CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO  
DIVISION OF SOCIAL WORK  
SOCIAL WORK 126: THEORIES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR  
FALL 2006

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Office Hours: Thursday 5:45-6:15  
Office MRP 3021  
Phone: 278-4090  
Class Meets: Thursdays from 6:30 p.m.-9:15 p.m.  
Class Location: BRH 101

Course Description

Theories of criminal behavior analyze various theories in terms of their logic, historical origins, and policy implications. It focuses on developing a critical framework from which to analyze criminal behavior. The course requires active student participation and a great deal of writing. The course addresses the following issues:

1) THE SCOPE AND DEFINITION OF CRIME: Before investigating the merits of various theories of crime, we must first understand how crime is defined and prosecuted, as well as its extent in different forms throughout society. We will examine the interrelationship of class, race, and gender with the definition and scope of crime.

2) THEORIES OF CRIME: We will review the development of major theories of crime in the 20th and 21st centuries, paying special attention to values and ideology, which motivate and organize these theories.

3) TOWARDS A THEORY OF CRIME: Based on our critique of theories of crime will begin to construct the elements of a plausible theory of crime; included in this will be an examination of specific types of criminal behavior.

4) IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY: Throughout the class, we will address the policy and program implications of various theories of crime.

This class is an advance study, writing intensive course. You must have passed the writing proficiency exam (WPE) or you cannot be enrolled.
Learning Objectives

A. Understanding how and why certain types of behavior are defined as criminal.
B. Understanding the historical perspective of how the different theoretical explanations of criminal behavior have changed over time and their impact on changing perspectives.
C. Understanding the criteria, definitions and data utilized in developing theories of criminal behavior.
D. Understanding the theoretical explanations of specific criminal behaviors.

Course Expectation

At the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to critically examine and discuss theoretical explanations for criminal behavior.

Class Participation and Norms

This class, in particular, discusses topics that may be emotionally charged for some students. Please be considerate of everyone's thoughts and feelings. With that being said:

- BE A PARTICIPANT: Participating fully in this class will enrich your learning experience.
- BE PREPARED: Reading assignments shall be completed prior to the start of class.
- BE PATIENT AND SUPPORTIVE: Beginning a new class may cause you or your classmates some initial nervousness or apprehension. It is important that class members are patient and supportive of each other. Providing encouragement and support creates an atmosphere of trust and confidence. Such an atmosphere makes risk-taking possible and even exciting.
- BE RESPECTFUL: Students are expected to be considerate and respectful toward their classmates and instructor. The instructor welcomes and encourages you to speak-up and actively participate in class discussions and exercises. **The instructor will not tolerate any student disrupting the class.** A student is considered disruptive when he/she engages in behavior in the classroom that interferes with the process of teaching and learning. If any student persists in disrupting the class, points will be subtracted from his/her grade. **There shall be no cell phone use in class.** If you expecting an urgent call please inform the instructor and put your phone on vibrate or silent.

The instructor encourages students to analyze life experiences and situations. Apply healthy communication skills to resolve conflicts.
Confidentiality

Confidential is very important to be maintained and respected. All client and personal information shared in the class shall be treated as confidential.

Attendance

1. The instructor will take roll at the beginning of each class.
2. It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with a written excuse to validate absences, otherwise the absences will be considered unexcused.
3. Every absence after three, unexcused or not, will result in 5 points being taken from your final grade for each class period missed.
4. Any student missing more than 6 classes, excused or unexcused, will receive a grade of Fail (F) for the course.
5. Students who are repeatedly late will have points deducted from their final grade, up to 10 points off the final grade.

Written Assignments

All writing assignments shall be typed double-spaced and have one-inch margins. Font (typeface) size shall be 12 points. The APA format is to be followed for all papers. All papers shall include a cover page with your name, name of assignment, instructor's name, course name and date. No late papers will be accepted unless there are extraordinary circumstances and/or prior approval has been given by the instructor. Always keep a copy of each assignment you submit to the instructor. Please do not use binders, folders or other types of covers for assignments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporating another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgment. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of rightful credit and gives credit to someone who has not earned it. Acknowledgement is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge. When the source is not noted, the following would constitute plagiarism:

1. Word-for-word copying.
2. The Mosaic: To intersperse a few words of one's own here and there, while in essence, copying another's work.
3. The Paraphrase: The rewriting of another's work, yet still using the fundamental idea or theory.
4. Fabrication: Inventing or counterfeiting sources.
5. Ghost-written Material: Submitting another's effort as one's own.

