

Last revised: August 31, 2023

Criminology and Criminal Justice Honors Reading Seminar (CCJS 388H)



Course Time and Location

Semester: Fall 2023
Section: Section 0101
Time: Mondays 3:00pm to 5:30pm
Location: [WDS 1131](#) (Woods Hall)

Course Instructor and Honors Program Director for Fall 2023 Cohort

Name: Dr. Wade C. Jacobsen
Email: wcj@umd.edu
Office Hours: MW 11:00am to 11:50am, or by appointment
Office Location: 2220H LeFrak Hall, or on [Zoom](#).

Honors Program Co-Director for Fall 2023 Cohort

Name: Dr. Greg Midgette
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Course Teaching Assistants

Name:	Abbey Potter	Gabrielle Wy
Email:	apotter6@umd.edu	gw@umd.edu
Office Hours:	Mon 10am to 12pm	Wed 1pm to 3pm

In this course, you will learn about good criminological research.

This is the first course in the Honors Program for the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. In it, we examine the research process in criminology and criminal justice, including theory, methods, writing, and application to policy. The course builds on other coursework by providing you with guided development of the tools you will need to conduct independent research, including an honors thesis.

You have four objectives in this course.

1. Learn to read and understand criminological research.
2. Be able to apply the principles you learn from reading good criminological research and seeing it presented, to your own research, writing, and presentations.
3. Understand the research process in criminology. Choose a research topic, refine a set of research questions, and develop a set of testable hypotheses.
4. Become familiar with the core components of major criminological theories, the methods that can be used for testing these theories, and the implications of the theories for policy and practice.

This is not a regular undergraduate course.

This course is set up like a graduate-level seminar. We cover more material than would be covered in a regular undergraduate course. The standards for achievement are also higher. You should remain engaged in the material each time we meet. For this reason, you should not use laptops or other devices during class. This policy is based on research evidence (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwPaw3Fx5Hk>) and experience teaching upper-level undergraduate courses.

You need to attend class of course.

Especially given that this is an honors program, you are expected to attend class and come well prepared. If you can't do that, you may not be a good fit for the honors program. It will be very difficult to earn the B or higher that is required to stay in the program without being engaged in class.

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I will base your final grade on the following scale.

A+	=	97% +	C+	=	77% to 79%
A	=	93% to 96%	C	=	73% to 76%
A-	=	90% to 92%	C-	=	70% to 72%
B+	=	87% to 89%	D+	=	67% to 69%
B	=	83% to 86%	D	=	63% to 66%
B-	=	80% to 82%	D-	=	60% to 62%
			F	=	below 60%

Weight the raw scores on your assignments by the percentage value in the table above and sum the categories. I will round the percentage to the nearest whole number, rounding up at .5 (for example, 86.4% will be a B and 86.5% will be a B+). If you have questions or concerns about a grade on an assignment and believe I should review it, please describe your concern in detail via email, within 48 hours of the due date. If you have concerns about your final grade, please email me as early as possible after grades are posted. More information here: <https://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Our TAs and I are available during our respective office hours.

We want you to do well in this course and will be available during office hour to discuss assignments, answer questions, or provide additional clarification on class material. If circumstances prevent us from being available during regularly scheduled office hours, we will try to notify the class in advance. If you are not available during office hours, please email us to schedule another time to meet as needed.

You should be committed to academic integrity.

I require absolute academic integrity in this course. The [University of Maryland Honor Pledge](#) reads: *I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.* We are each responsible for keeping this pledge. I will refer any suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the University Honor Council. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing, cheating, having unauthorized possession of an examination, fabricating citations or other information, submitting or tampering with the work of another person, and aiding another person in doing any of these things. You are permitted to take notes in the class and to share these notes with other students currently in the class. However, **you may not record, reproduce, or distribute my lectures or course materials for any purpose outside of this class.** For more information on academic integrity, visit <https://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-iii-academic-affairs/iii-100a>

You should follow the Code of Student Conduct.

I expect you to adhere to the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and to be courteous and respectful to me and to other students in this class. This includes using appropriate language, keeping your cell phone silenced and put away during lectures, and refraining from other disrespectful or distracting behavior (reading outside material, browsing the internet, text-messaging, having side conversations, sleeping, etc.). For more information related to student conduct, visit <https://www.studentconduct.umd.edu/>

You may have access to recourses for accessibility and accommodations.

