

CCJ 4014: CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY
FALL 2024

The syllabus and all revisions will be posted to Canvas

Instructor: Dr. Jessica Kahler (email: jkahler@ufl.edu; phone (352) 294-6910)
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law
Turlington Hall Room 3346
University of Florida

Teaching Assistants: Rachel Chen (email: rchen7@ufl.edu)
Tomas Alvaro Bartolotti (email: alvarobartolotti@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Dr. Kahler: Tuesday (1:00 pm -3:00 pm) in Turlington 3346 or *by appointment*
TA office hours TBD

Class Time: Tuesdays Period 2-3 (8:30 am-10:25 am) and Thursdays Period 3 (9:35 am - 10:25 am)

Location: Little Hall (LIT) Room 0109

Required Text: Akers, Sellers & Jennings (2021). *Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application*. 8th Edition. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.

All other relevant materials, which may include videos, songs, peer-reviewed papers, or other media, will be posted in relevant Modules by week in Canvas.

Course Description: This course introduces the major theories that seek to explain involvement in crime and deviance. We will review classical and contemporary theories, discuss the empirical evidence that supports or refutes these theories, and explore the application of theories in criminal justice practice and policies. We may host guest lecturers, experts in particular theoretical approaches, or tackle contemporary research to illustrate the application of theory in the criminal justice system and crime prevention and control. We will also be drawing on “pop culture” (e.g., music, movies, etc.) heavily in the class to help illustrate, connect to, and reinforce many of these topics. This is not meant to trivialize, infantilize, or otherwise diminish the importance and seriousness of the topics or theories, but rather represents pedagogy that has been successful in the teaching of criminological theory¹ The content and viewpoints expressed in the songs, films, etc. are meant to be illustrative and generate scholarly discussions and are no way an endorsement of those opinions or theories.

¹ Grubb & Posick (Eds.)(2021). *Crime TV: Streaming Criminology in Popular Culture*. New York University Press: New York, NY.

Roth & Collins (2013). Teaching criminological theory: The power of film and music. *Critical Criminology*, 21: 227-241.

Student Learning Outcomes:

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

- Provide a brief summary (one sentence) of major criminological theories
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each theory and be able to engage in critical thinking and scholarly discussions of which theory(ies) you believe best explain crime
- Understand how theories influence criminal justice policy and practice

Ground Rules and Classroom Norms:

Please be aware that the content of this course may be upsetting at times as we will be discussing crime, victimization, and other topics that may be sensitive and generate strong emotions. Please be cognizant that some of your peers (or instructors) may have been involved or have close ties with people involved in the criminal justice system as an offender or victim or have been a victim of an unreported crime. Additionally, we all have different experiences based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, abilities, socio-economic status, etc. Please be respectful of others' lived experiences, do not shame or make others feel embarrassed of their views or experiences. Acknowledge differences of opinions in a professional and respectful manner.

I would like to set **Ground Rules** to help us navigate sensitive or difficult topics during discussions (source: <https://crlt.umich.edu/publinks/generalguidelines>)

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views.
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating. Comment in order to share information, not to persuade.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) social group.

Further Guidance on Behavior During Class

- **Be an active participant.** Class participation is defined as the quality of your class involvement and attendance. This does not mean you must verbally participate but does require you to pay attention, and remain engaged through active listening and critical thinking during class time. If you choose to share your ideas (verbally or online) please use the ground rules established above.
- **Take responsibility for your education.** Attendance is crucial to your success in this class and readings should be completed prior to coming to class. ***You will not GET or BE GIVEN a grade in this class, you will EARN your grade (see work expectations, make-up policy, and grading below).*** Making yourself familiar with the syllabus, routinely checking Canvas, and seeking clarification when needed through in-class discussions, emails, or office hours are just some of the best practices. If you miss a deadline without a valid excuse, accept the consequences. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes from another student.

