



CJFS 3750 Theories of Criminal Behavior

T-Th, 12:50-2:20
Robbins Science Center (RSC) 220
Hamline University
Department of Criminal Justice & Forensic Science



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Class Canvas Page: <https://canvas.hamline.edu/courses/13880>

Course Overview:

What is crime? Why do people commit crimes? What social contexts are more criminogenic than others? What can society do to prevent it? This course will survey theories of crime etiology and the effectiveness of society's response to crime. This course will begin with a discussion of the fundamentals of criminology including definitions of crime and criminology, crime measurement, and trends in crime across space and time. Next, the course will delve into schools of criminological thought: classical rational choice models, biological and psychological trait theories, and sociological theories. Throughout the course we will focus not only on the criminological theories and their societal implications, but also the methodological foundations underpinning the social science of crime. At the conclusion of the course, each student will have an understanding of criminological theory, how theory is researched and tested, and the policy ramifications of these theories and empirical findings.

Required Text(s):

- Kubrin, Stucky, and Krohn. 2009. *Researching Theories of Crime and Deviance*.
- Lecture Notes - uploaded to canvas before each class period.
- Various readings uploaded to [Canvas](#).

Prerequisite(s): One of the following:

- CJFS 1120 - Crime and Justice in America
- PSY 1330 - General Psychology
- SJSC 1110 - Society and Social Change

Course Objectives:

It is my hope by the end of this course you will:

1. Learn the history and current state of criminological theories.
2. Be conversant in the empirical status of criminological theories.
3. Be able to read, digest, and explain empirical research articles.
4. Understand the connections between theory, data, and policy.
5. Explain how researchers use data and statistical evidence to develop criminological insights.

This course is a [Hamline Plan](#) Writing (W) course and therefore upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Employ writing process strategies appropriate to the writing task and audience.
2. Demonstrate analytical insight and depth.
3. Articulate a compelling central idea or purpose.
4. Establish a clear and logical organizational structure.
5. Provide appropriate evidence and support for ideas.
6. Use stylistic strategies appropriate to audience, genre, and purpose.
7. Control the mechanics of readable sentences.

Grade Distribution:

Scholarly Attitude	20%	50 pts.
Research Paper	40%	100 pts.
Exams	40%	100 pts.

Letter Grade Distribution:

≥ 93.00	A	73.00 - 76.99	C
90.00 - 92.99	A-	70.00 - 72.99	C-
87.00 - 89.99	B+	67.00 - 69.99	D+
83.00 - 86.99	B	63.00 - 66.99	D
80.00 - 82.99	B-	60.00 - 62.99	D-
77.00 - 79.99	C+	≤ 59.99	F

Course Requirements:

- **“Scholarly Attitude”**: Most faculty members evaluate participation as a part of students’ course grades. But mere participation – how much you do or don’t talk, sit up or fall asleep – isn’t really what most of us want from our students. Instead, most of us hope to see students accept our invitation to “the life of mind” by adopting a “scholarly attitude.” Having a “scholarly attitude” involves developing intellectual curiosity and a genuine engagement with the ideas presented in the course. Students with a scholarly attitude take the student role seriously and demonstrate their commitment to academic pursuits by actively engaging in the material, reflecting deeply on the readings, raising thoughtful questions and comments in class, bringing unsolicited materials to share that are directly relevant to the topics being covered, come early and/or stay late to raise their own questions about the material, and

generally go above and beyond the requirements of the course. Students who lack a scholarly attitude passively complete the readings and requirements, only occasionally engage in other activities during lecture, and are primarily concerned with obtaining a particular grade in the course.

The main idea here is to be actively engaged with the class material we will read this semester, and to display a genuine curiosity towards learning about crime. This portion of your grade is necessarily subjective, so please come see me if you have any questions or concerns about this part of your grade.

