

Sociology 372: Criminology Fall 2010

Class Information

Room: Parkinson 108
T, TH: 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM

Instructor Information

Nishanth Visagaratnam
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Office: FANR 3429

Office Hours:

Tues: 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
Thurs: 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
or by appointment only

The best way to contact the instructor is by e-mail: nvisagar@siu.edu.
Do not email the instructor using Blackboard.

Overview:

In this mixed format class involving lectures, videos, small group work, and discussions, students will be introduced to the major concepts and ideas that sociologists and criminologists use as they study crime and the social world. By the end of the term, the students should be able to:

- a) Demonstrate knowledge of basic sociological concepts about social processes (e.g., socialization, deviance, social control, and stratifications by class, gender, and race) and social institutions (e.g., the family, religion, and the state)
- b) Summarize theoretical and explanatory arguments in criminology
- c) Apply these arguments to contemporary events or personal experience
- d) Display knowledge of cultural, class, religious, and other differences within and between societies
- e) Develop an understanding of methods that criminologists and sociologists use to answer their research questions and how to conduct basic analyses of data
- f) Understand how sociologists and criminologists study crime
- g) Know definitions and types of crime
- h) Become familiar with theories that attempt to explain crime, particularly in the U.S.

Throughout this course, students will be asked to critically analyze historical, contemporary, biological, individual, and societal explanations of crime.

Students will gain their knowledge from lectures, student presentations, and through course readings, writing, group work, practical applications using real data, and critical discussions. Furthermore, students will develop key skills that they can apply and use outside of the class, become critical thinkers by learning to think outside the box, build skills to present topics in class, and become self-directed learners.

Required Course Materials:

Wright & McNeal. 2010. *Boundaries: Readings in Deviance, Crime, and Criminal Justice- An Introduction to Criminology*. Pearson Learning Solutions.

Blackboard: You may access Blackboard via SalukiNet or mycourses.siu.edu

Please check blackboard for grades, power points, class readings, exam study guides, and updates on the syllabus or anything pertaining to this class on a regular basis. If you do not find this class under Blackboard, please see the instructor.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation/Attendance=50 points
Research Paper =100 points
Exams(2)=200 points
Class presentation=120 points
Quizzes=140 points

Grading Scale:

90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
59% and below = F

Your class participation grade is composed of two main components: (1) class attendance = 25 pts; and (2) answering questions and participating in discussions and presentations = 25 pts. In this class, (especially during class discussions and activities) you are expected to show respect for your fellow students. Although you may not always agree on the issue, you must listen and respond to others with politeness and professionalism. Those who are unable to show respect for their fellow students and/or the Instructor WILL be asked to leave the class. Serious displays of disrespect to both students and the Instructor will be reported to the appropriate SIUC Administrators (e.g., Department Chair, SIUC University Police, SIUC Judicial Affairs, etc). In extreme cases of disrespect and potential harm to the students and/or the Instructor will result in telling the (disrespectful) student(s) to not return to class until the appropriate school officials have investigated the issue(s) and approved the (disrespectful) student(s)' return to class.

Class attendance

Class attendance is required! **More than two unexcused absences will result in 0 points for participation.** Excused absences require documentation of personal illness, school event, family emergency, or other unforeseen circumstance, and is left up to the discretion of the Instructor. If a student is absent due to school events (athletics, band, conference), it is the responsibility of the student to inform and provide proper documentation ahead of the event. If you have an excused absence on an exam day or a day when an assignment is given/due, contact the instructor for make-up assignment or exam. It is best to always let the instructor know ahead of time when you will be absent and provide documentation for an excused absence. Furthermore, it is the student's responsibility to sign in on the attendance sheet to acquire the attendance points. In cases where you "forgot" to sign in or you came in late and did not get a "chance" to sign in, you will NOT get the attendance points for that day. Students who have signed in on the attendance sheet, but leave early without the Instructor's consent will get an unexcused absence for that day.

In-class assignments/exercises/quizzes/discussions will be periodically given throughout the course. See course schedule for details. *I especially enjoy giving pop quizzes on days when attendance is low.*

Research Paper (100 pts):

Each student will be required to write an 10-15 page (APA or ASA format, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, size 10-12) research paper where at least one criminological theory is used as a framework to explain a phenomenon (crime). Although each student may choose his/her topic, it must focus on a particular crime or a social problem related to crime, and the Instructor must approve the topic. Students are advised to focus on what research has been conducted on the topic before (literature review), the findings, discussion, limitations (presented by contemporary studies 1990 to present), and present further research questions based on literature review. Students are required to attach a reference page that includes scholarly references, these sources should be properly cited within the body of the paper and in the bibliography using either APA 6th Edition format or ASA format (see me or the writing center for examples). *Wikipedia may NOT be used as a source.* Stay away from using an abundance of quotes in your paper, instead paraphrase and cite properly.