- **Refrain from disruptive or rude behaviors**, which includes arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, receiving or making calls, having side conversations, or making comments under your breath. You are adults and I expect you to use electronic equipment, such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets, in a manner that enhances your engagement in class rather than detracts from it, which requires you to practice self-restraint to avoid distractions. Texting, surfing the web, or watching web-based content unrelated to the class on mobile devices is distracting to you and others, is unprofessional, and demonstrates a lack of self-discipline. If you engage in disrespectful, disruptive, or rude behaviors in the classroom, I may ask you to leave. Please be considerate.

Work Expectations, Class Attendance, And Make-Up Policy: This is a 3-credit hour class. For every credit hour spent in class per week, you will spend approximately 2-3 hours on outside work, which can result in a moderate to heavy workload of about 6-9 hours of outside work per week. Keep up with the readings and assignments or you will get behind.

- You will not be allowed to turn in late work or make-up exams without a valid university-acceptable excused absence. Consistent with 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 an opportunity to complete a make-up exam, which may be given during the designated final exam period.
- Participation in official university activities which conflict with class meeting time and other reasons that may be determined appropriate by the university/instructor may also be permitted provided you **inform me of this conflict in advance**. Student athletes or those engaged in official university activities should provide me with the relevant documentation and schedule as soon as possible.
- If you miss an assignment because of a documented, excusable reason, you may be allowed to make up the work, or an alternate assignment may be given to you. Documentation must be provided within one week of the missed assignment and you will have one week to complete the make-up assignment. However, you will be responsible to meet all other assignment due dates as presented in the syllabus, while you complete excused assignments. Refer to the University of Florida grading policy on excused absences to define an excusable reason for missing class:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/exams.aspx>

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty, Submitting Work, And Email: This course will include in-class assignments, discussions, and guest lectures, which means it is imperative that you attend regularly. The course instructor reserves the right to conduct pop-quizzes related to reading or reflection activities for points at other unspecified times.

- **Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at UF and the consequences for dishonesty are taken seriously and may have a range of outcomes.** UF holds its students to the highest standards, and we encourage students to read the UF Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040), so they are

aware of our standards. Any violation of the Student Honor Code will result in a referral the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and may result in academic sanctions. The two greatest threats to the academic integrity of the University of Florida are cheating and plagiarism. If you cheat you will receive an F and may face further disciplinary action. (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>)

- **Accordingly, on exam days, students:**
 - Are not allowed to wear caps or hats that hide where their eyes are looking
 - Cannot use earphones of any kind
 - Must ensure that no class materials are visible from their seats
 - Must have all cell phones, laptops, tablets or other electronic devices turned off and not visible
 - Are not allowed to leave the room until they have turned in their exams. Exams will last 50 minutes, and if you must leave the room for any reason, you will have to accept a grade based on the portion of the exam you completed
 - Must show up on time. Once the first student has turned in their exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

- **Canvas will be used throughout this course to post announcements, assignments, notes, readings, and grades.** I use Modules grouped by theory to organize supplementary readings, videos, and assignments. Grades will not be given out in an email or over the phone. Please check Canvas regularly for new items or adjustments to the syllabus.

- **Only .doc, .docx, and. pdf files are the only submission type that will be accepted within the Canvas portal.** I cannot download or view any other file format. If you send it with any other file extension and miss the deadline, it will be considered late. Incompletes for this course will only be given in dire circumstances and is at the sole discretion of the instructor.
(<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/grades/gradepolicy.html>)

- **Please use the Canvas message system to communicate with me or my official UF email (jkahler@ufl.edu).** If you leave an important message and get no response, follow up to make sure it has been received. For confidentiality reasons, YOU MUST USE YOUR UF EMAIL. I am not to conduct class business through other email providers because of confidentiality regulations.

Grades:

Reading: Below is the current reading assignments for the semester. All readings listed for a particular date should be read *BEFORE* class so that you can engage in a more meaningful discussion of the content. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the schedule and readings based on the availability of guest lecturers, flow of the class, etc. All revisions of the syllabus and reading materials will be posted on Canvas and any changes will be posted at least a week in advance.