- **Exams:** There will be both a midterm and final exam, each of which cover material previously covered in each half of the semester respectively. The exams will cover ideas and topics from the class lecture, course readings, and class discussions, and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The class period before each exam will consist of a review day and study period, where we will review the relevant material for the exam. Students are expected to come to the review/study day with questions, concerns, and ideas, and we will “study together” before each exam. I know exams can bring about worry and anxiety. However, there will be no “trick” questions on the exams, and students who come to lecture and actively participate in class should be well situated for the exams. Please come prepared for each review/study day, as it is likely other students have the same or similar questions that you do. More details about each exam will be discussed in class.
- **Research Paper:** In order to delve deeper on a criminological topic of interest (and because this course is writing intensive!), you will write a research paper in the style of a mini social science review article. The idea here is relatively simple: pick a criminological question of interest, work to find relevant research articles that answer parts of your research question, and write a “review” of the studies that help answer your question of interest. The purpose of this assignment is to learn 1) to ask a good criminological question, 2) to formulate and support a clear and sophisticated thesis, 3) gain skills in finding appropriate and valid research to support your thesis, and 4) to go deeper on a criminological topic of interest. In the early weeks of the semester, do some thinking about what truly interests you within criminology, and then you’ll write a paper about it over the course of the semester!

Example research questions could include, but are certainly not limited to:

- How do monetary sanctions (fines, fees, etc.) impact crime?
- Does incarceration reduce crime?
- What is the relationship between sport participation and crime?
- How does racial discrimination impact crime?
- What is the relationship between gender and crime?
- What are the consequences of criminal victimization for individuals and communities?

The research paper should have the following sections:

- Abstract - a summary of your paper and its structure in approximately 150 words.
- Introduction - including clarification and exposition of the central question, important subsidiary questions, and general framing for the reader.

- Literature review - summarizing and synthesizing the main findings of at least **8** studies that have been done on your topic or a related one. What do these studies have to say about your research question? How do these studies use/test criminological theories we have engaged in class?
- Conclusion - Overall, what do these studies conclude about your research question? What questions remain unanswered? How might future research study these remaining questions?
- References - all citations (including in-text) should be in ASA format.
 - * [Purdue OWL ASA In-Text Citation Guide](#)
 - * [Purdue OWL ASA References Page Formatting](#)

Each topic will be chosen, and approved, in consultation with me and I will help guide you towards relevant research and ideas throughout the semester. We will work together to learn how to find relevant research articles and how to read and digest them. Google Scholar and the Bush Library Website will be integral sources for finding relevant theoretical and empirical scholarship. We will discuss how to use these tools and strategies for searching in class, as well as how to identify quality primary and secondary sources.

In order to produce high quality papers, you will write, workshop, and revise your papers over the course of the semester. The initial sub-submissions will be graded for completion, and will allow an opportunity for me to give everybody feedback on their papers step-by-step, without the specter of graded feedback. The final submission will be graded as a normal paper. This process hopefully will split the workload across the semester and mitigate any end of the semester time crunch. Thus, the following due dates apply:

- 9/23 - Research Question Synopsis. 10 pts.
 - 10/21 - Annotated References. 10 pts.
 - 11/18 - Draft of Research Paper (4-6 pages). 10 pts.
 - 12/14 - Final Research Paper (4-6 pages). 70 pts.
 - All writing assignments must be typed, stapled, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, and have 1-inch margins. The assignments should also have the student's full name, and date.
 - More detailed descriptions of each subcomponent will be discussed in advance of each due date, and a more detailed rubric will be disseminated later in the semester.
- **Extra Credit:** For extra credit in this course you may attend an event on campus or in the Twin Cities (e.g., lecture, movie, play, concert, art exhibit) that is related to theories of criminal behavior and write a 1-2 page reaction paper about the event. In the paper you must discuss how this event is related to theories of criminal behavior generally and how it is related to particular topics discussed in class. Next, critique the substance of the event based on what you know; is it an accurate depiction of theories of criminal behavior? Finally, include reactions to the event: did it reaffirm knowledge you gained in class or previously held beliefs or did it challenge your current knowledge and beliefs? To get credit for this assignment, you must get approval from the professor for the event over email at least one day prior to the event and you must turn in the paper within one week of attending the event and on or before the last day of class (December 8th). Multiple departments across campus offer opportunities, and the University of Minnesota's

Sociology Workshop Series is another place to keep an eye on. Keep in mind that completion of this extra credit opportunity requires timing, and likely cannot be completed last minute. The extra credit is worth 10 pts. upon completion.

