SYLLABUS—CRIMINOLOGY

Tell me and I forget; teach me and I remember; involve me and I learn—Benjamin Franklin

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COURSE CONTENT

Sociology 3561 is designed to explore crime, its context, and especially its causes. First, a foundation will be provided concerning the basic concepts of crime, law, and criminology. Next, theories of crime causation will be explored. The etiology or causes of crime are at the heart of this course, with the theories acting as pillars in the class structure. Next, crime typologies will be examined, or the different kinds of crimes most prevalent in our society. Lastly, we will gain an overview of the criminal justice system itself. The intent of this format is to present a balanced perspective on the field of criminology for new students to the discipline. Attention will also be directed to assure inclusion of issues concerning race, gender, and class, which are often overlooked.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Each student, upon completion of this course, should be able to recognize, define, and understand core issues in criminology. Additionally, students will gain a working knowledge of the key elements of the content identified as critical to this field of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The format of the course will include lecture, student participation and class discussions concerning the core texts, along with student book reports on related topics.

EVALUATION METHODS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Most upper-level, undergraduate courses in the social sciences require students to demonstrate mastery of material through successful completion of reading, assignments, AND participation. For SOC 3561, a Community Response Project with in-class presentation of experience will contribute 40% to the course grade. An additional 40% will be generated by a series of ten short Position Papers (5% each) concerning controversial topics in criminal justice (the lowest two scores will be dropped). The remaining 10% of the course grade will reflect class participation (notations are made of level of responses during discussions). The purpose of this type of system is to assure maximum results through an ongoing effort by students to stay abreast of course materials, particularly the assigned readings. Success will be greatly impacted by familiarity with information before each class period, with students coming prepared to participate in class discussions (more about all of the assignments in the syllabus).

A An excellent work in all or nearly all aspects of the assignment. The student exemplifies originality of ideas, superior depth of thought, and extensive grasp of topics as well as technical superiority.

B A competent work with a lapse here or there. Ideas are clear and properly expressed; the writing is technically solid. The assignment is effective in meeting all criteria but does not rise to sustained distinction.

C An adequate work, but not good. Student ideas tend to be oversimplified, reductionistic, and lack sufficient explanation or exploration. Problems may also exist with grammar, logic, or ability to express thoughts in a manner reflective of a junior level class.

D A minimal effort by the student—the work is marred by problems with almost all aspects of the assignment. This is not considered a competent performance.

E A failing mark, generally reserved for assignments which are not submitted or miss the target on virtually every criteria of the project.

+/- Plus or minus may be given in addition to each of the grade levels when deemed appropriate by the professor.

REQUIRED TEXTS

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. Please discuss any concerns with the professor as soon as possible. ([www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/acu/guide/faculty/](http://www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/acu/guide/faculty/)).

**Participation**

Research indicates that students who attend class on a regular basis earn higher marks than those who do not. SOC 3965 has been purposely designed to reward those who attend, having read the assigned chapters in advance, prepared to discuss the material. Class size notwithstanding, each student will be able to discuss important aspects of the texts under consideration on a regular basis. One of five marks (+, √, √, -, or 0/N) will be noted on the student’s card for each time they are called to comment in class. Additionally, a daily roll will be maintained for attendance. Participation contributes 20% to the overall course grade, and represents a very critical part of the student’s effort. Participation marks will be available for student’s perusal upon request before or after class, or by appointment.

**Community Response Project—in class presentation**

Students will seek out and observe any criminology-related aspect of their choice in our local community in order to gain a first-hand experience or the subject. Next, they will then write a 1500 word response paper for the problem identified and observed for 20% of class grade. The paper must be typewritten, with 1” margins and 10 point type required, and should stress those aspects of the problem which the student deems most important as identified by information in their text and from class discussions. Please protect privacy for all involved and remember that NO in-person interviews or research may be conducted except with government or law enforcement personnel who are acting in an official capacity. Students will use the following format:

1. double spaced;
2. 10 point academic font;
3. written in first person;
4. initial section explaining where and what problem or circumstance the student witnessed;
5. body of paper discussing the reality of the problem as compared to how the text described it;
6. a conclusion which offers any possible remedies the student may recommend;
7. a cover sheet with student name and the title of the assignment.

The last several days of class, students will report on their experience with a 5 to 10 minute oral presentation.

