

CCJS 225
Responses to Violence

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
FALL 2019

Class Time: MW 2-3:15pm

Email: mxie@umd.edu

Class Location: ESJ 1215

Professor: Min Xie, PhD

Office Hours: MW 12:30-1:30pm, or by
appointment

Office: LeFrak 2220K

Phone: 301-405-7063 (email me if I am not in
my office)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the long decline in violence since humans have lived on earth (about 200,000 years) for insight into what might have contributed to the pacification process. Yes, believe it or not, we are living in the most peaceful time ever. And yet, we clearly have a long way to go. In order to learn how to stop people from physically hurting one another, we need to understand why they resort to violence in the first place. This type of understanding requires that we study human nature. The goal of this course is to find ways to leverage human nature to decrease the risk of violence.

We will integrate our ideas into a rational choice framework and use analytical tools like game theory to predict outcomes of different intervention strategies for violent situations. For example, the most common intervention strategy derived from rational choice theory is deterrence, or the threat of punishment, which has been shown to only have a limited effect. We will study the unintentional consequences of deterrence and consider alternatives. Further, we will also learn about the factors that can sometimes dismantle rationality leading to outcomes that counter the expectations of rational choice.

Along these lines, each student will identify a type of violence that plagues us today and develop an intervention strategy based on the principles learned in this course. Students will be expected to outline the assumptions needed to assure a reduction in violence and to identify potential risks to those assumptions that could lead to unintentional consequences (or externalities). In essence, the goal of this class is to teach you to use your **informed** imagination to develop creative solutions that might be ready for use in 2019; but if not, then they could be feasible in 2020 or 2022 or 2114 when the features that counter violence in our society have further evolved.

Required Textbook

Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of our Nature: Why Violence has Declined*. New York: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0-670-02295-3

Other required readings will be provided on ELMS (<http://elms.umd.edu>)

ELMS

The course uses the web-based tool, ELMS, to provide you with easy and anytime access to information and notices about the class. In order to access ELMS you must first be registered for the class. Once registered, use your Directory ID and password to log onto the website. This website will contain a wealth of information about the class such as a copy of the syllabus, details on each assignment, critical discussion threads, and other reading materials. It also contains important course announcements. You can access your grades (but not those of others) through ELMS once they are posted. **I would strongly encourage you to access ELMS on a regular basis.** The site address is: <http://elms.umd.edu>. The site has a link for “ELMS support.”

CLICKERS

This course will rely upon clickers technology. You will need a physical clicker device, also called a ResponseCard RF-LCD clicker. If you already own a clicker, you do not need to buy a new one, but you may still need to create a Turning Account in order to use your clicker. All students (including those who own clickers) should visit ELMS for instructions. The “clicker instructions” on the home page describe how to purchase a clicker and register a Turning Point account with ELMS. You will not be able to use an iPhone/iPad/other web-enabled mobile device.

Make sure that your clicker is registered (see website instructions). You must bring your clicker to class daily. Only in this way can you get credit for attendance, participation, and quiz scores. **Bringing classmates’ clickers to class in their absence is a violation of the university Code of Academic Integrity and constitutes cheating.**

Course Grading

The goal of the class is for you to learn how to think critically about the problem of violence. Grades will be based on whether you are reading the assigned materials (quizzes), how deeply you think about the problem of violence (progress papers and final papers), how engaged you are (participation and presentation), and how much you have learned (exam).

Grading Breakdown:

<i>Clickers Today</i> Total	10%	Group Presentation	10%
Course Participation	15%	Final Paper (two options)	20%
First Progress Paper	8.3%	Exam	20%
Second Progress Paper	8.3%		
Third Progress Paper	8.3%		

Final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 96.5% - 100%	C+ = 76.5% - 79.49%
A = 92.5% - 96.49%	C = 72.5% - 76.49%
A- = 89.5% - 92.49%	C- = 69.5% - 72.49%
B+ = 86.5% - 89.49%	D+ = 66.5% - 69.49%
B = 82.5% - 86.49%	D = 62.5% - 66.49%
B- = 79.5% - 82.49%	D- = 59.5% - 62.49%
	F = Any grade < 59.5%

Clickers Today

We use clickers to (1) encourage reading, (2) encourage attendance, (3) facilitate student engagement, (4) evaluate student learning, and (5) obtain feedback.