Course Policies and Information:

- **General**

- First and foremost, welcome to CJFS 3750! I am so excited to go on this criminological journey and meet all of you! I find questions surrounding the causation of crime to be truly fascinating, and they speak to more broad social questions around how/where we draw social boundaries, what drives violations of those boundaries, and how we react to violations of those boundaries. I hope we can have a great time this semester exploring these criminological ideas.
- Given this is an upper-level class, many of you will have already developed strategies that help you be successful in the college classroom. However, I also have some tips that will be useful in this class and the others you may be taking:
 - * Come to class as much as possible! This will allow you to keep up to date with everything, and really engage with the class material.
 - * Take notes! Either electronically or the old fashioned way with pen and paper, take notes during lecture and discussion. These will help you when you are studying for exams and writing your papers.
 - * Ask questions! Please, please, please, ask questions whenever you have them. They can be simple logistical things or in depth questions about the class material. Grappling with class material is what college is all about, so I encourage you to ask questions whenever you find something confusing or fascinating! I'm happy to answer any questions as I am able, no matter how big or small. If I don't know the answer to something, I will work with you to find the answer!
 - * Come to office hours! Faculty members love when you come to see them. Take this time to get to know me and your other professors, which I personally found to be one of the most rewarding experiences of a liberal arts college experience.
 - * Use a calendar! Whether it be your Google calendar or a paper schedule, write out all the relevant dates for the course: assignment deadlines, exam dates, class times, my office hours, etc. This will help you stay a bit organized and keep tabs on what's to come in the semester.
- Please make use of this syllabus and the class [Canvas](#) site. They will both give a guide to what's coming next, and [Canvas](#) is also the hub for all assignment submissions. All supplementary class reading materials and other resources will also be posted to the class [Canvas](#) site.

- **Grading and Absences:**

- Overall, I'd love for everybody to not worry about their grades and instead spend that energy with the readings and engagement in class. If you do so, I am confident that the grades will follow, and I want everybody in the class to succeed however you define that for yourself. With that being said, keeping up to date on the readings and class material will be *essential* to obtaining a high grade in this class.

- The grading breakdown, course requirements, and letter grade distributions are listed above. Please come see me if you have any questions related to grading or general course expectations.
 - All assignments are due at just before midnight of the night they are due unless otherwise noted (11:59pm due date). Emailed assignments are not accepted unless otherwise arranged, and all submissions will take place via [Canvas](#).
 - Late assignments are deducted one letter grade if they are turned in within 24 hours of the due date and an additional letter grade for each additional 24 hours beyond this; assignments will not be accepted more than 1 week after the due date or all assignments are graded (whichever is later). Incompletes will not be granted except in rare or extraordinary circumstances and cannot be given without prior written agreement.
 - If you have questions about how you have been graded on a particular assignment, I have a general policy for handling these situations: please briefly put in writing your thoughts or comments on the grading and see me in the next available office hours. We will then discuss your grade(s). Any requests must be submitted within one week of the date the grades for that assignment are distributed.
 - If you miss a class, please ask a classmate to share their notes with you (in advance, if possible). If you are uncomfortable asking another student, please let me know and I will find a volunteer to share notes. We are in this together! You are still responsible for the class material in the presence of an absence. Note that while attendance is not strictly required, multiple absences will be reflected in your “scholarly attitude” grade.
 - You must notify me in person, e-mail, in writing, or by phone **prior** to missing an assignment due date or exam for me to consider giving you a makeup or extension. Exams may not be made up except in the rare event of an excused absence. Medical, bereavement, religious, athletic, or other excused absences require advance notice and proper documentation.
 - If you know in advance that you will be absent for an exam with an approved absence, you will be expected to take the exam prior to the exam date, and are expected to consult with me to find a proper time and place for the exam.
 - I know your lives can get busy and hectic and you have other responsibilities outside the classroom. The key here is to be in communication with me when you are going to be gone or would request an extension, and I will do my best under the circumstances to work with you to find a solution.
- **Communication:** The best way to reach me is by email. I will attempt to return email within 24 hours Mon.-Fri. and within 48 hours over the weekend. There will be times I cannot respond within 24 hours. If you wait until the last minute to email me with questions, I may not be able to respond in time. However, I will do my best to respond to all email inquiries in a timely fashion.
 - **Tech:** Many studies have shown that people are poor multi-taskers. Looking at Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, etc. or even doing Google searches that may seem relevant all distract from lecture and discussion. So, if you plan to use a laptop, please stay focused on lecture and discussion and use the laptop to take notes. Additionally, mobile phones should not be used in class unless specifically allowed by me.
 - **Inclusivity:** Hamline values diversity and inclusion; we are collectively committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. My goal is to create learning environments

that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, please notify me as soon as possible.