Written Assignments: 25% of the 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). Canvas quizzes are set to allow for multiple attempts. You should retake the quiz, after reading, until you have achieved one (1) point. Other assignments are graded as “completed” if students make a thoughtful attempt to answer the question(s).
- Assignments will be graded by the Graduate Assistants (Rachel Chen and Tomas Bartolotti) and students should contact them 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

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. The questions will test whether you understand the broad concepts, will draw heavily on in-class presentations, guest lectures, assignments, and key readings, and are meant to reward those who have attended class and engaged in the course content. We will have a review before each exam.

Points: I want you to do well in the class and provide you with ample opportunities to do so. There will be **no extra credit offered to any individual student for any reason**. The instructor reserves the right to offer or not offer extra credit opportunities to the entire class. *When calculating grades, I use standard rounding procedures to round up to the next percent (≥ 0.5 will be rounded to the next whole number) without exception.*

A	=	93 - 100%
A -	=	90 - 92%
B+	=	89 - 87%
B	=	86 - 83%
B-	=	82 - 80%
C+	=	79 - 77%
C	=	76 - 73%
C -	=	72 - 70%
D +	=	69 - 67%
D	=	66 - 63%
D -	=	62 - 60%
F	=	59 - 0%

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

In-Class Recording: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes 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. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, July 28th, 2021 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code

Accommodations: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. **Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.**

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website 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.
- *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.
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services:* For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell

website or call 352-273- 4450.

- *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 vetsuccess@dso.ufl.edu or 352-294-7233 for more information.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *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. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- *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.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Please note that this is a tentative schedule and is subject to revision. Please check Canvas regularly for changes. All readings and assignments must be submitted by the start of class (8:30 or 9:35 am) on the due date.

T: Textbook; A= Article on Canvas; V=Video on Canvas (and the links provided)

WEEK 1: Course Introduction

8/22 Introduction; In-class Q & A on assignments and course expectations

WEEK 2: Introduction to Criminological Theory & Deterrence and Rational Choice Theories

8/27 *Written assignment #1 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 1 & Ch. 2 (pgs. 14-24)

V: SFU Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (7 Mar 2016). Why Study Criminology? [CC]: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDhkcDAI_3c

V: Crisis of Crime (3 Aug 2020). Criminological Theories with Examples from Movies and TV (CC): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYMKT-02-Xg>

8/29 T: Ch. 2 (pgs. 24-44)

A: *Skim* Kahler, J., Boratto, R., Vanegas, L., Wieland, M. and Gore, M. (2019). Using conservation criminology to explore the opportunity structures, obstacles, and deterrence of urban bushmeat trafficking in Lékoumou District, Republic of Congo. Chapter 5 in M. Lynch and S. Pires (Eds.) *Quantitative Studies in Green and Conservation Criminology*. Routledge: New York.

V: CPTED Central (29 Sept 2021). 50 Years of Crime Prevention Theory in 5 Minutes [CC]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlEoFz2MjJA>

WEEK 3: Biological and Biosocial Theories & Psychological Theories

9/3 *Written assignment # 2 due @8:30 am*

T: Ch. 3 & Ch. 4 (pgs. 70-79)

V: The Take (25 Jan 2018). The Sopranos: Can Tony Soprano Be Cured? [CC]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O19WZmmqbY>

V: ITV (2 Jul 2019). Paris Bennett Admits He Murdered His Sister to Punish His Mother / Psychopath with Piers Morgan [CC]:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptbnHDrkKs>

Explore further:

V: National Institute of Justice (1990). *Biology and Crime*. Provided via Alexander Street, Electronic resources (UF George A. Smathers Libraries). Embedded, closed-captioned video in Canvas Model for Week 3 or electronic resources via UF libraries.

V: GQ (22 Nov 2021). Psychiatrist Breaks Down Psychopaths from Movies & TV, Part 2 [CC]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtFybK9n1EM>

9/5 *Written assignment #3 due @ 9:35 am*

Gajos, Fagan & Beaver (2016). Use of genetically informed evidence-based prevention science to understand and prevent crime and related behavioral disorders. *American Society of Criminology* 15(3), 683-701.

