

Course Syllabus

SYP4520 Criminology – Spring 2025

Instructor: Professor Marian J. Borg

Email: mborg@ufl.edu

Email (directly or via our Canvas course site) is the most effective way to reach me. I will do my best to return your email quickly and within 24 hours. I generally do not check email on the weekends, so please expect a slower response if you email then. I expect more email prior to assignment due dates and will answer your questions as quickly as possible. In general, I check my email (Monday to Friday) for the last time around 5:00 pm, so please plan accordingly if your questions are urgent. **Please include SYP4520 in the subject line of your email.**

Office hours: My face-to-face office hours are on Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00; on-line office hours via Zoom on Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30; and additional hours by appointment, zoom or in person. I will send a link for zoom office hours each week via Canvas Announcements. Please stop by virtually or in person for course-related questions as well as general conversations about your interests and other concerns!

Course Description and Objectives:

This on-line course is an overview of the field of criminology with particular emphasis on the nature of crime in the United States and the approaches sociologists have used to understand the conditions associated with criminal behavior. Over the course of the semester, we will address three general areas. First (in Modules 1-5), we will review how "crime" in the U.S. is legally defined and then examine the various techniques criminologists use to categorize, measure and track criminal behavior. Next (in Modules 6-10), we will analyze the patterns which these measurement devices reveal about the offenders, victims and social context in which different types of criminal behavior occurs. In the remaining modules (Modules 11-12) we will consider and evaluate the arguments of various sociological theories that propose to explain criminal behavior. Our discussions should help you reach a more accurate and informed understanding of the nature and extent of crime in our society and the social context in which such activity seems most likely to occur.

The course should help you:

- Explain, apply and assess the major theories used by sociologists to study crime.
- Differentiate and critically evaluate the measurement devices and data sources criminologists use to measure and track criminal behavior and victimization.
- Analyze and interpret data on the social context of various types of criminal behavior, including the characteristics of offenders, victims, bystanders and the location in which crimes occur.
- Critically analyze data and research to formulate policies and programs that provide effective responses to crime.

Note: Specific objectives associated with each topic are listed within each module.

Course Readings

All required reading for the course will be available through pdf links within modules. In addition to these **required** readings, I recommend (but not required!) one book available on Amazon for approximately \$10: *Criminological Theories: Just the Basics, 2nd edition*, by Robert Heiner (2016). This is RECOMMENDED only—useful if you wish to read additional summaries of the theories covered in the course.

Course Requirements

Syllabus Quiz

The syllabus quiz is required and is worth 3 points towards your final grade. The quiz is open book/open notes. There are 6 questions on the quiz; each question is worth half a point. You will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz, you must finish it once you start, and you must submit your answers by 11:59 pm on the due date (please consult the course calendar). **Your syllabus quiz is worth 3 points toward your final grade.**

Introduce Yourself Post

An “introduce yourself” assignment is required and is worth 7 points towards your final grade. Follow the assignment and complete all posts to earn the full points. The assignment will open on the first day of the semester and is due at 11:59 pm on the due date (please consult the course calendar). **Your introduce yourself post is worth 7 points towards your final grade.**

Quizzes

Over the course of the semester, there will be six substantive quizzes covering material from lectures, assigned chapters, supplemental readings and video material. The quizzes are not cumulative, except to the extent that material covered later in the course builds upon that discussed earlier. Quizzes will cover two modules worth of material, and will take place at the end of modules 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. Five of the 6 quizzes will count toward your final grade, so your lowest substantive quiz score will be dropped from your final grade. **Your quizzes are worth a total of 100 points toward your final grade (5 quizzes worth 20 points each).**

Once you have completed all of the assigned tasks for a module (i.e., all required readings, lectures, video links, etc.), make sure you study this material thoroughly. The quiz is timed, so you should know all the material prior to starting the quiz (**i.e., there will not be enough time to look up each answer in your notes, so you should prepare as if your notes were not available to you**). You will have 25 minutes to complete each quiz.