My goal is to welcome everyone to the fascinating world of criminology. As your professor, I hold the fundamental belief that everyone in the class is fully capable of engaging and mastering the material. My goal is to meet everyone in the learning process. Our classroom should be an inclusive space, where ideas, questions, and misconceptions can be discussed with respect. There is usually more than one way to see and solve a problem and we will all be richer if we can be open to multiple paths to knowledge. This course will include discussions of class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and criminality. These are sensitive social topics, and I expect each of you to broach with maturity and scholarly curiosity. I expect students to show respect toward the subjects of our study, as well as to treat your classmates and myself with respect and dignity at all times.

- **Accessibility:** If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Steve Anderson (sanderson65@hamline.edu, West Hall 108) as soon as possible to discuss accommodations. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disability Resources, please ensure submission of your accommodation letter within the first two weeks of class. Accommodations will only be provided after the letter is submitted to me and with sufficient lead-time for me to arrange testing or other accommodations. Although I will receive the letter electronically, I am available to chat privately during office hours if you wish.
- **Preparedness:** I promise to be prepared, engaged, and as helpful as I can be in each class period, as well as outside of class time. We will be wrestling with new and difficult topic matter during the course of the semester, and I understand it can seem daunting especially given your other responsibilities on and off campus. All I ask is that you give your best effort on each assignment, reading, and class period and I promise to reciprocate.

- **Office Hours**

Please come to office hours! This is a dedicated time set aside for **you**, the student, to:

- Ask questions or get clarifications on topic that weren't clear in the lecture or readings
- Get feedback on assignments and papers
- Just talk “shop”: research, criminology, etc.
- Talk about concerns you have inside or outside of class
- Get to know me! It also lets me get to know you as well, which is one of the best parts of my job.

I'm excited to meet and get to know each of you personally, and office hours are a great time to do that. Feel free to stop by anytime during office hours, or sign up for a slot on the [Canvas](#) site. If my usual office hours do not work with your schedule, please email me to schedule an office hours appointment and I will find a time that works with your schedule. I'd love the opportunity to learn about you, what is bringing you to study criminology, and how I can help you in your future studies/research/career. My office hours and location can be found near my picture at the top of this syllabus. Please don't hesitate to stop by and chat!

- **COVID-19 and Masking Policies**

- Any requirements for use of face masks on campus will be determined by the [Hamline University COVID-19 shift plan](#). See [Hamline’s Mask Policy](#) for more information.
- In general, if you were exposed to COVID-19, please follow the recommendations as follows from the CDC.
 - * [What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19](#)
 - * [What to Do If You Test Positive for COVID-19](#)

- **Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, making multiple submissions, fabricating information, using materials in an unauthorized manner, misrepresenting academic records, and facilitating academic dishonesty. A student found guilty of academic dishonesty can receive failure for an assignment, failure for the entire course, or academic suspension or expulsion. For more information on the Honor Code, please visit the [Honor Code website](#).

Discussion of class material and readings amongst students is encouraged, and helping each other out is encouraged! However, you are expected to work independently on assignments, papers, and exams. When in doubt, please come see me.

- **Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, and Stalking:** Hamline University also provides academic and other accommodations to students who have experienced sexual assault, relationship violence (physical, emotional, or other form of abuse by a dating or other intimate partner), or stalking. For more information about Hamline’s policy and the resources available to you, consult [Hamline’s website](#) or contact our Title IX Coordinator and Associate Dean of Students, Patti Kersten, (651) 523-2421, pkersten01@hamline.edu.
- **Writing Assistance:** The ability to communicate effectively in writing is an important skill that will be required in all classes at Hamline University and in life outside of the University. While we will workshop papers throughout the semester and you will receive feedback before your final submission, there are also resources on campus to assist you with your writing. There is free student writing support at the [Writing and Communication Center](#). The writing center can assist you in all stages of the writing process and I encourage all students to take advantage of this valuable resource. To schedule an appointment call (651) 523-2026 or visit [Hamline University Writing and Communication Center Website](#).