Plagiarism is not acceptable and students who plagiarize will receive 0 points for the assignment. Additionally, plagiarism may result in the student's failure of this course and possible referral to the (Student) Judicial Board or other appropriate administrative officials. Do not use anyone else's words or work without giving proper credit to that source! Topics must be turned into the Instructor for approval by **September 7, 2010**.

Examinations (200 pts):

Each examination will be worth 100 points toward your final grade. There is a midterm exam and a final exam. Each exam will be given during class time (final exam date and time will be announced at a later time) and may consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer, and/or essay questions. Material from your texts, in-class lectures, discussions, debates, media, and other assigned readings are fair game for the exams. The final exam will be comprehensive.

PLEASE BRING TO MY ATTENTION ANY DIFFICULTIES YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING TEST-TAKING OR WRITING ABILITY. IF YOU REQUIRE THE AID OF DSS FOR TEST TAKING, PROPER DOCUMENTATION MUST BE PROVIDED BY THE THIRD WEEK OF THE FALL SEMESTER (2010).

HELP IS AVAILABLE:

SIUC Writing center = Morris Library (453-6863)

Disability Support Services = Woody Hall B-150 (453-5738, 453-2293)

Personal/emotional counseling = Woody Hall A-302 (453-5371)

Class Presentation (120 pts):

Students will work in groups (assigned by the Instructor) to conduct class discussion over the assigned articles they must present for the week. The students are to write a one page summary (paraphrasing and properly citing using APA or ASA format, 10 – 12pt Times New Roman font) that states what the article was about, what method was used (if any), how the article is relevant to the topic for that week, present a 25-30 min presentation of the article(s) that includes the findings for the study, present discussion questions to the class that takes an additional 25-30 mins. Include a brief history about the authors of your article. The presenters are expected to ask the class questions and to academically and professionally interact with the class. The presentation is expected to last between 50 minutes – 60 mins, and the Instructor will mediate/intervene during the presentation as needed. The class presentation (worth 100 pts) CANNOT be made up under any circumstance! Students are expected to email a copy of the summary (1-2 pages) and the presentation to the Instructor by 1pm the day before the scheduled presentation (email: nvisagar@siu.edu). The summaries will be posted on Blackboard so that it will be available for all students to study for the midterm and the final. Focus on:

- 1) **Brief** overview/history of the authors: 10 pts
- 2) Summary of the articles (1-2 pages per article) (check grammar, punctuation, citation etc): 15 pts
- 3) Presentation of the articles (professionalism, organization, connection with the audience, ability of answer impromptu questions) (25-30 mins): 25 pts
- 4) Discussion of the articles (summary/ theory /methods /findings/ discussion /limitation /further research)(25 – 30 mins): 40 pts
- 5) Relevant questions asked by the presenters: 10 pts
- 6) Email **ALL** summaries and presentation to the Instructor **on time**(the day before the presentation by 1pm): 20 pts

Quizzes: 140 pts

Students are expected to have read the articles before coming to class. A short quiz (10 mins at the beginning of class) will be given once a week regarding the assigned articles and each quiz is worth 10 points. Students arriving late may not make up the quiz. The total points for the quiz may change at the

discretion of the Instructor. A total of 14 quizzes will be given where students are required to take 12 quizzes and the student may either miss two quizzes or take all 14 quizzes and count two quizzes as extra credit. When reading the articles, make sure you can answer the following questions:

- 1) Summarize what the article is about (abstracts and conclusions are great sources for a summary)
- 2) What is the purpose of the study? (can be found in the abstract/introduction/method)
- 3) What has been done by other authors on the topic examined? (introduction and literature review)
- 4) What are the main findings? (be able to summarize it in 1-2 paragraphs) (findings/results)
- 5) What do the researcher(s) say about their findings? (typically found in the discussion)
- 6) What are some future research questions and implications suggested by the author(s)? (if any are presented, you will find it in "further research," "discussion," "implications," or the "conclusion")
- 7) What are the limitation(s) of the study? ("limitations," "discussion," "further research," or "conclusion")

Course Schedule

(Scheduled readings should be completed prior to class)

August 24: Syllabus, introduction to criminology, presentation assignments

August 26: Criminology and the Sociological Perspectives; Classical School; Positivistic School; Chicago School

August 31: Presentation 1

Articles: Criminogenic Traits (p. 67)

The Born Criminal (p. 241)

QUIZ

September 2: Presentation 2

Articles: Genetic Influences in Criminal Convictions (p. 429)

Does the Body Tell? Biological Characteristics and Criminal Disposition (p. 591)

QUIZ

September 6: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY (no class)

September 7: Intersectionality and Delinquency.

