

SOCIOLOGY 2250
CRIMINOLOGY
FALL 2001-02

Instructor: Oswald S. Warner

Time/Place: Tues. & Thurs. 1 2.20pm Room: TBD

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SEP. 07 2001

Description:

In this course, we seek to understand, measure, and examine the distribution of criminal activity in Canada. This course will therefore be conducted from a largely critical perspective in order to provide learners with an alternative to the structural functionalist perspective that pervades both social discourse and much sociological teaching.

Overview of Course Objectives:

In addition to acquiring specific knowledge, learners should gain some specific skills in this course. All courses you have been exposed to so far have a built-in bias, as does this course. Having an alternative way to analyze events helps learners to build their critical thinking skills. In this course, we would therefore challenge common assumptions by formulating questions, identifying and weighing appropriate evidence, and reaching reasoned conclusions.

However, you do not have to believe everything you read or hear in this course. But, you do need to learn the perspectives and learn the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas. Disagreement is therefore welcomed, so long as it is educated disagreement. We all have opinions, but we need to find out how they stack up against social data. Feel free to debate points, but recognize that debates will ultimately be won based on empirical facts, rather than feelings.

Two (2) exams will be taken in-class designed to determine learners' understanding of and ability to use the material. Learners should be able to improve their ability to write short to medium length essays to "show what they know." A larger group research project will take the place of a final exam.

Readings:

The required readings:

Hackler, James C.. 2000 (2nd ed.) *Canadian Criminology: Strategies and Perspectives*, Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall.

Occasional short handouts which learners are responsible for reading and understanding.

Learners are expected to read assigned readings in advance of the dates they are listed for. Generally, readings are a very manageable amount. They are less than the expected 125 pages per week for junior classes in order to give learners time to do research for their projects.

Format:

Most lectures will supplement the readings. Learners are encouraged to bring questions about the readings, issues raised by the readings, etc. to the attention of the class for answer, discussion, and/or debate.

The lecture format presumes interruption by learners to discuss, question, demand clarification, etc. Likewise you should feel free to demand the instructor slow down, explain, or do anything else you need to understand the lectures. Additionally, some class meetings will include viewing video material. Learners are responsible for knowing all material presented in class, as all are testable material.

Course Assignments and Grading Procedures:

There will be two (2) in-class exams and a final group research project.

Exams:

Two (2) short to medium in-class exams covering basic themes in the lectures, readings, discussions, and video material. The first will be on **Tuesday Oct. 16** and the second on **Thursday Nov. 22**. Review questions will be handed out a week before the exams.

Group Research Project:

Each group will select a topic for a final research project to be jointly researched and written. Project topics should be obtained from aspects of the sociological perspectives of the course. Each group should make an appointment early in the semester with the instructor to help the group think creatively about the topic selected. The group must have its topic approved by the instructor and a copy provided by **Thursday Sept. 27th**. Then, all members will take part in building a tentative outline of the report contents and annotated resource bibliography to be reviewed by the instructor by **Oct. 18th**. Upon approval of these, members can finish compiling and writing their reports. At the set group presentation dates, each group is expected to make a brief presentation of their research project. A handout will be provided with more details on the group research project.

The grade for the group research project will go to all members of the group who participated. Each group member will also evaluate the contribution of other members except her/himself which will go towards the group project participation grade.

Course Assignments and Grading:

		<u>Due Dates</u>
In-class Essay Exam # 1	25%	Due Oct. 16
In-class Essay Exam # 2	30	Due Nov. 22
Final Group Research Project Proposal	2	Due Sept. 27
Outline & Bib.	3	Due Oct. 18
Group Project Paper	30	Due Dec. 6
Group Project Participation	5	
Individual Participation	5	
Total	100%	

Individual Participation:

Individual participation grades will be calculated based upon attendance and involvement in class sessions. Attendance is important not only to your final grade but also to your understanding of what is being discussed. Therefore, I will from time to time give simple quizzes (or curve busters) and these would also be used as a measure of attendance, participation, and understanding of course material and concepts. However, if an occasion arises that necessitates your absence from class for a day or a period of time let me know in advance. I will arrange with you to go over what you have missed during one of our office hours.

Course Policies:

1: Reconsideration of grades:

Learners who are not satisfied with their grades have the option of having their papers re-evaluated. However, the following stipulations apply:

- a. Requests for reconsideration must be made within one week from the date that the graded paper was returned.
- b. Learners must present clear reasons why they disagree with my grade. This is to ensure that I fully grasp what you have presented.
- c. I will consider your arguments and re-evaluate your paper. The grade will remain the same or it may go up. It will never be reduced but more times than not it will remain the same.

2: Submission of assignments:

You will turn in all work on the due dates provided. Late work received without a verified excuse from your advisor will have a 0.5 deducted for each day of lateness. Late work will be accepted without penalty if it includes a note from your advisor that you have experienced some calamity earning you the privilege.

3: Academic behavior:

You will respect the rights of all members of the class (instructor included.)

This means no private gossip sessions during lecture/discussion sessions that distract other learners or prevent them from hearing the main discussion going on.

This also means stating your opinions, ideas, and issues in class in a way that does not offend others.

This means being on time, ready to begin class on time, as well as staying through the period.

4: Academic dishonesty:

You will not present the work of others as your own. Any incident of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will lead to a failing grade.