Tentative Course Outline:

The following is a *tentative* schedule for lecture topics and exams. I will do my best to keep as close as possible to this schedule, although we may make some adjustments throughout the semester. *All exams will be given on the dates indicated.*

Week	Content/Readings
Week 1 (8/30 & 9/1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introduction to Criminology</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (8/30): No reading, welcome to class! – Th (9/1): 3750 syllabus; Kubrin et al. Ch. 1
Week 2 (9/6 & 9/8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Deterrence and Rational Choice Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (9/6): Kubrin et al. Ch. 2 – Th (9/8): Sherman, Lawrence W. and Douglas A. Smith. 1992. “Crime, Punishment, and Stake in Conformity: Legal and Informal Control of Domestic Violence.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 57:680-690.
Week 3 (9/13 & 9/15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Biological and Psychological Trait Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (9/13): Kubrin et al. Ch. 3 – Th (9/15): Moffitt, Terrie E., et al. 2011. “A Gradient of Childhood Self-Control Predicts Health, Wealth, and Public Safety.” <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i> 108:2693-2698.
Week 4 (9/20 & 9/22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Social Disorganization Theory</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (9/20): Kubrin et al. Ch. 4 – Th (9/22): Sampson, Robert J., et al. 1997. “Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy.” <i>Science</i> 277:918-924. – Research Question Synopsis DUE 9/23 11:59pm
Week 5 (9/27 & 9/29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anomie and Strain Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (9/27): Kubrin et al. Ch. 5 – Th (9/29): Burt, Callie Harbin, et al. 2012. “Racial Discrimination, Ethnic-Racial Socialization, and Crime: A Micro-sociological Model of Risk and Resilience” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 77: 648-667.
Week 6 (10/4 & 10/6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Social Learning Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (10/4): Kubrin et al. Ch. 6 – Th (10/6): Kreager, Derek. 2007. “Unnecessary Roughness? School Sports, Peer Networks, and Male Adolescent Violence.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 72:705-724.
Week 7 (10/11 & 10/13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Midterm Exam</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (10/11): Review/study day! – Th (10/13): Midterm Exam

Week	Content/Readings
Week 8 (10/18 & 10/20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Control Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (10/18): Kubrin et al. Ch. 7 – Th (10/20): Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub. 1990. “Crime and Deviance over the Life Course: The Salience of Adult Social Bonds.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 55:609-627. – Annotated References DUE 10/21 11:59pm
Week 9 (10/25 & 10/27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Labeling Theory</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (10/25): Kubrin et al. Ch. 8 – Th (10/27): Chiricos, Ted, et al. 2007. “The Labeling of Convicted Felons and its Consequences for Recidivism.” <i>Criminology</i> 45(3):547-581.
Week 10 (11/1 & 11/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conflict Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (11/1): Kubrin et al. Ch. 9 – Th (11/3): Krivo, Lauren J., and Ruth D. Peterson. 2000. “The Structural Context of Homicide: Accounting for Racial Differences in Process.” <i>American Sociological Review</i>:547-559.
Week 11 (11/8 & 11/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Integrated Theories</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (11/8): Kubrin et al. Ch. 10 – Th (11/10): Costello, Barbara, and Paul Vowell. “Testing Control Theory and Differential Association: A Reanalysis of the Richmond Youth Project Data.” <i>Criminology</i> 37:815-42.
Week 12 (11/15 & 11/17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consequences of Crime and Punishment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (11/15): Sharkey, Patrick. 2018. “The Long Reach of Violence: A Broader Perspective on Data, Theory, and Evidence on the Prevalence and Consequences of Exposure to Violence.” <i>Annual Review of Criminology</i> 1:85-102. – Th (11/17): Pager, Devah. 2003. “The Mark of a Criminal Record.” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 108:937-975. – Draft of Research Paper DUE 11/18 11:59pm
Week 13 (11/22 & 11/24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research Paper Workshop</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (11/22): Research Paper Workshop 1 – Th (11/24): No class, Thanksgiving Break
Week 14 (11/29 & 12/1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Social Correlates of Crime</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (11/29): Massoglia, Michael and Christopher Uggen. 2010. “Settling Down and Aging Out: Toward an Interactionist Theory of Desistance and the Transition to Adulthood.” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 116:543-82. – Th (12/1): Steffensmeier, Darrell J., et al. 2013. “Gender and Twenty-First-Century Corporate Crime: Female Involvement and the Gender Gap in Enron-Era Corporate Frauds.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 78:448-476.

Week	Content/Readings
Week 15 (12/6 & 12/8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tying Up Loose Ends</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T (12/6): Research Paper Workshop 2 – Th (12/8): Review/study day!
Week 16 (12/12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Final Exam</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – M (12/12): Final Exam 2:45-4:45 – Final Research Papers DUE 12/14 11:59pm