Unless otherwise announced, quizzes will open on Fridays at 12:01 am and remain open until Sunday at 11:59 pm. You are responsible for completing your quizzes by 11:59 pm on the due date. **You will have 25 minutes to complete your 20 question quiz.** If you are still taking the quiz when the due time passes,

you will not be allowed to submit your quiz. Make up quizzes will be given according to the makeup policy (see below) and will be scheduled at my discretion.

If you have any trouble with your quiz, or any technical issues, you must contact the UF Computing Help Desk immediately at 352-392-4357 / option 2. Once you have done so, email me immediately with the details of your problem along with your HelpDesk ticket number.

Before taking your first quiz, view the [Canvas video tutorial on taking quizzes](#).

Discussion Activities

There are two required discussion activities available in the course. Instructions for each activity are located via links under the appropriate tabs in Canvas. To earn the full points, make sure to follow the directions associated with that discussion activity. Each activity consists of an initial discussion post and a peer review. Each discussion activity is worth a total of 35 points. **A total of 70 discussion activity points will count towards your final grade (2 required discussion activities worth 35 points each).**

Semester Project: Photography Portfolio Project

Your semester-long project will take the form of a photography portfolio that conveys your sociological understanding of crime and its consequences as depicted in photographs that ***you take over the course of the semester***. The goal of the project is to encourage you to think about how the material we cover in the course relates to the social and physical space in which you exist and to the real life experiences of the individuals (strangers, acquaintances and intimates) with whom you interact on a daily basis. The project will include three parts.

Photo Submissions & Analyses

The first part of the project will consist of 4 photos taken by you and a written analysis of each one that connects the photo to a concept, theory, empirical pattern or other content covered in our course modules. Each student's Photography Portfolio will be displayed on our course website as it evolves over the semester. See the Photography Portfolio Project instructions for all details. **Your photo submissions/written analyses are worth a total of 60 points (4 submissions, 15 points each) towards your final grade.**

Peer Reviews

In addition to your own submissions, you will be asked to provide a review of your peers' work each time a submission is due. Your peer reviews (4 total) will include an assessment of one peer's portfolio submission, including its strengths and weaknesses; what you learned from their entry; and how it may have prompted you to rethink the work you are completing on your own photography project. **The peer review assignments are worth 20 points total (4 reviews, 5 points each) towards your final grade.**

Reflective Essay

A final reflective essay discussing what you learned from the photography project is due at the end of the semester and is **worth 20 points towards your final grade.**

In sum, the Photography Portfolio Project is worth a total of 100 points towards your final grade (60 points from your own photo submissions; 20 points from your peer reviews; 20 points from your final reflective essay). See the project guidelines for full instructions on the contents, organization and expectations for your portfolio photos, your peer reviews and your final essay.

Makeup Policy

I understand that sometimes one's personal life, emergencies and responsibilities interfere with one's ability to take an exam, turn in a paper, participate in a discussion, etc. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved in accordance with [UF's attendance/policy](#). Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Please contact me (via email) before/ immediately after the missed assignment/quiz.

Making up quizzes. Your lowest quiz grade in this class is dropped at the end of the semester. Therefore, if you miss one quiz, you do not need to provide documentation for me. However, if you miss more than one quiz, and want to make up the second, you'll need to have an approved reason (i.e., those listed above and in accordance with [UF's attendance/policy](#).) to make up the second missed quiz. Again, contact me ASAP to discuss.

