

**Syllabus**  
**CJ 7311**  
**Advanced Criminological Theory**  
**Texas State University**  
**Spring, 2018**  
**Th 6:30-9:20 Hill House**

Instructor: Dr. Mark Stafford  
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**Course Description**

This course offers an overview of the major theories about the causes of crime. The course includes consideration of theory construction, theory testing, and theoretical integration as they apply to theories of crime causation, and links between the theories and criminal justice policies.

**Course Objectives**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate knowledge regarding:

- (1) the logic and content of the major theories about the causes of crime;
- (2) empirical tests of these theories;
- (3) unresolved problems/issues with these theories and how to examine them empirically; and
- (4) the links between the theories and criminal justice policies.

**Course Requirements**

Course requirements are as follows:

(1) Write six papers. Each paper should be about ten typed, double-spaced pages and will count for 10% of the course grade. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade. The papers should be written in APA format. In five of the six papers, you will (a) summarize the logic/content of a major theory about the causes of crime and (b) provide an assessment of the overall predictive accuracy of the theory according to empirical tests. The summary part of the paper should be no more than five pages in length, with the rest of the paper being the assessment. The first paper will be on deterrence theory or differential association theory or social learning theory and will be due on February 8th. The second paper will be on social control (bonding) theory or self-control theory and will be due on March 1st. The third paper will be on labeling theory or reintegrative shaming theory or lifestyle/routine activity theory and will be due on March 22nd. The fourth paper will be on social disorganization theory or collective efficacy theory or anomie theory or institutional anomie theory or general strain theory and will be due on April 12th. The fifth paper will be on life course/developmental theory or biological theory and will be due on April 26th. The sixth paper will be different from the first five papers. It can be turned in before April 26th. You should be mindful of the due dates for the other papers and the examinations. The sixth paper will not be a summary and assessment of a major theory. Instead, you will identify unresolved problems/issues with one of the major theories and discuss how you would

address them empirically. This might include a research design, or it might be a general research strategy that you would adopt. Each of you will make a 20-minute oral presentation of this paper on April 26th.

**Important note: For the last paper, students can write an empirical piece that brings data to bear on one of the theories covered in the course. If this option is chosen, the paper should be about 20 pages in length, and it will count for two papers – one of the first five papers and the last paper.**

**Another important note: It is unacceptable to submit papers written in whole or in part for other courses.**

(2) There will be two examinations that will consist of short-answer questions requiring a thorough understanding of the readings and lecture materials. You will be asked on each examination to define/discuss key concepts (e.g., social disorganization)/principles (e.g., principle of differential association) in theories about the causes of crime and deviance. The first will be a take-home examination that will be distributed at the end of class on March 8th and will be due on March 15th. The first examination will count for 15% of the course grade. The second examination will be comprehensive and count for 25% of the course grade. It will be an in-class examination on May 3rd.

(3) Class attendance and participation are mandatory.

### **Grading**

Six papers, 100 points each

First examination, 100 points

Second examination, 100 points

To compute weighted point total:

(1) Multiply points for each paper by .1 (each paper counts for 10% of course grade).

(2) Multiply points for the first examination by .15 (the first examination counts for 15% of course grade).

(3) Multiply points for the second examination by .25 (the second examination counts for 25% percent of course grade).

(4) Add points from (1), (2), and (3) above.

Conversion of weighted point total to letter grade:

90-100 – A

80-89 - B

70-79 - C

60-69 - D

59 or less – F

## **Policies**

I will discuss appropriate accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Before accommodations will be made, you may be required to provide proper documentation.

## **Texas State University Honor Code**

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our University live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest.

**WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS.** We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses.

**WE ARE RESPECTFUL.** We act civilly toward one another and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views.

**WE ARE HONEST.** We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

### **ADDRESSING ACTS OF DISHONESTY**

Students accused of dishonest conduct may have their cases heard by the faculty member. The student may also appeal the faculty member's decision to the Honor Code Council. Students and faculty will have the option of having an advocate present to insure their rights. Possible actions that may be taken range from exoneration to expulsion.

The policies and procedures regarding Honor Code violations are outlined at <http://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/07-10-01.html>

## **Required Readings**

Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi's *A General Theory of Crime*, 1990.

Marcus Felson and Mary Eckert's *Crime and Everyday Life*, 2016.

John Laub and Robert Sampson's *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives*, 2003.

Other required readings are available on TRACS.