Routinely, this is how we use clickers:

- At the beginning of the class, several multiple choice quiz questions based on the readings for that day will be presented so that each student can respond using Clicker technology. This section will count as a **VERY SMALL** proportion of the course grade, so you should be prepared but have no worry if you lose a few points.
- During the class, you have opportunities to respond to multiple-choice or true-false questions based on course content. I design these questions to facilitate student engagement and understanding. They will be really **ENGAGING AND FUN**.
- You earn **EXTRA CREDIT** using clickers because when I calculate the final clicker points at the end of the semester, the denominator will be 10% smaller than the numerator, inflating the scores so that you earn extra credit for each correct answer. For example, if there are a total of 100 clicker questions, then each student's total will be divided by 90 instead of 100. This allows you to miss 10% of the questions, and still earn 100% for your clicker score.
- Further, a subset of the questions developed for *Clickers Today* will make up **50% OF THE FINAL EXAM**. The remaining 50% of the final exam will include material that is drawn from the course material and class discussion.

In short, these clicker questions serve multiple purposes: (1) they assist in attendance taking; (2) they assure that you read the course material before class, making the class a more enriching experience for all; (3) they make the course fun; (4) they provide an opportunity for extra credit; and (5) they give you a preview of the final exam.

PARTICIPATION

The assessment of your participation is based on several factors including how engaged you are during class discussion, the quantity and quality of your participation on discussion, and the feedback you give and engagement during the group presentations at the end of the semester. As an I-Series class it is important that the students remain engaged so that all of our learning is enhanced. If you complete the assignments and come to class ready to learn and discuss, you should learn a lot.

Course Paper

For the class, you will write a paper that addresses a type of violence that plagues us today by learning as much as you can about it and developing an intervention strategy based on the principles of this course. In order to assure that you put much thought into each component of this project, it will be broken into three progress reports that you will turn in on specific due dates, for which I will grade and give feedback. For the final paper, you can either (1) combine all three reports into a coherent final paper using the required format, or (2) decide not to submit a final paper but use the average of the three progress reports to be the score of your final paper (option good for students with satisfactory scores).

First Progress Report

For this report you are to identify a type of violence or an ongoing violent conflict that is troublesome today from a list of assigned topics. Examples of topics are gun violence, domestic violence, gang violence, racial/ethnic violence, hate-motivated violence, school violence, workplace violence, genocide, terrorism, or something else. For this first report, you are to convince the reader that this is an ongoing problem, by describing it in depth and highlighting

the motives that maintain its momentum. Be sure to cite academic research articles (not just online news reports) to support your arguments. Note that a detailed literature review is required for the second progress report, so be judicious as to what you present in this report. The text portion of this paper is to be 2 to 4 pages in length, using Times New Roman 12 point font with the default margins for Word. A detailed description of this assignment, along with a grading rubric and a sample paper format will be posted on ELMS.

SECOND PROGRESS REPORT

The second portion of your paper will be an annotated bibliography of every source you plan to use for your final paper. The purpose of this report is to explore different solutions other people have tried or thought of in the past to reduce your chosen problem. This will lay the groundwork to start thinking about your own intervention in the third progress report.

Your source list should include at least 5-7 sources. These sources should include research articles or books that further develop our understanding of your selected problem, but some of them should also offer possible solutions to it. For this project, you will write a paragraph about each source that you plan to use. This paragraph should include a summary of the key information that you want to use from that source and how you plan to use that information. A more detailed guide on how to complete this assignment will be posted on ELMS.

Third Progress Report

For this portion of the report, you are to develop an intervention strategy that you think will reduce incidence of your selected violence based on the principles learned from the class. Be sure to explain (1) what the current solutions are out there and how they fall short based on your review of the literature in your second progress report, (2) how your intervention strategy is different or better than the current solutions, (3) what principles you use to develop your strategy, (4) name any assumptions that you are making that would need to be met in order for your intervention to be effective, and (5) discuss any factors that will support or threaten the implementation of your ideas. Keep in mind that this project is requiring you to use your imagination and to think outside of the box. The course intentionally draws your attention to changes in violence over several millenniums so that your vision will go well beyond what might be possible today. You are encouraged to use your imagination because all change starts with an idea, and sometimes those ideas are well ahead of their time. This paper should be 4 to 6 pages using Times New Roman 12 point font with the default margins for Word. A more detailed guide on how to complete this assignment will be posted on ELMS.

Final Paper

For those turning in a final paper, your final paper will be a combination of all three progress reports that incorporates the feedback. You are to incorporate the ideas from the three progress reports in a way that helps the flow of your paper taking the reader on a journey from part 1 (the introduction to the problem) to part 3 (the solution). Make sure that one paragraph leads to the next. This paper should be 9 to 12 pages (excluding bibliography) using Times New Roman 12 point font with the default margins for Word. A more detailed guide on how to complete this assignment will be posted on ELMS.

Group Presentations

For the class, you will be assigned to one of four groups that will develop a group presentation designed to teach the remainder of the class about a topic of violence today. The group will have an entire class period (1.25 hours) to present material and engage the audience in whatever manner they choose. The purpose of these presentations is to give the group members the opportunity to work together to teach the audience about a current problem in violence and present possible ways to reduce or end that violence.

