The overarching goal of this course is the systematic exploration of various theories of criminal behavior in terms of their logic, historical origins, and policy implications. The course focuses on the development of a framework useful in the critical analysis of the various criminological theories considered in the course. The course requires active student participation and a fairly large amount of writing (at least 5000 words) since it is intended to fulfill an important writing related general education requirement at California State University, Sacramento.

This course is designed to address four major topic areas: (1) the scope and definition of crime since an important aspect of investigating the merits of various theories of crime can be found in understanding how crime is defined and prosecuted as well as appreciating the forms and extent of crime in society. In this regard special attention will be paid to the interrelationship of class, race, and gender within the scope and definitions of crime; (2) various theories of crime will be reviewed especially those major theories developed in the 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} century; (3) toward a theory of crime: based on the process of critiquing various theories of crime effort will be directed toward the construction of the elements of a plausible theory of crime; included in this section will be an examination of specific types of criminal behavior; and, (4) implications for policy: Throughout the course, attention will be directed to the policy and program implications of various theories of crime. Because of the time constraints and the demands of this course, I encourage you to actively engage in class and with one other, in order to create a collaborative learning environment during the next six weeks. To this end, the work and the assignments build upon each other so that the work you do is recursive, that is, will connect to the next assignment.

At the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to critically examine and discuss theoretical explanations for criminal behavior. This critical examination should be informed by the logic, historical origins, and policy implications of various criminological theories presented in the course. The learning objectives of the course are:

1. Understanding how and why certain types of behavior are defined as criminal.
2. Understanding the historical perspective of how the different theoretical explanations of criminal behavior have changed over time and their impact on changing populations.
3. Understanding the criteria, definitions and data utilized in developing theories of criminal behavior.
4. Understanding the theoretical explanations of specific criminal behaviors.

Text Book(s):

Required text book for course:  

Recommended text book for course:  
Course Requirements & Expectations

This course **demands students’ active participation**. Taking risks is not only encouraged, but also necessary for your learning and for the success of the class. In order to create a positive learning environment, the following must apply:

- Students attend class.
- Students are prompt.
- Students have read the assigned material and come to class prepared.
- Students get their needs met by interacting with classmates and by raising their concerns and criticisms with the instructor.
- Students do all their work and turn assignments in on time.
- Students behave in a non-violent manner.
- Students do not ridicule others.
- Students own their own expressions of bigotry. In other words, rather than attribute a negative characteristic to a social group or to a member of that group, students begin with, “this is how I have been taught to believe,” or “I don’t like to admit it but I do have the belief that…”
- Students resolve issues that they may have with other group members. If students are not sure how to accomplish this task, students and instructor can discuss possible strategies. **It is not acceptable to miss class in order to avoid interacting in class.**
- Students are committed to personal/professional growth and self-exploration.

Written work must be mechanically and stylistically acceptable. Assignments must be type-written, double-spaced and must meet the minimum number of words required for the assignment. Serious deficiencies in areas such as spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and coherent organization will result in lower grades. **Plagiarism** (claiming the work of someone else as your own) and/or **Cheating** will result in a grade of FAIL for the course. Where appropriate, the following criteria are used to evaluate assignments:

- Effective use of knowledge: the integration of concepts, theories, models, and information from readings, lectures, and class discussions is used in a way that demonstrates internalization.
- The inclusion of personal points of view along with analysis, rationale, logic, and examples. Generalization of ideas, observations, concepts, and experiences are carefully supported with empirical data, conceptual work generated by authors, practitioners, or researchers, and/or original thoughts.
- Organization: thesis in introduction, smooth relationship between ideas and between paragraphs, and overall structure, integrative concluding section. Careful planning is evident in the organization.
- Clarity: understandability, good style and form. Central ideas are concrete and clear.
- Correct syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Sentences and paragraphs are clear, unified, and coherent.
- References in appropriate format (use of APA format).

**Special Note:** (Students are reminded to make and retain a duplicate copy of all their written assignments prior to submitting them for grading in the event of accidental loss or destruction.)

Students’ interest, time, commitment to the course, as well as personal/professional development is highly valued. Attending all scheduled class sessions and being prepared for class discussion and activities is required. As a matter of fairness and equity, anyone missing (2) two scheduled class sessions will have their final course grade reduced by a full letter grade. Likewise, anyone missing (3) three or (4) four class sessions will have their final course grade reduced two full letter grades. There is no substitute or make-up for attendance and participation. Missing more than (4) four scheduled class sessions will result in dropping a student from the course.

Students are expected to complete all the work for the course on time, and, without exception, when they are due, and if special circumstances arise and if the student was granted permission in advance, an assignment may
be accepted by the last regularly scheduled class meeting. If students need help or have questions, they are encouraged to contact the course instructor as early as possible. Incompletes are not given automatically. A grade of “Incomplete” may be assigned only in cases of major illness, accident, or other occurrences clearly beyond the student’s control. It is the student’s responsibility to fulfill the University’s policies and procedures for obtaining an “incomplete” for a course grade. Students who fail to follow this policy will automatically be assigned a grade of FAIL for the course.

Students are expected to obtain an e-mail account and to check their e-mail regularly. Some class communications may be through e-mail. You may apply for a student sac-link account through the university.

