

Sociology 4014: Criminology
TR 3:30pm-4:45pm, HLMS 267
COURSE SYLLABUS, Fall 2011

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus as necessary.

Instructor: Devon Thacker Thomas

Email: Devon.Thacker@colorado.edu (this is the best means of contacting me outside of class)

Office: Ketchum 10

Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30pm-3:30pm, Tuesday 4:45pm-5:45pm or by appointment

PEER CONTACT INFORMATION:

- 1.
- 2.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will provide an opportunity for each of you to examine your own assumptions and understanding around crime and punishment in the United States. Throughout the semester, we will explore the field of criminology, including definitions of crime, explanations for crime and an understanding of various components of the criminal justice system. We will discuss a broad range of issues related to criminology from varied perspectives. Ultimately, the knowledge you will gain from this course will help you think critically and analyze more deeply the theoretical and policy issues relating to crime and victimization in the United States.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Refrain from engaging in distracting behaviors (side conversations, text messaging, packing up early, etc.).
2. You are required to complete all assigned readings **before** class meetings. The schedule of readings is on CULearn.
3. Be prepared and on time daily (attendance policy applicable for presentation dates. See below for further details).
4. Students are responsible for checking their e-mails from me and CULearn announcements and updates. If you miss a class, make sure to get notes and announcements from another student.
5. **Laptops are not permitted in this course.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Reading:

There is no assigned textbook for our course. Instead, I will be assigning one or more readings per group meeting (lecture) session. All course readings will be posted to our course website on CULearn and it will be your responsibility to identify the assigned reading, download and/or print it from CULearn and read. Readings should be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned.

Using CULearn:

Students need to access CULearn regularly. I use CULearn to post our weekly reading schedule, our course syllabus, all readings, assignments and announcements. To log into CULearn, go to: <http://culearn.colorado.edu>

GRADES

Assignment	% of Grade
Exam One	15
Exam Two	20
Exam Three	25
Group Paper & Presentation	40

Note: See CULearn for an explanation and example of how to calculate your grade throughout this course.

NOTE: If you are particularly concerned about your grade in this class for any reason (athletics, scholarships, academic probation, etc.), I STRONGLY advise that you schedule an appointment to talk with me towards the middle of the semester so that we can touch base about your grades thus far and talk about strategies for improving your performance if you are not doing as well as you need to be. Please don't wait until the end of the semester when it will be too late for me to work with you on improving your performance.

EXAMS

Exams consist of multiple choice and short essay questions. Each exam will be given during the scheduled class period in our scheduled classroom. None of the exams, including the final, are cumulative. **Our final is scheduled for Saturday, December 10, 2011 from 7:30pm-10:00pm in HLMS 267.**

Exam Preparation: You are in control of your own studying and grade for each exam and the class more broadly. I will assist you in achieving success on exams by holding in-class reviews that may consist of practice exam questions, Q & A, and other helpful exam study aids and tips.

SPECIAL TOPIC GROUP PAPER & PRESENTATION

This is a two-part research assignment. The instructor will divide the class into groups of approximately 4-5 students. Each group will conduct a research project on a topic agreed upon by the group and approved by the instructor. Your grade will be calculated based on 3 required components: (1) proposal; (2) 16-page research paper; and (3) a 15-minute group presentation. The assignment is designed to allow each of you to demonstrate your ability to do research and report on a particular topic through the use of secondary sources. All group members must contribute to both parts of this assignment (the paper and the presentation). With this said, however, if members feel stronger with one component over the other, the distribution may be created so that the assignment can be completed in the most efficient and strong manner.

There is a wide degree of latitude regarding choice of topics for presentation (see below) and each group is free to shape the direction of their project. Groups must relate their chosen topic to the theories and material discussed in class. Each group must decide upon a topic that falls under one of the following themes:

- Crime and Media
- Wrongful Convictions
- Violence and Crime
- Punishment and Society

Proposal (Due Thursday, September 15, 2011) (5%)

Each group is responsible for submitting ONE proposal for their group presentation. These proposals should be between 1-3 pages in length. The proposal will indicate the following:

- 1) Names of all group members
- 2) A tentative title for your presentation—usually in two parts, for example: “Drugs and Deviance: The History of Corporate Lobbying in the War on Drugs”
- 3) An abstract and introductory paragraph for the paper and presentation explaining the title and what the report and presentation will be about—what concepts and issues will each component discuss?
- 4) A list of course readings that you think pertain to your topic and why
- 5) A tentative bibliography listing some of the secondary sources you may be using within your paper and presentation
- 6) A plan of work and division of labor

Paper (Due on the date of your presentation: Nov. 29, Dec 1, Dec 6, or Dec 8) (25%)

Group papers can be dreaded assignments if they are not handled with care. You will know by the second week of class what group you are a part of and when your paper due date and presentation is. This is a formal paper, thus each group should search online databases and use academic texts to support their papers and presentations. It is expected that 5-7 secondary scholarly sources (e.g., peer-reviewed journals, edited volumes, and academic texts) will be used (3 is the minimum). In the paper you will need to (1) define the issue and your argument, (2) review the extant research and literature on the issue, (3) apply a criminological theory to your argument, (4) draw connections between your argument and broader issue and our course material, (5) a closing discussion of what your paper as a whole suggests and what contributions the paper makes to the chosen topic and our course. As a group, it is your responsibility to demonstrate a strong understanding and analysis of your chosen topic, superior application to material from our course and high-quality writing (e.g., organization & grammar). Each section will be graded individually (15%). An additional grade (10%) will be given to all group members for consideration of the paper as a whole.

