

CCJ 4014-01A4 CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY – SPRING 2022
Tuesdays 8:30-10:25 am and Thursdays 9:35-10:25 am (CSE E121)

Instructor: Dr. Abby Fagan

Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-2pm; Thursdays: 11:00-12:30pm; or by appointment

Office Address: 3362 Turlington Hall

Contact Information: afagan@ufl.edu

Phone: (352) 294-7169

Graduate Assistant: Kenna Rudominer

E-mail: kenna.rudominer@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Fridays 9-11 am, Turlington 3205

OVERVIEW

This course will familiarize students with the major theories that explain involvement in crime. We will review classical (early) and contemporary theoretical explanations of crime, examine the empirical evidence for these theories, and discuss application of the theories to criminal justice policies and practices. There will be an emphasis on developing critical thinking skills when evaluating theories. This means that, in addition to understanding the basic facts associated with each theory, we will compare and contrast the assumptions, strengths, weaknesses, and relevance of these theories in class discussions, written assignments, and exams.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Summarize each of the major criminological theories in one sentence.
- Explain the processes each theory identifies to explain why individuals become involved in crime and why they may recidivate or desist from offending.
- Understand how theories influence criminal justice policy and practice.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each theory and decide which theory(ies) you think best explains crime.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Ronald Akers and Christine Sellers. *Criminological Theories (8th Edition)*. Oxford University Press.
- Articles on e-learning/Canvas (under the “Files” tab)

COURSE POLICIES

- **COVID-19, Masks, and Attendance:** The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our experience. Please keep informed of any policy changes and follow UF guidance described here: <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/health-guidance/>.
 - The attendance policy is consistent with UF policy; see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

- I will not take attendance, but your absence may harm your ability to do well in the class and complete all assignments. I will post abbreviated copies of my lecture slides on Canvas, but you should consult with other students, not me, to obtain information missed if you are absent.
- Recording of Classes. UF policy states that students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the only purposes for which these recordings may be used are: (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited, and students may not publish or distribute recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.
- Communication. I will use announce changes to the course schedule in class and on Canvas. You should regularly check your UF email account and the Canvas course site to obtain this information. The best way to communicate with me is to message me in Canvas.
- Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals at the end of the semester. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.
- On exam days, students:
 - are not allowed to wear caps or hats that hide where their eyes are looking
 - cannot use ear phones of any kind
 - must ensure that no class materials are visible by their seats
 - must not have a cell phone turned on or visible
 - are not allowed to leave the room until they have turned in their exam. If you are sick during an exam and must leave, you will have to accept a grade based on the portion of the exam you completed.
 - must show up on time. If you arrive after the first student has completed the exam and left the room, you will not be allowed to take the exam.
- Missed Exams. Consistent with the UF policy, students who miss an exam due to a documented family or medical emergency, *and who discuss this problem with me in advance of the scheduled exam date*, will have the opportunity to complete a make-up exam, **which may be given during the final exam period.**
- Plagiarism/Cheating. I provide many opportunities to help students do well in this course so **DO NOT CHEAT! *If you cheat, you will receive an F and may be subject to other sanctions consistent with UF policy; see: https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/***

GROUND RULES FOR BEHAVIOR DURING CLASS

During our discussions and written assignments, we will all agree to:

- 1) Be an active participant. This does not mean you must verbally participate in every session, but it does mean paying attention, thinking critically, and doing more than just showing up.
- 2) Acknowledge that we all have different experiences based on race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender preference, age, physical disability(ies) and so on. Realize that some of your classmates may have been involved in or have close ties to people involved in the juvenile and/or criminal justice system(s) as victims or offenders. Please be respectful of others' experiences, do not judge, do not interrupt or insult others, and do not make others feel embarrassed or ashamed of their views. We do not have to agree with each another, but let us acknowledge and discuss our differences of opinion in a respectful manner. These expectations are consistent with the UF Student Conduct Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.
- 3) Refrain from rude behavior, including arriving late or leaving early, sleeping, reading outside materials, or making comments under your breath. **If you are chatting with, emailing, or texting others during class, I may ask you to leave the classroom.** Please be considerate.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should meet with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to Dr. Fagan. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

SENSITIVE TOPICS AND CAMPUS RESOURCES

In this class, we will discuss crime, victimization, and other topics that may be sensitive and could generate strong emotions. Should you encounter serious emotional challenges with the course content, or if you are aware of other students in such a position, please consider contacting one of the following support services for students:

- Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
- Office of Victims' Services: <http://www.police.ufl.edu/victim-services/>
- U Matter, We Care: <https://umatter.ufl.edu/>; email: umatter@ufl.edu; 352-294-2273.
- University Police Department: <https://police.ufl.edu/>; 352-392-1111.

GRADING

- **Exams:** 75% of final grade (25% each). Three non-cumulative exams will be given and will test knowledge in the first, second, and third sections of the class. Each exam will have 50 multiple choice and true/false questions.