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**Calendar of Class Meetings, Readings, Assignments, and Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments and Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:</td>
<td>Introductions &amp; Course Overview</td>
<td>Monday June 5, 2006 Lecture/Discussion/Video</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read Chapters 1, 2,13 &amp; 14 Reid text</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Defining crime; Crime and punishment; Court Systems, Criminal Justice System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:</td>
<td>Read Chapters 3 &amp; 4 Reid text</td>
<td>Monday June 12, 2006 Lecture/Discussion/Video Assignment: Lab to work on Group PPPPP and Individual Mini Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explanations of criminal behavior, Early explanations, Biological &amp; Psychological theories.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:</td>
<td>Read Chapters 5 &amp; 6 Reid text</td>
<td>Monday June 19, 2006 Lecture/Discussion/Video Assignment: Lab to work on Group PPPPP and Individual Mini Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociological Theories of Criminal Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:</td>
<td>Read Chapter 7 &amp; 10 Reid text</td>
<td>Monday June 26, 2006 Lecture/ Discussion/Video Assignment: Lab to work on Group PPPPP and Individual Mini Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance abuse and the criminal justice system; Violent Crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:</td>
<td>Read Chapters 8 &amp; 9 Reid text</td>
<td>Monday July 3, 2006 Assignment Due: Group Power Point Poster Presentation Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>White collar crimes; property crimes</td>
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**Requirement 1: Attendance & Participation (10% of final course grade)**

- This course is conducted on a lecture-discussion-laboratory basis. The use of multimedia is also a critical part of this course. The emphasis in this course is on critical analysis, not rote learning or memorization. **There will be a considerable amount of reading and writing (at least 5000 words) in this course, plus a great deal of critical thinking.** Assignments are based on readings and class lectures/discussions. Students who have a learning disability or experience other reasons that might interfere with their ability to complete the class requirements need to make an appointment and discuss this with the instructor.

- **Students are expected to have read all assigned materials prior to class sessions.** Student preparation and participation are integral parts of this learning process. Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor during office hours to explore issues and to clarify assignments as well as course content. Students are encouraged to speak with the instructor during office hours if they believe that their educational goals are not being met.

- **Repetitive lateness** (more than 15 minutes – on more than two occasions) will affect your final grade. Speak to the instructor individually if you believe that you will be repetitively late for class.

**Requirement 2: Power Point Poster Presentation Project (20% of final course grade)**

Students will form into groups of 4 to 5 members and develop a “Power Point Poster Presentation Project” that has two components. Each group must:

**Component One (10%)**

- Select and describe a high profile crime (one occurring since January 1, 2000).
- Develop five key points which illustrate major elements of the high profile crime selected.
  1. What is the legal and/or social definition of the crime?
  2. Who is defined as the criminal?
  3. Who is defined as the victim?
  4. What were (or are, if convicted or held culpable) the consequences of committing the crime?
  5. What made the crime “high profile”?
- Briefly discuss the history of the law violated.
- Apply at least two criminological theories useful in explaining the causes of the crime. Keep in mind that the theories you choose should be compelling for you because you will use one of these theories throughout the course in other assignments.
- What are the financial, social, and political costs which can be attributed to the crime?

**Component Two (10%)**

Each member of each group must write at least 1,250 words that cover the same points listed above for the power point slide show portion of the assignment. Each paper must be distinct from that of any other member of the group and reflect independent effort. The assignment must be type-written and may be either single or double-spaced but must meet the minimum number of words required for the assignment.

**Requirement 3: Movie Analysis Paper (20% of final course grade)**

Considering the theory you have chosen, develop well conceived responses to the questions listed below. The paper should be a minimum of 1,250 words in length. The assignment must be type-written and may be either single or double-spaced but must meet the minimum number of words required for the assignment.

1. How was the law used as a tool in the movies?
2. What is the overall message these movies have about crime?
3. What is the overall message these movies have about justice?
4. If you were the main character in the movie, what criminological theory would you attribute to your character?
5. What is your subjective reaction to the crimes dealt with in the movies?
Requirement 4: Criminal Law Summary and Response Paper (15% of final course grade)

Select a criminal law from international, national, state, and/or local level of government and provide a summary and response to it. That is, provide an explication of the law in your own words and discuss the implications of the law as you understand it. I recommend that you obtain a written version of a law that is less than five pages in length in its legal form and retain this legal version for inclusion as an appendix to your paper. The paper must be a minimum of **1,500 words** in length. The assignment must be type-written, double-spaced and meet the minimum number of words required for the assignment. The following is a guideline by which to think about and structure your paper.

1. Identify the law (by its legal and informal name if applicable) and describe the level at which it is designed to have effect.
2. Describe the law in your own words and include in this discussion what is defined as:
   - what is being defined as criminal behavior under this law
   - who is the criminal under this law
   - who is the victim under this law
   - what are the consequences of committing the criminal behavior as described under this law

Requirement 5: Criminal Law Analysis Paper (25% of final course grade)

This paper must be **2,000 words in length, double spaced, A.P.A. format.**

Considering the criminal law you have selected in the previous assignment, discuss and analyze the implications of that law. You must support your analysis using three to five sources from the library. The following is a guideline by which to think about and structure your paper.

1. Discuss the historical, political, and social precursors (precedents) that led to establishment of the criminal law.
2. Briefly identify and describe laws at the other levels (the ones you did not select) that are related to the law you did select.
3. Apply whichever criminological theory(s) you believe to be at the core of how the law would explain the cause of criminality under it.
4. Finally, how would you modify the law to address what you perceive as inequities, limitations, or flaws in the law?

Assignment 6: Final In-Class Exam (Worth approximately 10% of final course grade)

This final will consist of short answer essay questions focusing on required readings, classroom lectures and discussions. A study guide will be given a week prior to the in-class exam.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A- to A+ Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B- to B+ Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C- to C+ Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D- to D+ Range</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 or Below</td>
<td>F</td>
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