After receiving your group assignments, discussion threads will be created on ELMS for each group to discuss and develop ideas to present at the end of the semester. Students' participation in these discussions will affect their participation grade. Each member of the group will assign a grade to all group members. Further, if any group member is discovered as free riding on the work of others, their grade will be lowered. Half of the final group presentation score will be based on the instructor's assessments, one quarter will come from the students in the audience, and the final quarter will be based on peer evaluations. A more detailed guide on the assignment and grading criteria will be posted on ELMS.

Each group will be told which day they will present at the time of the assignment. If you are unable to attend class that day due to an excusable event, you have until two weeks after assignment to request a switch.

You must be present for other students' presentations regardless of whether you have done your own presentation. You will lose a significant number of participation points for not attending presentation sessions unless you have an acceptable excuse (see course attendance and makeup policy). To show respect for your classmates, you will lose points for coming to class late or leaving early without proper notification and acceptable excuses.

EXAM

The exam will be an overview of the course materials, including the readings, the lectures, and the in-class discussions. Half of the exam will be come from a subset of the in-class multiple choice quizzes on the reading, and the other half will be multiple choice or short answer questions based on the readings, in-class lectures, and discussions. **We will have a review session prior to the exam.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty of any form will absolutely NOT be tolerated. The University of Maryland has a nationally Recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. The Student Honor Council proposed and the University Senate approved an Honor Pledge. The University Honor Pledge reads:

“I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.”

Students will be asked to write the University approved Honor Pledge on each paper and on the final exam. Students also are personally responsible for reviewing the course's policy statement on academic integrity on ELMS ([Syllabus Supplement - Ethics of Scholarship](#)).

DISABILITY SUPPORT

I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) and who provide me with a University of Maryland

ADS Accommodation form. This form must be presented to me **no later than September 9, 2019**. I am unable to accommodate students who are not registered with ADS or who do not provide me with documentation that has not been reviewed by ADS by that date. ADS students who are requesting to take their exams at the ADS Center need to provide me with a testing form for each exam that must be turned in to me no later than 1 week prior to each exam. The student is expected to take the exam at the same time as the rest of the class.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

If you are restricted from meeting your course requirements due to a religious observance, you will need to discuss this with me by **September 9, 2019**. Please submit a request for an alternative time to complete an assignment by that date.

ATHLETIC EVENTS

Official athletic schedules must be submitted to me by **September 9, 2019**. Practices do not count as an excused absence; but competitive events do. Athletes who failed to submit their expected missed classes and who miss class assignments or major scheduled graded events listed in **bold** under the Course Schedule below will receive a grade of zero for the missed events.

CLASSROOM CODE OF CONDUCT

The success of the class is dependent not only on my abilities and talents as an instructor to communicate new and complicated ideas, but also on our ability as a class to work together to create an environment conducive to learning. As a Department and University, we expect the faculty and students to be prepared for class and to be actively engaged in the classroom activities. Unfortunately, disruptive behaviors in the classroom cheat other students out of their opportunity to learn. The University of Maryland's Code of Academic Integrity defines classroom disruption as "behavior a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of a class." Examples include coming late to class, repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom without authorization, making loud or distracting noises, and persisting in speaking without being recognized. As the instructor of this class, I also find the following distracting: reading outside material, sleeping, loud side conversations with your neighbor, text messaging and using laptops for non-academic functions (IM, e-mail, Facebook, surfing, etc.). I also request that you silent your cell phones and other electronic devices during class.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to show civility with one another, the teaching assistants (when available), or me will be subject to referral to the Office of Student Conduct or to Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

MISSED EXAM, QUIZZES, PROGRESS REPORTS, PRESENTATION OR FINAL PAPER

Makeup assessments will NOT be offered for unexcused or undocumented absences. University policy excuses absences due to (1) the illness of the student or the illness of an immediate family member as defined by Board of Regents policy on family and medical leave (www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionVII/VII750.pdf); (2) religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period); (3) participation in university activities at the request of university authorities; and (4) compelling circumstance beyond the student's control.

Additionally, **all written work should be turned in to the instructor by the beginning of class on the due date.** Prior notification is required in all instances for excused absences for major scheduled graded events listed in **bold** under the Course Schedule below. Additionally, documentation including an obituary/death notice, an official health center excused absence form, or hospital records must be provided. Make-up work must be completed within one week of its original due date. All necessary arrangements must be made with the instructor via email. Preserving this agreement in writing ensures there is no discrepancy at some later point. I reserve the right to alter the content of the assignment, including making the make-up exam a short-answer or essay format.

