Loyola University New Orleans
Fundamentals of Criminology (CRJU C110-A51)
Criminal Behavior (SOCI A215- A51)
Spring I 2006

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Course Meeting Information:
Mondays 6:00-10:00 p.m.
Bobet Hall 216

Course Description:

Over its 200 years or so of development, the field of criminology itself has become enormous and diversified. Contemporary criminology is interdisciplinary and multi-paradigmatic. It encompasses a wide spectrum of subjects including law, crime measurement, victimology, etiology, criminal typologies, the criminal justice system (i.e., law enforcement, courts, and corrections), cross-cultural criminology, and critical criminology. The express goal of this course is to offer a comprehensive description of the field of criminology and to probe the cultural meaning and significance of crime and criminal justice both in the United States and globally. For example, we will explore the legal and extra-legal nature of crime and review the various measures of crime and all of its manifestations. Etiological or causal theories of crime are considered along with social control systems and preventive models that have evolved historically. Academic and theoretical knowledge are combined with practical and applied implications, bringing together the main subject areas of criminology and criminal justice. The course also directs attention to larger social issues connected to crime such as differential life chances, poverty, gender and racial inequality, and the consequences of changes taking place in the family, school, workplace, and the society. Finally, the course is designed to help students master the skills necessary for critically consuming and as well as producing criminological knowledge. Special attention is given to various approaches of criminological scientific research, the strengths and limitations of scientific evidence, and the ethics and politics of research.

Required Readings:

Course Decorum:

- Students are expected to come to class prepared and to actively participate in class.
- Questions and discussions are encouraged in class. Superior contributions to discussions and outstanding class presentations may result in extra credit points added to the final grade.
- **Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted in typed form in hardcopy (do not email assignments). Proofread and polish all work prior to submission. Assignments must be handed-in on their designated due dates. Late submissions will result in grade penalties or failure. Due to strict scheduling this semester, there will be no opportunity to make up any missed scheduled oral presentations. A missed presentation may lead to failure or necessitate withdrawal from the course.
- If for reasons of serious illness or other emergency you are unable to complete the course requirements as scheduled, you must speak with the professor regarding approval of a grade of “I” (Incomplete). Please note that grades of “I” change to “F” automatically if the course is not completed and the grade changed by the sixth week of the subsequent term, excluding summer terms. The resulting “F” grade remains the permanent grade for the course.
- Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the office of Disability Services at 504-865-2990 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.
- The University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. All work must represent each student's own efforts.
- **Attendance:** Individuals are expected to be punctual and regular in their class attendance. Excessive absences (no more than 1 per term) will result in grade penalties or failure.
- All students are encouraged to come to office hours, Mondays 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. or by appointment. My office is in Mercy Hall 306E (you may enter through Mercy 306).

Summary of Course Requirements:

I. **Want to go to Prison?** Field trip to the LA State Penitentiary in Angola, Louisiana - extra credit (5 points added to the final grade). Leaving Loyola at 6:30 a.m. and returning approximately 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 8, 2005. (See more details below.)

II. **Oral Presentation:** The topic and date of presentation will be assigned the 2nd week of class - 30% of final grade; 10-15 minutes in length, including submission
of a detailed outline of hardcopy of PowerPoint slides with notes and bibliography (see details below).

III. **Position Paper/Term Paper** - 30% of final grade; approximately 12-15 double-spaced typed-pages (see further details below). Due date: February 13, 2006.

IV. **Comprehensive Final Examination** - 40% of final grade; covering *all* assigned readings, class lectures and materials, student presentations, and media presentations. Scheduled examination date: February 20, 2006, 6:00-10:00 p.m.

**Description of Course Requirements:**

I. **Want to go to prison?** On Wednesday, March 8, 2006, the Loyola University New Orleans Department of Criminal Justice is sponsoring a field trip to the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, Louisiana. Transportation will be provided by Louisiana Coaches Trailways. The bus will be departing from Loyola at 6:30 a.m. promptly in order to arrive at the penitentiary at 10: a.m. This will be an all day event including lunch at the penitentiary cafeteria. A nominal fee of $13.00 is due during time of sign-up for the trip ($10.00 covers the cost of transportation, which is subsidized by Loyola's Department of Criminal Justice, and $3.00 covers the lunch). Students participating in the field trip will receive 5 extra credit points added to their final grade. In the event that students are unable to take part in the field trip, but desire to have an opportunity to get extra credit, they may submit a paper on or before the last day of class on a selected topic in corrections (5-7 pages in length).