WEEK 4: Social Learning Theory

9/10 *Written assignment #4 due @ 8:30 am*

In-class activity: We will watch *Mean Girls (2004)* in class. Be sure to understand the basic concepts of social learning theory from Chapter 5.

T: Ch. 5 (pgs. 86 – 110)

9/12 *Potential guest lecturer*

T: Ch. 5 (pgs. 110 – 122)

WEEK 5: Review & Exam 1

9/17 *Written assignment #5 to be completed in class*

Review of theories Ch. 1-5

9/19 Exam 1

WEEK 6: Social Bonding and Control Theories

9/24 *Written assignment #6 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 6

V: Graham (22 Nov 2015). Social Bond Theory [CC]:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5WgUHyBF_s

9/26 *Case study: TBD*

WEEK 7: Labeling and Reintegrative Shaming Theory

10/1 T: Ch. 7

10/3 *Written assignment #7 due @ 9:35 am*

Case study: "Ban the box" laws

A: Alessio, Stolzenberg & Flexon (2015). The effect of Hawaii's Ban the Box Law on repeat offending. *American Journal of Criminal Justice* 40, 336-352.

V: AJ+ (28 May 2015). Ban the Box: Why it's so hard to find a job after prison (CC):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4mb2g-XVjs&t=36s>

WEEK 8: Social Disorganization Theory

10/8 *Written assignment #8 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 8

10/10 *T: Ch. 8*

WEEK 9: Anomie and Strain Theory

10/15 *Written assignment #9 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 9

V: Merton's Strain Theory & Disney [CC]:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NA9Pv_HMsUk

10/17 *Case study: Climate change and crime*

A: Agnew (2011). Dire forecast: A theoretical model of the impact of climate change on crime. *Theoretical Criminology* 16(1), 21-42.

V: Robert Agnew on Strain Theory [CC]:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxn_Ki5g1YQ

WEEK 10: Conflict Theory

10/22 *Written assignment #10 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 10

10/24 *Case study: Indigenous Environmental Justice*

McGregor, Whitaker & Sritharan (2020). Indigenous environmental justice and sustainability. *Current Opinions in Environmental Sustainability* 43, 35-40.

WEEK 11: Conflict Theory & Exam 2

10/29 *Written assignment #11 to be completed in class*

Review of theories Ch. 6-10

10/31 Exam 2

WEEK 12: An overview of Marxist, Radical, Critical & Feminist Theories

11/5 *Written assignment #12 due @ 8:30 am*

T: Ch. 11 (focus on broad ideas and be able to define bold terms at end of chapter: pgs. 241-242; summary 256)

T: Ch. 12 (focus on broad ideas and be able to define bold terms at end of chapter: pgs. 258-259; Summary 270)

11/7 T: Ch. 13 (focus on broad ideas and be able to define bold terms at the end of chapter; pgs. 272-273; Summary 294)

WEEK 13: Developmental and Life-Course Theories

11/12 T: Ch. 14 (Read before class and understand basic concepts)

In-class movie: Meirelles, F. & Lund, K. (Co-Directors). (2002). *City of God* (Portuguese: *Cidade de Deus*) [Film]. O2 Filmes, VideoFilmes, Globo Filmes (co-production), Lumière (co-production), Wild Bunch (co-production), StudioCanal (co-production) Hank Levine Film, Lereby Productions (uncredited).

11/14 *Written assignment #13 due @ 9:35 am*

T: Ch. 14

WEEK 14: Integrating Criminological Theories

11/19 T: Ch. 15

V: The Vile Eye (27 Apr 2022). Analyzing Evil: Voldemort From Harry Potter (CC):
<https://youtu.be/qrPsmDLTNbE>

Written assignment #14 to be completed in class

11/21 Review for Exam 3 and course wrap up

WEEK 15: No classes -Thanksgiving holiday

11/26 & 11/28

WEEK 16: Course wrap up & exam 3 review

12/5 EXAM 3

12/7 No class reading days