Grading

Final grades will be determined from a combination of quizzes and assignments, according to the following structure. GPA equivalents are also noted below:

Syllabus quiz	3 points
Introduce Yourself Post	7 points
Quizzes (5 of 6, 20 points apiece)	100 points
Discussion Activities (2@35 points each)	70 points
Photography Portfolio, Individual Submissions (4)	60 points
Photography Portfolio, Review of Peers' Photos (4)	20 points
Photography Portfolio, Final Reflective Essay (1)	20 points
Total possible points	280 points

Points Earned	Percent	Grade	Corresponding Grade Points
262-280	94-100%	A	4.00
251-261	90-93%	A-	3.67
245-250	88-89%	B+	3.33
234-244	84-87%	B	3.00
223-233	80-83%	B-	2.67
217-222	78-79%	C+	2.33
195-216	70-77%	C	2.00
189-194	68-69%	D+	1.33
167-188	60-67%	D	1.00
0-166	Below 59%	E	0.00

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found here: [link to the university grades and grading policies.](#)

Semester Schedule and Due Dates (subject to change)

Date	Details	Due
Sun Jan 19	Discussion Topic Introduce Yourself Discussion Activity	11:59pm
	Quiz Syllabus Quiz	11:59pm
Tue Jan 21	Calendar Event Introduce Yourself--follow-up post	11:59pm
Sun Feb 2	Quiz Quiz #1 - Mods 1-2	11:59pm
Tue Feb 4	Assignment Discussion Activity #1: Juvenile Justice Editorial	11:59 pm
Thu Feb 6	Calendar Event Discussion 1--Peer Review	11:59pm
Sun Feb 16	Quiz Quiz #2 - Mods 3-4	11:59pm
Tue Feb 18	Assignment Photography Portfolio Project - Submission 1 (Module 1-3)	11:59pm
Thu Feb 20	Calendar Event Photo #1--Peer Review	11:59pm
Sun Mar 2	Quiz Quiz #3 - Mods 5-6	11:59pm
Tue Mar 4	Assignment Photography Portfolio Project - Submission 2 (Modules 4-6)	11:59pm
Thu Mar 6	Calendar Event Photo #2--Peer Review	11:59pm
Sun Mar 16	Quiz Quiz #4 - Mods 7-8	11:59pm
Tue Mar 25	Assignment Discussion Activity #2 Learning More About White Collar Crime	11:59pm
Thu Mar 27	Calendar Event Discussion #2--Peer Review	11:59pm
Sun Apr 6	Quiz Quiz #5 - Mods 9-10	11:59pm
Tue Apr 8	Assignment Photography Portfolio Project - Submission 3 (Modules 7-9)	11:59pm
Thu Apr 10	Calendar Event Photo #3--Peer Review	11:59pm
Tue Apr 22	Assignment Photography Portfolio Project - Submission 4 (Modules 10-12)	11:59pm
Thu Apr 24	Calendar Event Photo #4--Peer Review	11:59pm
Fri Apr 25	Calendar Event University of Florida GatorEvals – Fall 2024 Main Project	11:59pm
Sun Apr 27	Quiz Quiz #6_ mods 11-12	11:59pm
Tue Apr 29	Assignment Photography Portfolio Project - Reflective Essay	11:59pm

Disabilities Resource Center

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. See the [“Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semes. The DRC is located in 001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). Their phone number is 392-8565.

Administrative Information

This syllabus is provided for your information and may change as deemed necessary. You are responsible for learning all the material contained in the syllabus as well as any modifications that are made to the syllabus over the course of the semester. All changes to the syllabus will be announced and emailed to you. If you have any questions about the syllabus or course requirements, please feel free to contact me. An approximate semester schedule appears below.

Course Evaluations

At the end of the semester, you are also asked to complete an evaluation of the course. Please take the time to complete these evaluations as I appreciate your valuable feedback. Here are [UF instructions](#) regarding the evaluation process: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. 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/>.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness: [U Matter, We Care](#): If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [UMatter, We Care](#) website or call 352-392-1575 to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

[Collegiate Veterans Success Center](#): The Collegiate Veterans Success Center supports UF student veterans, service members, and family members of veterans with a designated space on campus to study, socialize, and meet with on and off campus resources in a fun and relaxing atmosphere. Please visit the website or contact 352-294-7233 for more information.

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.](#)

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357.

[Career Connections Center:](#) Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support:](#) Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center:](#) 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio:](#) Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.](#)

Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)