Addendum on Medical Absences: The in-class presentations and final exam are considered to be major scheduled graded events (noted in bold under the course calendar section below) and therefore the new university medical excuse policy which allows one student signed honor statement attesting to illness does **NOT** apply to them (<https://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-v-student-affairs/v-100g>). In the event you become chronically absent, missing more than two consecutive weeks of class, due to the same persistent illness, this must be verified by a health professional in writing. Any absences from major scheduled graded events will be counted as zeroes if you have failed to inform the instructor of these developments within one week of missed event or before December 11, whichever comes first. Please refer to the link above in locating the items that must be included in both the signed honor statement and chronic absence verification.

Missed Quizzes: Because the quizzes are automatically inflated $\left(\frac{\text{number correct}}{90\% \text{ of total questions}} \right)$, you will not be allowed to make up any quizzes that you miss without an excused absence. However, in line with the University policy, I will allow each student one absence due to a self-diagnosed illness if you make a reasonable effort to tell me before class. All make up quizzes will be different from the one administered to the class, and will be in the form of two-page essay.

GRADE DISPUTES

If you have questions or concerns about your grade(s) and believe that I should review them, you must submit a written request via email that describes your concern in detail. This request must be submitted within one week of the day that grades for the relevant assignment are disseminated.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your feedback about this course is very important to me. Completing a course evaluation is part of what it means to be a member of the UMD academic community. At the end of the semester I very much would like you to fill out the online course evaluation. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your course evaluation. You can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluation starting in late November.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

On occasion, classes may be cancelled due to inclement weather. If the university is closed on the day a graded item is scheduled the graded assignment will be rescheduled for the next class meeting that the university is open. If the final exam is cancelled, we will follow university rules for rescheduling.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Class meetings and course materials, including instructions, presentations, assessments, content outlines, and similar materials are the intellectual property of the course instructor and protected by legal copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own personal use. You may not, nor may you allow others to, distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly, whether or not a fee is charged, without the express written consent of the instructor. Similarly, you own copyright in any work products that you create for this course. If I am interested in sharing your work with others I will ask for your written permission. Copyright violations may result in referrals to the Office of Student Conduct and/or civil penalties under State and Federal law (www.copyright.gov/title17).

For more information on the University of Maryland Policies for Undergraduate Students, visit <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

COURSE SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
Mon.	8/26	Syllabus review, preface	
Wed.	8/28	Violence Then, Violence Today	Pinker 1-12, 18-21
Wed.	9/4	The Historic Decline in Violence & Overview of Conclusions.	Pinker 23-30, 61-64
Mon.	9/9	The Pacification and Civilizing Processes	Pinker 31-36, 47-61, 64-81
Wed.	9/11	The Civilizing Process in These United States	Pinker 91-106
Mon.	9/16	Recivilization: Explaining the Decline in Homicide USA beginning in 1991 & How to Write a Paper	Pinker 116-119, 121-128
Wed.	9/18	The Humanitarian Revolution	Pinker 146-153, 168-180
Mon.	9/23	The Rights Revolution FIRST PROGRESS REPORT DUE	Pinker 378-394, 406-415, 447-454, 475-481
Wed.	9/25	Game theory, Rational Choice Theory, & Deterrence	Pinker 532-541 ELMS readings
Mon.	9/30	Violence Today: General & Violence Against Women	TBA
Wed.	10/2	Violence Today: School Shootings & Other Types of Violence	TBA
Mon.	10/7	Inner Demons: Predation, Dominance & Revenge	Pinker 509-531
Wed.	10/9	Inner Demons: Sadism, Ideology, & Pure Evil SECOND PROGRESS REPORT DUE	Pinker 547-570
Mon.	10/14	Better Angels: Empathy & Self-Control	Pinker 571-611
Wed.	10/16	Better Angels: Biology, Morality, & Taboo	Pinker 611-642
Mon.	10/21	Better Angels: Reason	Pinker 642-670

Wed.	10/23	Developments Contributing to the Reduction of Violence	Pinker Chapter 10
Mon.	10/28	Policing/Corrections Possibilities	TBA
Wed.	10/30	Restorative/Procedural Justice	TBA
Mon.	11/4	Innovation Lecture, Allow Your imagination (Group work)	TBA
Wed.	11/6	A summary of the course materials covered so far: Exam Review	Do your homework: Review your notes, outline them, and see if you have questions
Mon.	11/11	Exam (on materials covered so far)	
Wed.	11/13	No class (ASC conference)	
Mon.	11/18	Allow Your Imagination (Group Work)	TBA
Wed.	11/20	Allow Your Imagination (Group Work) THIRD PROGRESS REPORT DUE	TBA
Mon.	11/25	Presentation I	
Mon.	12/2	Presentation II	
Wed.	12/4	Presentation III	
Mon.	12/9	Presentation IV	
Sat.	12/14	Optional FINAL PAPERS DUE (submit to ELMS)	

This is an approximate schedule and will likely change. However, the bolded events will always be on the date that is marked above.