative Course Schedule – Required Readings

Week Beginning

Topic

W&A

F

M&R

M, M&P

S, S&W

Week 1 09/05

What is Criminology?

Ch. 1

Ch. 1

Ch. 1

Week 2 09/11

Measuring Crime

Ch. 2-5

Week 3 09/18

Nature of Crime

Ch. 2, 4, 7

Ch. 2

Week 4 09/05

Deterrence and Opportunity Theories

Ch. 2

Ch. 3, 5

Week 5 10/02

Biological and Psychological Theories

Ch. 3, 4

Week 6 10/09*

Review and Midterm Exam

Week 7 10/16

Social Organization Theories

Ch. 6

Ch. 1, 4

Ch. 6

Week 8 10/23

Learning and Development Theories

Ch. 5

Ch. 3, 7, 8

Week 9 10/30

Social Process Theories

Ch. 7

Ch. 6

Ch. 2

Week 10 11/06

Marxist, Feminist, and Labeling Theories

Ch. 8, 9

Week 11 11/13

Preventing and Reducing Crime

Ch. 8, 9, 10

Ch. 5

Week 12 11/20**

Student Presentations

Week 13 11/21

Student Presentations

Week 14 12/04

The Future of Criminology

Ch. 10

Ch. 11

Ch. 6

Note: * class cancelled on 10/9 for Columbus Day; ** class cancelled on 11/22 and 11/23 for Thanksgiving. Depending upon the progress of the class and at my discretion, the schedule is subject to change.

"F" - Felson, Marcus. (2002). Crime and Everyday Life, 3rd Ed. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

"M&R" - Messner, Steven; Rosenfeld, Richard. (2001). Crime and the American Dream, 3rd Ed. Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.

"M, M&P" - Mosher, Clayton; Miethe, Terance; Phillips, Dretha. (2002). The Mismeasure of Crime. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

"S, S&W" - Simons, Ronald; Simons, Leslie; Wallace, Lora. (2004). Families, Delinquency, and Crime. Roxbury Publishing Co.: Los Angeles, CA.

"W&A" - Winfree Jr., L.; Abadinsky, H. (2003). Understanding Crime: Theory and Practice, 2nd Ed. Thomson Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.