## **Schedule and Required Readings**

### **January 18 Introduction and Metatheory**

(1) Robert Agnew's "Determinism, Indeterminism, and Crime," *Criminology*, 1995.

(2) Daniel Mears and Mark Stafford's "Central Analytical Issues in the Generation of Cumulative Sociological Knowledge," *Sociological Focus*, 1992.

(3) Mark Stafford and Daniel Mears' "Causation, Theory, and Policy in the Social Sciences," in *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015.

(4) Jack Gibbs' "Seven Dimensions of the Predictive Power of Sociological Theories," *National Journal of Sociology*, 1997.

(5) Lynn Exum and Cristina Layana's "A Test of the Predictive Validity of Hypothetical Intentions to Offend," *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 2016.

**January 25 Deterrence**

- (1) Greg Pogarsky et al.'s "Modeling Change in Perceptions about Sanction Threats," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 2004.
- (2) Alicia Sitren and Brandon Applegate's "Testing the Deterrent Effects of Personal and Vicarious Experience with Punishment and Punishment Avoidance," *Deviant Behavior*, 2007.
- (3) Mark Stafford and Mark Warr's "A Reconceptualization of General and Specific Deterrence," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 1993.
- (4) Christopher Watling et al.'s "Applying Stafford and Warr's Reconceptualization of Deterrence Theory to Drug Driving," *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 2010.

**February 1 Differential Association/Social Learning**

- (1) Ronald Akers et al.'s "Social Learning and Deviant Behavior," *American Sociological Review*, 1979.
- (2) Raymond Paternoster et al.'s "The Causal Impact of Exposure to Deviant Peers," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 2012.
- (3) Daniel Ragan's "Revisiting 'What They Think,'" *Criminology*, 2014.
- (4) Gregory Zimmerman and Bob Vasquez's "Decomposing the Peer Effect on Adolescent Substance Use," *Criminology*, 2011.
- (5) Glenn Walter's "Proactive Criminal Thinking and the Transmission of Differential Association," *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 2015.

**February 8 First Paper Due**

**February 8 Social Control (Bonding)**

- (1) Jeffrey Bouffard and Stephen Rice's "The Influence of the Social Bond on Self-Control at the Moment of Decision," *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 2011.
- (2) Travis Hirschi's "On the Compatibility of Rational Choice and Social Control Theories of Crime," in *The Reasoning Criminal*, 1986.
- (3) Machteld Hoeve et al.'s "The Relationship between Parenting and Delinquency," *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 2009.
- (4) Jeffrey Ward et al.'s "Hirschi's Redefined Self-Control," *Crime and Delinquency*, 2012.

**February 15 No Class (ACJS – February 13-17)**

**February 22 Self-Control**

- (1) Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi's *A General Theory of Crime*, 1990.
- (2) Olena Antonaccio and Charles Tittle's "Morality, Self-Control, and Crime," *Criminology*, 2008.
- (3) Harold Grasmick et al.'s "Testing the Core Empirical Implications of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 1993.

- (4) Carter Hay and Walter Forrest's "The Development of Self-Control," *Criminology*, 2006.
- (5) Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson's "In Defense of Self-Control," *Theoretical Criminology*, 2000.
- (6) Bruce Arneklev et al.'s "Testing the General Theory of Crime," *Western Criminology Review*, 2006.
- (7) Alex Piquero et al.'s "Does Self-Control Affect Survey Response?" *Criminology*, 2000.

**March 1      Second Paper Due**

**March 1      Labeling/Reintegrative Shaming**

- (1) Jon Bernburg et al.'s "Official Labeling, Criminal Embeddedness, and Subsequent Delinquency," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 2006.
- (2) Andy Hochstetler et al.'s "That's Not Who I Am," *Justice Quarterly*, 2010.
- (3) Akiva Liberman et al.'s "Labeling Effects of First Juvenile Arrests," *Criminology*, 2014.
- (4) Lonnie Schaible and Lorine Hughes' "Crime, Shame, Reintegration, and Cross-National Homicide," *The Sociological Quarterly*, 2011.
- (5) Tom Tyler et al.'s "Reintegrative Shaming, Procedural Justice, and Recidivism," *Law and Society Review*, 2007.

