COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to examine the intersection between race and crime in the American criminal justice system. In order to achieve this goal, we must first determine what race means to us now and what it has meant to us in the past. By answering this initial race question, we will evaluate the historical, social and political evolution of this term.

Once we create some guidelines as to who belongs in what racial category, we must then consider: “Why does race matter?” Who decides how much race matters? As we study these questions and many other current and past issues, the class will consider how the system views and deals with Asians, Arabs, Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, and Whites. An analysis of the development of criminological theory, its practical implications, as well as the future of race and crime research will be explored.

The perception of which groups commit crimes, who we should be afraid of and who we should punish severely will be questions we consider in relation to offenders. The perception of which groups we believe need protection and which groups we do not generally perceive as victims will be questions we consider in relation to victims and potential victims in our society.

The role the media plays in assisting in creating images of particular racial groups as defendants while other racial groups are depicted as vulnerable to crime will be a main component in analyzing and dissecting this topic.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To become more familiar and more comfortable with reading, discussing, and writing critically.
- To learn vocabulary, concepts, theories, and methods of critical race theory as they relate to the social sciences.
- To demonstrate the understanding of the development of different races from a biological, cultural, historical, social, economic, and ideological perspective.
- To demonstrate the understanding of fundamental concepts and methods like assimilation and acculturation which promote and produce knowledge about the communication amongst the races in our country.
· To explicate the processes which create or fail to create a colorblind criminal justice system.
· To articulate how particular policies like racial profiling create or inhibit the formation and functioning of America as a plural society.

**CLASS FORMAT**

Students are expected to attend class. Students are also expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Classes will be a combination of lecture and classroom discussion and debate. Many weeks we will view relevant films and then discuss the issues raised in those films.

**REQUIRED BOOKS**


Student website: [http://www.sagepub.com/greene/study/journal.htm](http://www.sagepub.com/greene/study/journal.htm)

**STATEMENT ON CLASSROOM CLIMATE**

The success of this class is dependent not only on my abilities and talents as an instructor to communicate information and ideas, but also on our ability as a class to work together to create an environment conducive to active 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 of opportunities 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, excessive talking, persisting in speaking without being recognized, allowing cell phones to ring, talking on a cell phone and receiving and sending text messages. None of this behavior will be tolerated.

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 or with me will be subject to being referred to the Office of Student Conduct or to Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

**USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

In this class, students will not be allowed to use their personal computers to take class notes. Students will also be prohibited from using their mp3 players, cell phones, tablets or any other type of technology during class. If these devices are seen and/or used during class, the student(s) will be asked to leave the class immediately. If these devices are seen and/or used during an exam, the exam will be collected from the student and the student will no longer be allowed to continue taking the exam. The exam score will be noted as.

*Exception: Students will be allowed to use electronic devices (like tablets) to access the e-version of the textbook. However, if at any time the professor learns that students are using the device for other reasons, the students will no longer be permitted to access this device for the remainder of the semester.*
CLASS CANCELLATIONS

In the course outline you will find dates where classes have been identified as cancelled. If for any reason a class needs to be cancelled at the last minute, a Teaching Assistant will be present in the classroom to notify the class of the cancellation and/or notice will be posted through the class email list. If for any reason the Professor or a Teaching Assistant is not present, students should wait at least 15 minutes. After that time has passed without the Professor or a Teaching Assistant showing up to the class, students may leave without suffering any consequences.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Official closures and delays are announced on the campus website at http://www.umd.edu and snow phone line (301-405-SNOW) as well as local radio and TV stations. If the University closes for inclement weather, then any reading assignments, written assignments or exams that were assigned for that day will be due the next class period that the University is open. If the University is opening late then the instructor will notify the class via the coursemail and on ELMS whether the instructor will either have class or cancel class.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Regular and consistent attendance in this class is expected from registered students. University policy excuses the absences of students for illness, religious observances, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control. Students must submit the request in writing and supply appropriate documentation.