It is also plagiarism to neglect quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged. Plagiarism and acts associated with it are cause for disciplinary and/or legal action.
If it is determined that a student has plagiarized the work of another, it can result in the student being suspended or expelled from the University, depending on the circumstances. ([http://www.csus.edu/admbus/umanual/UMP14150.htm](http://www.csus.edu/admbus/umanual/UMP14150.htm)) In this course a grade of Fail (F) should be expected by students who plagiarize.

**Disability**

Reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids, will be provided to students with disabilities when necessary to ensure that they are not denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any academic program. The University's goal is to provide an equivalent academic experience and learning opportunity, not to guarantee the outcome of the student's educational endeavor.

The student is responsible for making arrangements for accommodations and support services with the Specialist and the Instructor in a timely manner. Use of reader, tutor, or note taker requires certain office procedures that the student must complete before these support services can start.

If you believe you will need accommodations, please contact Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD).
- Phone: (916) 278-6955 (Voice) (916) 278-7239 (IDD only)
- Fax: (916) 278-7825
- E-mail Address: sswd@csus.edu

**Course Requirements**

1. As an advanced study, writing intensive course, you will write at least a minimum of 5,000 words throughout the semester. To meet this requirement, there will be five essay assignments.

   ANY ASSIGNMENT TURNED IN LATE WILL AUTOMATICALLY LOSE TWENTY-FIVE (25) POINTS FOR EACH DAY IT IS LATE. YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL OF THE ASSIGNMENTS TO PASS THE CLASS.

2. Active participation in class discussions not only enhances your learning experience but also will help your grade.
3. Three essay exams will cover materials from class lectures, guest speakers, discussions, readings, videos, and handouts.
4. The final will be an essay examination to be written outside of class and brought to class during finals week.
5. There will be weekly quizzes on the assigned readings. In general, the question will be given at the end of class each week. Each quiz will be worth one point. If you are absent for one of the quizzes, you cannot make it up.
Grading System

Grading is based on the assumption that a paper deserves a C grade (on the basis of 100 points, is approximately 70 points). For example, an A paper (approximately 90 points) will clearly communicate your understanding of the topic under discussion; it will be well organized and will fully develop the ideas discussed in class or in the book. It will be written in a clear and concise manner with little ambiguity. The paper will also make clear references to the sources and show that the writer has thought carefully about the topic. There will be no grammatical, spelling or syntax errors.

A B paper (approximately 80 points) will contain some, but not all of the strengths of the A paper. It is also a well-written paper, but the examples will be less specific, clear, or appropriate than those in the A essay. There will be very few grammatical, spelling or syntax errors.

A C paper, like the A and B essays, will be organized around the assigned topic and will directly discuss the topic. The essay will be organized, but in a less clear and concise manner. Transitions will be weak and there will be repetitiveness and weaker use of examples. The essay will communicate the basic information, but not in a clear, effective or persuasive fashion. There may be frequent grammatical, spelling or syntax errors.

A D paper (approximately 60 points) is too general; it lacks a direct or specific focus on the topic. The essay is poorly organized and does not provide documentation and support for the topic. It is a poorly constructed essay that makes it very difficult to follow the information and argument that is being presented. The essay may have numerous grammatical, spelling or syntax errors.

An F paper (approximately 50 points) fails to even minimally discuss the assigned topic. The essay may have numerous grammatical, spelling or syntax errors.

Assignment #1: 50 points

Assignment #2: 200 points (Research essay- See course syllabus for details of assignment)

Assignment #3: 100 points

Assignment #4: 100 points

Assignment #5: 100 points

Total number of points = 550

A, A- = 550 to 495
B+, B, B- = 494 to 440
C+, C, C- = 439 to 385
D+, D, D- = 384 to 330
F = below 330
**Course Outline**

**Textbooks**


**Suggested Supplemental Readings**


Wallace, Harvey (2002). Family Violence. Allyn and Bacon

**Weekly Course Schedule**
Week 1: 9/7/06: Introduction, Defining Crime, Crime and punishment.
   Readings: Conklin: Chapter 1 & 2

Assignment #1
This is a three page, typed, take-home essay. It is due at the start of class on 9/21/06. Explain why you think people commit crimes. Discuss how definitions of crime and criminal behavior, as well as theories explaining crime and criminal behavior, support your position.