**March 8      Lifestyle/Routine Activity**

- (1) Marcus Felson and Mary Eckert's *Crime and Everyday Life*, 2016.
- (2) Martin Andresen's "A Spatial Analysis of Crime in Vancouver, British Columbia," *The Canadian Geographer*, 2006.
- (3) Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson's "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends," *American Sociological Review*, 1979.
- (4) Jackson Bunch et al.'s "Demographic Characteristics and Victimization Risk," *Crime and Delinquency*, 2012.
- (5) Joe Bannister et al.'s "Place and Time in the Criminology of Place," *Theoretical Criminology*, 2017.
- (6) Pamela Wilcox and Francis Cullen's "Situational Opportunity Theories of Crime," *Annual Review of Criminology*, 2017.

**March 8      Take-Home Examination Distributed**

**March 15      Take-Home Examination Due**

**March 15      No Class – (Spring Break – March 11-18)**

**March 22      Third Paper Due**

**March 22      Social Disorganization/Collective Efficacy**

(1) Candice Odgers et al.'s "The Protective Effects of Neighborhood Collective Efficacy on British Children Growing Up in Deprivation," *Developmental Psychology*, 2009.

(2) Robert Sampson and Byron Groves' "Community Structure and Crime," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1989.

(3) Robert Sampson et al.'s "Civil Society Reconsidered," *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005.

(4) Wouter Steenbeek and John Hipp's "A Longitudinal Test of Social Disorganization Theory," *Criminology*, 2011.

**March 29 Anomie/Strain/Institutional Anomie**

(1) Eric Baumer's "Untangling Research Puzzles in Merton's Multilevel Anomie Theory," *Theoretical Criminology*, 2007.

(2) Mitchell Chamlin and John Cochran's "An Evaluation of the Assumptions that Underlie Institutional Anomie Theory," *Theoretical Criminology*, 2007.

(3) Robert Merton's "Social Structure and Anomie," *American Sociological Review*, 1938.

(4) Travis Pratt and Francis Cullen's "Assessing Macro-Level Predictors and Theories of Crime," in *Crime and Justice*, 2005.

(5) Olena Antonaccio et al.'s "Anomic Strain and External Constraints," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 2014.

**April 5 General Strain**

(1) Robert Agnew's "Dire Forecast," *Theoretical Criminology*, 2011.

(2) Ekaterina Botchkovar et al.'s "General Strain Theory," *Criminology*, 2009.

(3) Giacinto Froggio and Robert Agnew's "The Relationship between Crime and 'Objective' versus 'Subjective' Strains," *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 2007.

(4) Wesley Jennings et al.'s "Gender and General Strain Theory," *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 2009.

**April 12 Fourth Paper Due**

**April 12 Life Course/Developmental**

(1) John Laub and Robert Sampson's *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives*, 2003.

(2) Terrie Moffitt's "Adolescence-Limited and Life-Course-Persistent Antisocial Behavior," *Psychological Review*, 1993.

(3) Edward Mulvey et al.'s "Trajectories of Desistance and Continuity in Antisocial Behavior Following Court Adjudication among Serious Adolescent Offenders," *Development and Psychopathology*, 2010.

(4) Daniel Nagin and Richard Tremblay's "Developmental Trajectory Groups," *Criminology*, 2005.

(5) Robert Sampson and John Laub's "A Life-Course View of the Development of Crime," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 2005.

(6) Alex Piquero's "What We Know and What We Need to Know About Developmental and Life-Course Theories," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 2015.

**April 19**

**Biology**

(1) J.C. Barnes et al.'s "Examining the Genetic Underpinnings to Moffitt's Developmental Taxonomy," *Criminology*, 2011.

(2) Diana Fishbein's "Biological Perspectives in Criminology," *Criminology*, 1990.

(3) John Wright and Kevin Beaver's "Do Parents Matter in Creating Self-Control in Their Children?" *Criminology*, 2005.

(4) John Wright et al.'s "Lombroso's Legacy," *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 2008.

(5) Brian Boutwell and Kevin Beaver's "A Biosocial Explanation of Delinquency Abstention," *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 2008.

(6) Terrie Moffit and Amber Beckley's "Abandon Twin Research?" *Criminology*, 2015.

(7) John Wright et al.'s "Mathematical Proof Is Not Minutiae and Irreducible Complexity is Not a Theory," *Criminology*, 2015.

(8) Eric Connolly et al.'s "The Effect of Socioeconomic Status on Delinquency Across Urban and Rural Contexts," *Criminal Justice Review*, 2017.

**April 26**

**Fifth Paper Due**

**April 26**

**Sixth Paper Due and Oral Presentation**

**May 3**

**In-Class Examination**