Campus Senate policy requires students who are absent for a Major Student Grading event, due to illness/injury, to furnish documentary support to the instructor. I require students to contact me by email or by phone prior to class time in which you indicate that you have an illness or an injury. You must provide written documentation of the illness from the Health Center or an outside health care provider verifying the dates of treatment and the time period during which the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities. This documentation must be provided immediately upon your return to class. You will not be allowed to turn in missed assignments or make up quizzes, tests or papers if you have not provided this documentation. Documentation not presented to me in a timely manner will not be accepted. In addition, if it is found that you have falsified the documentation provided, I will refer you to the University’s Student Conduct Office.

If a student has missed a single lecture, Campus Senate police allows that I accept as an excused absence a self-signed note from the student. The note must also contain an acknowledgement by the student that the information is true and correct and that providing false information is prohibited under Code of Student Conduct. The student is also obligated to make a reasonable attempt to inform the instructor of his/her illness in advance. A self-signed note will not apply to missing a major Scheduled Grading Event.
RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

While the University does excuse absences for religious observances, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance and prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before the conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester. Therefore, by February 11, 2015, students must provide me in writing a request for a make-up exam if I have indicated a date on this syllabus that you are unable to make due to a specific religious observance on a specific date. Please refer to the Online Undergraduate Catalog Policy on Religious Observance.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form, which has been updated for the Spring 2015 semester. This form must be presented to me no later than February 11, 2015. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide me with documentation which has been reviewed by DSS after February 11, 2015.

ATHLETES

Any student participating in a school sponsored athletic program must provide a copy of their athletic calendar outlining dates when they will miss classes to the instructor by February 11, 2015.

ELMS

The University of Maryland uses Canvas via the Enterprise Learning Management Systems, (ELMS). The ELMS website is www.elms.edu. We will use ELMS in this course for posting grades, class announcements and class notes. After assignments are due and exams are given, grades will be posted on ELMS in a reasonable period of time. The instructor will also post class notes on ELMS for students to review. It should be noted that while notes will be posted, these notes are only a sketch of what will be discussed in class and are not to be considered a replacement for attending class and taking notes for oneself.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Maryland, College Park 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. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation and plagiarism. For more information of the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.shc.umd.edu.

The following statement must be signed and/or written on every exam and assignment: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).”
COPYRIGHT

Legally, course materials such as written or recorded lectures and Power Point presentations are copyright protected and the ability to copy and distribute course materials unless it is for personal use and with instructor’s permission is illegal.

The lectures I deliver in this class and the course materials I create and distribute are protected by federal copyright law as my original works. My lectures are recorded or delivered from written lectures in order to ensure copyright protection. You are permitted to take notes of my lectures and to use course materials for your use in this course. You may not record, reproduce, or distribute my lectures/notes for any commercial purpose without my written consent. Persons who sell or distribute copies or modified copies of my course materials, possess commercial copies of my notes (i.e. Terpnotes), or assist another person or entity in selling or distributing those materials may be considered in violation of the University Code of Student Conduct, Part 9(k).

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Your feedback about this course is very important to me and therefore we do several forms of evaluations throughout this semester. One important campus-wide evaluation is the online evaluation at the end of the semester. Students can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete their evaluations.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Reading Assignments:** Each student is responsible for reading assignments as outlined below and being fully prepared to participate in classroom discussions. Students will be selected at random to answer questions and participate in classroom discussion.

2. **Homework Assignments:** Assignments are due as noted in the Course Outline section of the syllabus. The requirements of each assignment will be outlined in class.
   a. **Race Awareness:** Write a 250-500 word paper identifying when you first became aware of your race. This is a personal reflection exercise designed to initiate the race discussion.
   b. **Journal Articles:** Weekly evaluation of assigned journal articles

3. **The Space Traders:** After reading Derrick Bell’s essay, “The Space Traders” (I will provide a copy of the essay in class) write a response to Professor Bell addressing the following: (1) Whether the scenario presented is plausible or incredible; (2) Identify two historical events (pre-2000) and two current events (post-2000) that support your answer to the first question. Make sure to answer both parts. This paper must be 4-6 typed pages. You must include a bibliography using APA format.
4. **Group Research Project:** Each group will select a topic related to race and crime. I will organize the class into groups and inform each student of their group members.