Assignment #2
Research Paper: See last page of syllabus for due dates.

Week 2: 9/14/06: Crime and Its Costs & Dimensions of Crime
   Readings: Conklin: Chapters 3 & 4

Week 3: 9/21/06: Biological and Psychological Explanations for Crime
   Readings: Conklin: Chapter 5

Week 4: 9/28/06: Social, Cultural, and Economic Sources of Crime
   Readings: Conklin: Chapter 6
Week 5: 10/5/06  
Social Control and The Commitment of Law & Learning to Commit Crime  
Readings: Conklin: Chapters 7 & 8

Assignment #3 will be handed out; it will be due at the start of class on 10/19/06

Week 6: 10/12/06  
Readings: Opportunities and Facilitating Factors & Criminal Careers  
Conklin: Chapters 9 & 10

Week 7: 10/19/06  
Readings: The Organization of Criminal Behavior & Community Reactions to Crime  
Conklin: Chapters 11 & 12

Week 8: 10/26/06  
Readings: The Criminal Justice System  
Conklin: Chapter 13

Week 9: 11/2/06  
Readings: Deterrence, Incapacitation, Retribution and Rehabilitation  
Conklin: Chapter 14  
Simon: Chapter 1

Week 10: 11/9/06  
Readings: Elite Deviance and the Higher Immorality & Corporate Deviance: Monopoly, Manipulation and Fraud  
Simon: Chapters 2 & 3

Assignment #4 will be handed out; it is due at the start of class on 11/30/06

Week 11: 11/15/06  
Simon: Chapters 4 & 5

Week 12: 11/22/06  
Reading: Political Corruption: Continuity and Change & Political Deviance  
Simon: Chapters 6 & 7

Week 13: 11/30/06  
Reading: Understanding Elite Deviance  
Simon: Chapter 8

Week 14: 12/07/06  
Readings: The Scandalization of America  
Simon: Chapter 9

Assignment #5 will be given out, due on final examination date 12/21/06.

Week 15: 12/14/06  
Readings: Solving the Crime Problem & Economic Democracy  
Conklin: Chapter 15  
Simon: Epilogue

Assignment #2 due (research paper)
Research Assignment for Fall 2006

The purpose of this assignment is to refine your research and writing skills. You will be graded on content and format.

Select a particular crime that you are interested in studying. The subject must be approved by the professor. Your research paper must discuss the following issues:
1. How extensive is the problem?
2. Who are the primary victims and the primary perpetrators?
3. What types of punishments are given?
4. How do theories of criminal behavior analyze or explain this specific crime?
5. Would rehabilitation be effective in addressing the problem with perpetrators?
6. What types of rehabilitation is available to perpetrators?
7. What services, if any, would be helpful to the victims?

This paper must contain a cover sheet and a bibliography. Your paper must be a minimum of ten (10) typed pages, excluding the cover sheet and bibliography.

Due Dates

9/28/06: Turn in a brief typed description of your research subject.

10/12/06: Turn in a typed bibliography with a minimum of ten (10) references that you will be using to write your paper. Use the APA Manual (see the Reference section in the Library) for proper citation format. The bibliography must include at least four different articles from academic journals. The articles must have been published after 1995. Other references may be books. The books must be published after 1990. Internet sources are permitted. If you are unsure if your references are appropriate, please see me before the due date or you will lose points on this assignment. If you do not turn in a bibliography this day you will lose 25 points from the final grade of the research paper.

11/9/06: A typed outline of your research paper is due. If you do not turn in an outline that day, you will lose 25 points from the final grade for the research paper.

12/7/06: A typed draft of your paper is due. If you do not turn in a draft on that day, you will lose 25 points from the final grade for the research paper.

12/14/06: Your research paper is due.

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any time.