Research topic due .

September 9: Presentation 3

Articles: Social Class, the State and Law (p. 343)

Race and Violent Crime in the Suburbs (p. 303)

Social Movements and the Racialization, Sexualization, and Gendering of Federal Hate

Crime Law in the U.S. 1985-1998 (p.201)

QUIZ

September 14: Presentation 4

Articles: Lower Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency (p. 485)

Who Joins Gangs and Why (p. 125)

QUIZ

September 16: Presentation 5

Articles: Urban Black Violence: The Effect of Male Joblessness and Family Disruption (p. 613)

Why Some Offenders Stop (p. 283)

QUIZ

September 21: Presentation 6

Article: Stages of Progression in Drug Involvement from Adolescence to Adulthood: Further Evidence for the Gateway Theory (p. 255)

Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality (p. 655)

QUIZ

September 23: Types of Crime; White Collar Crime; Violence against Women and Children; Political Crime

September 28: Types of Crime; White Collar Crime; Violence against Women and Children; Political Crime; Feminist Perspective & Criminology

September 30: Presentation 7

Article: Fraternities and Rape on Campus (p. 323)

Convicted Rapists' Vocabulary of Motive: Excuses and Justifications (p. 679)

QUIZ

October 5: Sociological Theories: Self Control

October 7: Presentation 8

Article: Low Self-Control (p. 1)

Toward an Interactional Theory of Delinquency (p. 745)

QUIZ

October 12: Presentation 9

Article: Control Theory and the Life-Course Perspective (p. 109)

A Power Control Theory of Gender and Delinquency (p. 47)

QUIZ

October 14: Sociological Theories: Anomie and Strain Theory

October 19: Presentation 10

Article: Foundations for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency (p. 437)

General Strain Theory and Delinquency: A Replication and Extension (p. 503)

QUIZ

October 21: Review for Midterm and Catch-up. Possible questions will be given out in class during the review session.

October 26: MIDTERM (essay format & you may use one flash card – get approval from Instructor first)

October 28: Sociological Theories: Rational Choice Theory; Differential Association Theory; Routine Activities Theory

November 2: Presentation 11

Article: The Current State of Differential Association Theory (p. 395)

A Theory of Differential Association (p. 739)

QUIZ

November 4: Presentation 12

Article: Crime, Deterrence and Rational Choice (p. 537)

Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place (p. 705)

QUIZ

November 9: TBA

November 11: VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY (no class)

November 12: Turn in Research Paper at the beginning of class. Late papers will not be accepted. You may turn in the research paper any time prior to November 12.

Learning Theory; Social Control/Bond; Labeling Theory

November 16: TBA- Instructor at Conference (Video)

November 18: TBA- Instructor at Conference

November 20 – November 28: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (no class)

November 30: Presentation 13

Article: Criminal Behavior and Learning Theory (p. 153)

Delinquency as the Failure of Personal and Social Control (p. 573)

QUIZ

December 2: Presentation 14

Article: The Labeling Perspective an Overview (p. 27)

School Delinquency and the School Social Bond (p. 167)

Reflected Appraisals, Parental Labeling, and Delinquency (p. 355)

QUIZ

December 7: Development of Criminals: Life Course Theories (Integrated Theories; Rethinking Crime; etc)

December 9: TBA- catch-up day; Review for Final Exam

December 13 – December 17: FINAL EXAM! Your final exam date will be announced in class toward the end of the semester. Final Exam is comprehensive, please check University Scheduling close to finals week for the Final Exam Schedule (Fall 2009).

THIS COURSE SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE – STUDENTS WILL BE GIVEN IN-CLASS NOTICE OF ANY SYLLABUS CHANGE (check Blackboard as well)

*No use of electronic devices during class (these include but are not limited to: lap tops, computers, iPods, cell phones, cd/MP3 players, etc). Turn off your cell phone or put it on silent when you enter class! If you are on call due to work, please let the Instructor know at the beginning of the class.

Emergency Procedures:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT's website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.