Grading will be based upon a group score. One-half of the grade will be an individual score and the other half will be based on an overall group score. Each member of the group will receive the same group score. This will be based upon how well the group works together and its level of organization. The individual score will be based upon the thoroughness and preparedness of the individual student. Group members should also be prepared to answer questions about their topic (from class members and the professor).

Each group must be prepared to address the following questions:

1. Why is the issue important; how is society affected by this issue?

2. What recent research has been done on the topic?
   a. Locate at least three recent journal articles or books and summarize their findings.
   b. Locate at least three recent newspaper/magazine articles on your topic and summarize their findings.

3. Are there any agencies which address this specific issue? If so, select at least one agency. Specifically, how does the agency address your topic area? Examine whether the agency is effective or ineffective. If no agency exists, what steps are being taken by the state or municipality to address this problem? Is the federal government involved in this issue?

4. What are the future implications of this issue? Is the problem likely to increase or decrease? Provide research to support your answer.

5. At the conclusion of your group project presentation, each group will submit a literature review including a minimum of three academic sources from each student.

6. **Midterm:** There will be a midterm exam. **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS** will be given unless a legitimate and documented excuse plus notification to me prior to the exam are given, and the exam must be made up within one week of the missed examination.
7. **Newspaper Policy Report**: This assignment counts as the final for the class. Each student is required to complete this assignment. The report will be based on your reading of the *Washington Post* and other local and national newspapers throughout the semester.

As you read the paper, please keep the following questions in mind:
- Which racial groups are portrayed? Are some featured more than others?
- How are racial groups represented regarding crime?
- Which racial groups are not featured?
- For those racial groups that are represented, how is this done? Are there explicit references to race? Photographs? Geographical references? Name cues?

For this assignment, discuss what guidelines you believe newspapers should use in deciding when/not to reference race. Be specific. Your guidelines should be supported by references to specific newspaper articles.

Your report should be 4-6 page, in APA format. It will be due at the end of the semester. Date **TBA**

### GRADING

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Space Traders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework Assignments</td>
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<td>Group Research Project</td>
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<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Newspaper Policy Report</td>
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This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor’s discretion. All changes will be announced in class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
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<td>1/29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction and Overview of the Course</td>
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| **Week 2**     |
| 2/4            |
| Census Evaluation |
| **Race Awareness Paper Due** |
| Movie: *What’s Race Got To Do With It?* |

| **Week 3**  |
| 2/11        |
| Section I   |
| Overview of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime |
| Section II  |
| Extent of Crime and Victimization |
| **Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions** |
| Movie: *Freedom Writers* |

| **Week 4**  |
| 2/18        |
| Section III |
| Theoretical Perspectives on Race and Crime |
| **Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions** |
| Movie: *Who Killed Vincent Chin* |
### Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions

**Week 5**  
2/25  

Section IV  
Juvenile Justice  

** Videos: Central Park Five**

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**Week 6**  
3/4  

Section V  
Policing  

**Space Traders Assignment Due**

** Video: Rodney King Incident**

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**Week 7**  
3/11  

**MIDTERM**

**Week 8**  
3/18  

**SPRING BREAK**

**Week 9**  
3/25  

Section VI  
Courts and Sentencing  

** Video: Tulia, Texas**
Week 10
4/1

Section VI
Courts and Sentencing

Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions

Video: Tulia, Texas

Week 11
4/8

Section VII
The Death Penalty

Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions

Video: Troy Davis

Week 12
4/15

Section VIII
Corrections

Homework Assignment: Discussion Questions

Week 13
4/22

Group Presentations

Week 14
4/29

Group Presentations

Week 15
5/6

Group Presentations