II. **Oral Presentation:** Each student will be assigned to one of the types of crime, which will be considered during this semester (e.g., violent crimes, property crimes, white collar and corporate crimes, organized crime, and political crimes). An oral presentation based on a summary of the materials in Siegel's *Criminology* and an additional library research conducted on the assigned topic will be expected from each student on an individually appointed due date. The following points should be covered in each presentation:

- Definition of the crime type (including legal definitions, if appropriate);
- Measurement and extent of the problem (including a discussion of quality of statistics and data);
- Description of typology (e.g., typical perpetrators and victims and a consideration of the social construction of reality of the specific form of crime);
- Relevant causal theories (including a consideration of which perspectives dominate);
- Consideration of common myths (including any factual misconceptions);
- Prevention, treatment or solutions (including a consideration of which agencies or institutions control treatment or solutions);
- List of references; and
- Questions and answers (Q&A).

Your main task is to provide an informed and well documented overview of your topic and to dispel some of the myths associated with your topic. During your presentation, be
sure to cite references for your statistical and factual data - keep your statistics current! It is also important that you cite the sources that correspond to your major points and statistical information in your outline or slide presentation. The Monroe Library has updated information, government documents, and statistical resources. A brief period of questions and answers (Q&A) will follow each presentation. Prior to each class presentation, students will be asked to place their outline or PowerPoint slides on Blackboard, so that each member of the class can download a handout and prepare questions for the Q&A. In addition, a hardcopy of the outline or PowerPoint slides with notes and a comprehensive bibliography (in correct style and format) must be handed in to the professor on the day of the presentation. At the time of the oral presentation, students will be asked to submit a detailed outline of the presentation or a hardcopy of their PowerPoint presentation with notes and corresponding reference citations along with a comprehensive bibliography (in correct style and format). Grades will be determined on the basis of the quality of information presented, the comprehensiveness of the bibliography, and overall effectiveness of the presentation (including any handouts). The bibliography should be representative of the scope and breadth of your literature review (i.e., do not depend on one or two sources for your presentation). While popular magazine and newspaper articles and Internet data sources may be included among your sources of information, be sure you do not rely on such information exclusively. Your bibliography should mainly be comprised of authoritative books, monographs, government reports, and articles from scientific or professional journals (e.g., Criminology; Criminal Law and Criminology; Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency; Homicide Studies; American Journal of Sociology; American Journal of Psychology; Violence and Victims; Journal of Drug Issues; Journal of Crime and Justice; American Journal of Police; and Criminal Justice Review; etc.). Please remember that due to strict scheduling this semester, there will be no opportunity to make up any missed scheduled oral presentations. Failure to do a presentation may lead to failure or necessitate withdrawal from the course.

III. Position Paper/Term Paper: Select a debated crime issue in our society. Consider the opposing views on the issue and critically consider the various perspectives (some issues may have more than two positions). Below is a sample list of topics:

- Do the media present an accurate representation of crime and violence in society? (Be sure to use illustrations of the media’s treatment of crime during and after Katrina.)
- Do tough sentences reduce crime?
- Should the death penalty be abolished?
- Does arrest deter domestic violence?
- Would repealing drug laws reduce drug-related crimes?
- Does the criminal justice system discriminate against racial minorities?
- Is the justice system biased against women?
- Does community-policing work?
- Should juvenile offenders be tried and punished as adults?
- Which best explains crime - nature or nurture?
Can dangerousness be predicted?