- **Written Assignments:** 25% of final grade. There will be regular individual and small group assignments completed in and outside of class. These assignments will test your understanding of the course content and your ability to apply the material to your own life and to criminal justice policy and practice. Doing well in this part of the course requires you to regularly attend class and complete assignments on time.
 - In-class assignments will occur throughout the semester, with no advanced warning. Each assignment will be graded as not completed (=0) or completed (=1). *Students must be in class in order to receive a grade.*
 - Out-of-class assignments and their due dates are listed on the course schedule below. These may be short quizzes based on the reading or short (< 1 page) responses to a question(s) or activity. Assignments are posted on the Canvas e-learning site *and must be completed and submitted through Canvas before class begins on the day they are assigned.* They will be graded as not completed (=0) or completed (=1). Quizzes count as “completed” if students answer the majority of questions correctly (e.g., at least 3 of the 5 questions must be correct). Other assignments are graded as “completed” if students make a thoughtful attempt to answer the question(s).
 - Assignments will be graded by the Graduate Assistant (Kenna Rudominer) and students should contact her with questions.
 - Your overall grade for the assignments is based on the number you complete, as shown:

| Number Completed | Grade |
|------------------|-------|
| 20 | 100 |
| 19 | 97 |
| 18 | 94 |
| 17 | 91 |
| 16 | 88 |
| 15 | 85 |
| 14 | 82 |
| 13 | 80 |
| 12 | 77 |
| 11 | 75 |
| 10 | 72 |
| 9 | 70 |
| 8 | 65 |
| 7 | 62 |
| 6 | 60 |
| 0-5 | 50 |

- **Final Grades Are Based on the Following Scale:**
 - 93-100%=A
 - 90-92.9%=A-
 - 87-89.9%=B+
 - 83-86.9%=B
 - 80-82.9%=B-
 - 77-79.9%=C+
 - 73-76.9%=C
 - 70-72.9%=C-
 - 67-69.9%=D+
 - 63-66.9%=D
 - 60-62.9%=D-
 - 0-59.9%=F

COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

NOTE: This is a tentative schedule subject to revisions. All readings must be completed and written assignments must be submitted by the start of class (8:30 or 9:35am) on the due date.

| TOPIC | DATE | ASSIGNMENT (T: textbook; A: Article on Canvas) |
|---|------------|--|
| Week 1: Introduction | Thurs 1/6 | Buy the textbook and read the syllabus |
| | Tues 1/11 | T: Chapter 1 |
| Week 2: Deterrence, Rational Choice, and Routine Activities Theories | Thurs 1/13 | T: Chapter 2, pp. 14-32 Written assignment #1 |
| | Tues 1/18 | A: Wright and Decker, 1997: <i>Armed robbers in action</i> Written assignment #2 |
| | Thurs 1/20 | T: Chapter 2, pp. 33-44 |
| Week 3: Biological and Biosocial Theories | Tues 1/25 | T: Chapter 3 |
| | Thurs 1/27 | A: Caspi et al., 2002: <i>The role of genotype in the cycle of violence</i> Written assignment #3 |
| Week 4: Social Learning Theories | Tues 2/1 | T: Chapter 5 |
| | Thurs 2/3 | A: Anderson, 1999: <i>The code of the street</i> Written assignment #4 |
| Week 5: Social Learning Theories | Tues 2/8 | Written assignment #5 |
| | Thurs 2/10 | EXAM 1 |
| Week 6: Social Control Theories | Tues 2/15 | T: Chapter 6, pp. 123-133 |
| | Thurs 2/17 | T: Chapter 6, pp. 133-148 |
| Week 7: Social Disorganization Theories | Tues 2/22 | T: Chapter 8 Written assignment #6 |
| | Thurs 2/24 | A: Braga, 2008: <i>Hot spots policing</i> |
| Week 8: Strain Theories | Tues 3/1 | T: Chapter 9 |
| | Thurs 3/3 | A: Unnever and Gabbidon, 2011: <i>A theory of African American offending</i> Written assignment #7 |
| SPRING BREAK | Tues 3/8 | NO CLASS |
| | Thurs 3/10 | NO CLASS |
| Week 10: Feminist Theories | Tues 3/15 | T: Chapter 13 Written assignment #8 |
| | Thurs 3/17 | A: Miller, 1998: <i>Gender and victimization of young women in gangs</i> |

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| Week 11: Labeling Theories | Tues 3/22 | EXAM 2 |
| | Thurs 3/24 | T: Chapter 7 |
| | | |
| Week 12: Labeling and Conflict Theories | Tues 3/29 | A: Chambliss, 1973: <i>The Saints and the Roughnecks</i> Written assignment #9 |
| | Thurs 3/31 | T: Chapter 10 |
| | | |
| Week 13: Life Course Theories | Tues 4/5 | T: Chapter 14 A: Moffitt, 1993: <i>Pathways in the life course to crime</i> |
| | Thurs 4/7 | A: Laub et al., 2019: <i>The age-graded theory</i> Written assignment #10 |
| | | |
| Week 14: Integrated Theories | Tues 4/12 | T: Chapter 15 Written assignment #11 |
| | Thurs 4/14 | Written assignment #12 |
| | | |
| Week 15: Wrap Up | Tues 4/19 | EXAM 3 |
| | | |
| FINAL EXAM (OPTIONAL): Monday 4/25: 10-11:05 am | | |