**Position Papers**

The second half of the course will consist of a series of discussions concerning the text, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Criminal Justice*. Students will choose one topic discussed each class period (a total of ten papers) during these sessions and create a 500 word (about a page) argument/position essay either in favor of or opposing the issue, and defending that stance. Papers are due on the day the topic is to be discussed. At the end of term, the lowest two scores will be dropped, producing 40% of the course grade. The Position Papers are designed to display the student’s ability to utilize sound argumentation/opinion and should not simply regurgitate the contents of the essays by the noted experts. Students will use the following format:

1. double spaced;
2. 10-point academic font;
3. written in the first person;
4. a cover sheet with student name and the title of the assignment.

**Class Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Jan (Tu)</td>
<td>Course introduction: presentation of syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Jan (Th)</td>
<td>Crime and criminology</td>
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<td>Siegel—Chpt 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Jan (Tu)</td>
<td>The nature and extent of crime</td>
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<td>Siegel—Chpt 2</td>
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22 Jan (Th)  Victims and victimization
             Siegel--Chpt 3
27 Jan (Tu)  Choice theory—because they want to
             Siegel--Chpt 4
29 Jan (Th)  Trait theory—it’s in their blood
             Siegel--Chpt 5
3 Feb (Tu)   Social structure theory—because they’re poor
             Siegel--Chpt 6
5 Feb (Th)   Social process theories—socialized to crime
             Siegel--Chpt 7
10 Feb (Tu)  Critical criminology—it’s a class thing
             Siegel--Chpt 8
12 Feb (Th)  Developmental theories—things change
             Siegel--Chpt 9
17 Feb (Tu)  Violent crime
             Siegel--Chpt 10
19 Feb (Th)  Property crime
             Siegel--Chpt 11
24 Feb (Tu)  Enterprise crime: white-collar crime, cyber crime, and organized crime
             Siegel--Chpt 12
26 Feb (Th)  Public order crime
             Siegel--Chpt 13
3 Mar (Tu)   The criminal justice system
             Siegel--Chpt 14
5 Mar (Th)   Are U.S. crime problems a result of our failure to get tough on crime?
             Does the United States have a right to torture suspected terrorists?
             Hickey—Issues 1 & 2
10 Mar (Tu)  Should serious sex offenders be castrated?
             Will strict gun control laws reduce the number of homicides in the United States?
             Hickey—Issues 3 & 4
12 Mar (Th)  Should the United States abolish the Exclusionary Rule of Evidence in criminal cases?
             Is Black Rage a legitimate defense in criminal proceedings?
             Hickey—Issues 5 & 6

16 Mar—21 Mar  SPRING BREAK—HOLIDAY—NO CLASSES!
24 Mar (Tu)   Should U.S. courts abandon the Miranda Rule?
             Should a judge be permitted to admit evidence about an alleged rape victim’s history as
             a prostitute?
             Hickey—Issues 7 & 8
26 Mar (Th)  Should the United States abolish *plea-bargaining* in criminal cases?
Should the United States abolish the *juvenile court system*?
Hickey—Issues 9 & 10

31 Mar (Tu)  Should cameras be allowed inside U.S. courtrooms?
Do *Three Strikes* sentencing laws help to reduce serious crime?
Hickey—Issues 11 & 12

2 Apr (Th)  Does confining sex offenders indefinitely in mental hospitals after they have served their
Prison sentences violate the *Constitution*?
Should homosexual prison inmates have a right to share the same cell?
Hickey—Issues 13 & 14

7 Apr (Tu)  Are *Supermax* (Control Unit) prisons an appropriate way to punish hardened criminals?
Should private *For Profit* corporations be allowed to run U.S. prisons?
Hickey—Issues 15 & 16

9 Apr (Th)  Is the death penalty an unacceptable punishment for juveniles?
Should law enforcement agencies use *Affirmative Action Programs* to increase the number
of minority police officers?
Hickey—Issues 17 & 18

14 Apr (Tu)  Are female police officers as effective as male officers?
Do *crack cocaine* laws discriminate against African American and other minority groups?
Hickey—Issues 19 & 20

16 Apr (Th)  COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROJECTS—ORAL PRESENTATIONS

21 Apr (Tu)  COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROJECTS—ORAL PRESENTATIONS

23 Apr (Th)  COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROJECTS—ORAL PRESENTATIONS

27 Apr (Tu)  COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROJECTS—ORAL PRESENTATIONS

29 Apr (Th)  COMMUNITY RESPONSE PROJECTS—ORAL PRESENTATIONS—RESPONSE PAPER DUE!
NOTE:  Those who wish their grade for the final paper and course mailed to them should attach a
*legal size, peel & stick, self-addressed, stamped* envelope with their final paper.

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That’s all, folks!  Have a great summer!