Begin by conducting a thorough literature search on your chosen topic in the Monroe Library. It is important that one also explores Internet listings, especially the topic reports produced by various resource centers and government agencies, for example:

- Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS): www.ojp.usdoj.gov.bjs;
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ): www.ojp.usdoj.gov.nij;
- Source Book of Criminal Statistics: www.albany.edu/sourcebook;
- Juvenile justice: www.jrsa.org/resources/justicelink.htm;
- School crime and safety: www.americanschoolsafety.com and www.ncsu.edu/epsy;
- Campus security statistics: www.ope.ed.gov/security;
- Meta criminology site: www.criminology.fsu.edu/cj.html;
- Criminal court: www.court.com;
- Law: www.findlaw.com;
- Office of Justice Programs: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/
- Victims: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/).

Try to develop a general understanding of the topic. Become familiar with the main areas of debate. Select several scientific articles, which represent opposing sides of the debate. Be sure to check the sources of data or evidence, which are commonly associated with the different positions held in the debate. Clearly identify the opposing sides of your issue. It is important to consider opposing perspectives as well as be able to critically analyze those perspectives. In order to make an informed evaluation, a number of basic skills for critical thinking must be developed. Some of these skills include:

Evaluating Sources of Information: The ability to choose the most reliable and accurate information from among alternative sources related to a given subject. This skill entails an understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses characterizing different types of information and forms of data.

Separating Fact from Opinion: The ability to make the basic distinction between factual statements that can be demonstrated or verified empirically and statements of opinion, beliefs or attitudes that cannot be supported or proved. Knowledge and understanding of the scientific method and appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of scientifically derived data are critical to determining the quality of information.

By sharpening one's critical skills one may have a deeper understanding of debated issues such as the problem of crime, and one may appreciate the complexity of even seemingly simple issues on which people may disagree. This awareness is particularly important in a democratic society such as ours where people representing many different perspectives
enter into public debate to determine the common goal or social response to the problem. Disagreements often simply suggest different paths to a common goal or different ways of looking at a problem. Since the causes of crime are rarely simple and are usually multi-faceted, solutions presuppose understanding the complex nature of crime.

In preparing your critical review consider the following points:

1. Trace your selected articles through the steps of the scientific method.
2. Briefly summarize the major thesis on each side and cite author(s).
3. State, in your own words, the theories presented by each side.
4. State, in your own words, the evidence presented by each side. Be sure to consider the quality of data or statistics used to support each side.
5. Identify any logical and scientific fallacies (include illustrations) on each side, for example:
   a. Faulty cause and effect statements;
   b. Faulty generalizations;
   c. Faulty operationalization of concepts;
   d. Faulty methodology;
   e. Inadequate theoretical grounding;
   f. Weak source of supportive data (i.e., unsubstantiated or inappropriate conclusions drawn from statistics, or poorly designed research);
   g. Distortion of information or oversimplification.
6. All and all, which author(s) and which position(s) impressed you as being the most scientifically sound and offered the best empirically justified evidence?
7. Now, after studying the issue and reviewing some of the opposing positions on the problem, what is your personal view? Please discuss in detail.
8. Bibliography - for help in locating pertinent data and information, please check the Loyola University New Orleans Monroe Library's "Selected Sources on Criminology." In preparing your bibliography, please use proper bibliographic format.

(Please note that the Position Paper/Term Paper is due in class on February 13, 2006.)

**IV. Comprehensive Final Examination:** The final examination will be comprised of an in-class examination that covers the entire semester's work (i.e., class reading assignments (Siegel's *Criminology*, chapters 1-17) and handouts, formal lectures and discussions, student presentations, and media presentations). Questions (approximately 100) will include short essays, definitions, multiple choice, and true or false questions. The scheduled examination will be held on Monday, February 20, 2006, 6:00-10:00 p. m. in our classroom, Bobet Hall 216.
Tentative Course Outline

January 2, 2006

- The social construction of crime
- A brief history of criminology
- The criminological enterprise
- How criminologists view crime
- Defining crime
- Competing Theoretical Models of Law and Social Control

Reading Assignment: Siegel's *Criminology*, chapter 1.

Class Discussion: What factors do you think have contributed to the high crime rate in the United States? What about in New Orleans? How did the media affect images of crime in New Orleans during and after Hurricane Katrina?