- I. Introduction [Person 1] (2 pages)
- II. Literature Review [Person 2] (4 pages)
- III. Theory Application [Person 3] (4 pages)
- IV. Connections to Course [Person 4] (4 pages)
- V. Discussion & Conclusion [Person 1] (2 pages)

Presentations (Tuesday, November 29, Thursday, December 1, Tuesday, December 6 & Thursday, December 8) (10%)

Presentations should emphasize an innovative and creative approach to the study of the topic chosen by the group and approved by the instructor. Each presentation must use some form of visual aide (e.g., power point, brochure, handouts, etc) OR interactive tool, such as an activity. Groups are encouraged to meet with me throughout the semester to develop the presentation and paper. Each group will be assigned a presentation date by the instructor (randomly chosen). Presentations will be graded by the instructor and by several peers not in the presenting group. A rubric for the presentation grades will be provided to groups and will additionally be uploaded to our course website on CULearn.

Presentation Attendance

Attendance is mandatory during group presentations and will be recorded. If you choose not to attend class on one of the presentation days, you're personal project grade will be docked 15 points for each day you miss. Please keep in mind that material found in these presentations will be fair game for the course final exam.

EXTRA CREDIT

For extra credit, you may do a fieldwork paper for the class in which you observe people working in the criminal justice system. Observation opportunities include going on a police ride-along, sitting in on criminal court proceedings at the Boulder Justice Center, or touring the Boulder County Jail. After you have done your observations, you will write a 2-3 page reflection paper about your experience in which you describe what you observed and reflect on how your observation enhanced your understanding of course material. Additional information about these opportunities will be announced in class, and information is also available on the course website. You can earn **up to 2 percentage points** onto your final grade for doing this project.

GRADING DETAILS

Grades will be assigned based on the following (approximate) percentages:

A: 100-93	A-: 92-90	
B+: 89-87	B: 86-83	B-: 82-80
C+: 79-76	C: 73-75	C-: 72-70
D+: 69-66	D: 65-63	D-: 62-60
F: below 60		

1) I dedicate a great deal of time, effort, and energy to grading your exams and field assignment. Considering this, I request that you thoroughly review my comments and the work you submitted to me. If after 24 hours you would like to discuss your grade, you may make an appointment to meet with me. All grade discussions should be completed within 1 week from the date graded papers are provided to the class.

2) Please keep all returned work. In case of a grade discrepancy, your original graded work will be required.

COURSE POLICIES

EMAIL POLICY

If you contact me via email, please include **"4014"** or **"Criminology"** in the subject line so that I can identify your emails and respond to them in a timely manner. **University policy prohibits the discussion of student grades via email.** If you have questions about your grade, please make an appointment to meet with me.

MISSING CLASS:

You are responsible for keeping track of all announcements and syllabus/schedule changes made in class, whether you are there or not when the announcement is made. In addition, you are responsible for getting any class material that you missed from a classmate. While I am always happy to discuss with you questions you have about specific material or items of interest you have discovered through our course, office hours will not be spent giving entire lectures.

LATE POLICY

All assignments must be submitted in hard copy format on time and in person. I will neither accept nor acknowledge assignments submitted via email, left in my mailbox, or placed under my office door.

MISSED EXAMS

Any missed exam will result in a score of 0, and make up exams will be given only in the case of a documented emergency (e.g., a family death or serious illness). You must notify me prior to the exam if such a circumstance arises. Any make up

requests made after the exam has already been administered will not be considered. All make up exams must be completed either 1) prior to the in-class exam or 2) within 1 week of the initial exam.

****The instructor reserves the right to give a varied format of the exam if a make-up exam is given.****

FINAL EXAM RESCHEDULING

If you have 3 or more exams scheduled on the same day during finals week, you are entitled to arrange an alternate exam time for the last exam(s) scheduled on that day. You must make these arrangements **no later** than the 6th week of the semester. To qualify for rescheduling final exam time, you must provide evidence that you have three or more exams on the same day, and arrangements must be made with your instructor no later than the end of the sixth week of the semester (Friday, September 30, 2011).

ADD/DROPS

Class-size limits are set according to departmental guidelines and the fire code, both of which specify the number of students that can be enrolled in each course. Use MyCUInfo to verify if you have been dropped or added. The address is: <http://mycuinfo.colorado.edu>. **If you fail to attend class within the first 2 days (Tues 8/23 and Thurs 8/25), you will be administratively dropped to make room for those students on the waitlist who have attended.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, **please submit a letter from Disability Services to the instructor within the first two weeks of class.** It is your responsibility to contact Disability Services and arrange for a letter to be provided to you. You can contact Disability Services at: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY

The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff, and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises that create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the OSH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed can be obtained at: <http://www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment/>

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. If you need to miss class for a religious holiday **please submit a letter to the instructor within the first two weeks of class.** For a copy of CU's policy regarding religious holidays, visit: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

This syllabus acts as a contract for our course. By attending this course you are agreeing to the terms outlined above. If you find any of these terms disagreeable, dropping the course is recommended.