January 9, 2006

- The study of crime - the scientific method
- The ethics and politics of the study of crime
- The measurement of crime: Official statistics (*Uniform Crime Reports*), victim surveys, self-report studies, and developmental analysis (cohorts and careers)
- Crime trends and rates
- Victimology

Reading Assignment: Siegel's *Criminology*, chapters 2 and 3. Please review the following sources of information in the library or on the Internet: *Uniform Crime Report* (UCR); *National Crime Victims Surveys* (NCVS); and *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*.

Class Discussion: How do official accounts of crime compare to the media's portrayal of crime including offender and victim profiles? Test your knowledge of victims. What factors affect the fear of crime in our society?
January 16 and 23, 2006

Theories of crime causation:

- Choice theories
- Trait theories
- Social structure theories
- Social process theories
- Conflict theories
- Developmental theories

Reading Assignment: Siegel's *Criminology*, chapters 4-9.

Class discussion: Are some people more dangerous than other? Are some places more dangerous than others?

The Study of the Patterns and Types of Criminal Behavior: Student class presentations will be given January 30-February 6, 2006. Please follow the outline below:

- Definition of the problem,
- Measurement and extent of the problem,
- Description of the typical perpetrators and victims,
- Relevant causal theories,
- Common myths,
- Solutions: Prevention and control, and
- References
- Q&A

January 30, 2006

Criminal Violence

- Homicide/Multicide
- Rape
- Robbery
• Assault/Battery

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, Chapter 10.

**Property Crimes**

• Larceny/Theft
• Burglary
• Arson

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, chapter 11.

**White Collar, Corporate Crime, and Cyber Crime**

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, chapter 12.

**February 6, 2006**

**Organized Violence:**

• Juvenile Gangs
• Organized Crime (e.g., Mafia, etc.)

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, chapter 12.

**Public Order Crimes**

• Sexual crimes
• Pornography
• Substance abuse (alcohol/drug abuse)

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, chapter 13.

**Political Crime**

• Rebellion, insurgency, social unrest and civil disobedience
• Terrorism

**Reading Assignment:** Siegel, pages 363-371.
Media Presentation: Organized Crime in America

February 13, 2006 (Please note that your position/term papers are due in class today).

Overview of the criminal justice system

- Law enforcement
- Courts
- Corrections

Reading Assignment: Siegel, chapters 14-17.

Concluding comments

February 20, 2006: Comprehensive Final Examination 6:00-10:00 p.m., in classroom Bobet Hall 216.

**Please remember that the field trip to Angola State Penitentiary will be on March 8, 2006."
Course Goals and Objectives

I. Cognitive Skills

This course should enable students to:

A. Understand the cultural, legal, and scientific conceptualizations of crime.
B. Understand the contemporary definition of criminology and the history of criminology.
D. Understand different approaches to law and social control:
   1. Consensus model
   2. Conflict model
E. Identify various bodies of data pertaining to different forms of crime, summarize information, and determine relative strengths and weaknesses.
F. Understand the biological, psychological, and sociological theories of crime, including the nature of scientific evidence supporting various perspectives.
G. Understand the nature and extent of various patterns of crime (i.e., note special conceptual and data differences, identify victims and offenders, and identify common causes and solutions):
   1. Criminal violence
   2. Property crime
   3. White collar and Organized crime
   4. Public order crime
   5. Political crime
H. Understand the fundamental elements of the criminal justice system: law enforcement, courts, and corrections.

II. Critical and Analytical Skills:

This course should enable students to:

A. Formulate critical questions when examining a position, especially with respect to:
   1. Empirical quality of argument - fact vs. opinion
   2. Cause and effect relationships - cause vs. correlation
   3. Information distortion - bias, faulty logic, oversimplification, stereotyping, and faulty generalizations
B. Understand the structure of social scientific thinking, various research methods, strengths and limitations of scientific evidence, and the ethics and politics of theory and research, including the ability to:
   1. Assess the validity and reliability of different forms of crime data.
   2. Assess the scientific merits of different causative theories of crime.

III. Knowledge Base and Resources for the Study of Criminology

This course should enable students to:

A. Uncover and access various forms of information, data, and research findings related to different types of crimes.
B. Run literature searches and use journal abstracts located in the University Library and online.
C. Develop personal bibliography on various topics.