Students seeking accommodations for a disability should contact Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) at [301.314.7682](tel:301.314.7682), or adsfrontdesk@umd.edu. After receiving an Accommodations Letter from ADS, you should meet with me **as soon as possible** to provide a copy of the accommodations letter and for my signature on the Acknowledgement of Student Request form. Together, we will plan how the accommodations will be implemented. Specific details must be documented and added to the Acknowledgment of Student Request form. You are responsible for submitting the signed original form to ADS and retaining a copy of the signed Acknowledgment of Student Request for your records.

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Course Schedule and Assignments

Week	Date	Topics	Do before Class	Due before Class (on ELMS)	Do in Class
Introduction to the Course					
1	Aug 28	Introduction.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the course syllabus. 2. Explore the following websites. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Course ELMS page b. CCJS Faculty Bios c. American Society of Criminology (ASC) 	Write down three criminological research topics that interest you (they do not have to come from the reading material) and say why they interest you. Prepare to share.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name game 2. Intro to professor 3. Intro to program and course 4. Line up 5. Intro to dept and field 6. Discuss topics
2	Sep 04	Labor Day. No class or office hours.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to two episodes of the Criminology Academy. Make sure you choose episodes that highlight a criminologist's particular study. 2. Find and skim through the academic journal articles that the episodes highlight. You can find them using Google Scholar or the UMD Library. 	Write one single-spaced page about (1) what interested you the most in what you heard in the podcasts and (2) what questions came up as you listened to the podcasts and skimmed through the articles. Include the titles of the podcasts you listened to and the articles you read. Submit the write-up on ELMS and prepare to share with the class.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No class
3	Sep 11	Data, patterns, correlates. The research process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following short excerpts and encyclopedia entries on ELMS. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Alexander 2020 b. Fagan 2002 c. Phillips 2002 d. Rocque et al. 2016 2. As you read, take notes about what you learn about patterns in crime and criminal justice. 	Write one single-spaced page that describes two patterns in crime or justice involvement you identify in the readings in #2 on the left. Focus on patterns you feel are the interesting or important. Say what the patterns are and why you think they are interesting or important. Include a list of five questions related to the patterns in crime that come to your mind as you read. Focus on questions you have that are not answered by the material in the readings. Explain if and how these questions could be answered using research. Submit on ELMS and prepare to share with the class.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore: Add Health, FECWS, NCVS, NIBRS, NLSY, UCR. 2. Examine patterns and correlates in different data sources. 3. Discuss research questions
4	Sep 18	What is theory?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Akers et al. 2016 on ELMS 2. Read Paternoster and Bachman 2001 on ELMS 	Find and read two published empirical journal articles that are directly related to one of your topics of interest. Write one single-spaced page that, for each article, identifies one pattern that the authors observe in their data. Describe how the authors explain the pattern they observe. Summarize their explanation. Include the reference information for the articles.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intro to theory 2. Building blocks and conceptual models 3. Evaluating theory 4. Group theory 5. Discuss articles
5	Sep 25	Social disorganization. Strain.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following excerpts on ELMS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Shaw and McKay 1942 b. Du Bois 1889 c. Agnew 1992 2. Find and read the following articles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sampson and Groves 1989 b. Agnew and White 1992 	Article deconstruction. Instructions on ELMS.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social disorganization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications 2. Strain <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications 3. Guest: Center for Research on Child Wellbeing, QA
6	Oct 02	Control.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following excerpts on ELMS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hirschi 1969 b. Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990 2. Find and read the following articles: 	Article deconstruction. Instructions on ELMS.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Costello and Vowell 1999 b. Grasmick et al. 1993 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Self-control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications
7	Oct 09	Rational choice. Deterrence. Routine activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following excerpts on ELMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Beccaria 1764 b. Cohen and Felson 1979 2. Find and read the following articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Midgette et al. 2020 b. Osgood et al. 1996 	Article deconstruction. Instructions on ELMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deterrence, rational choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications 2. Routine activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications 3. Graduate student panel, QA
8	Oct 16	Learning. Labeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following excerpts on ELMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sutherland 1947 b. Lemert 1951 2. Find and read the following articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Akers and Lee 1995 a. Wiley et al. 2013 	Article deconstruction. Instructions on ELMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guest: Abbey Potter, QU 2. Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications 3. Labeling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short history b. Conceptual model c. Policy implications
9	Oct 23	Writing in the social sciences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following chapters on ELMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Trimble 1975 Chapter 1 b. Booth et al. 2003 Chapter 4 2. Find and read the following articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Haskins article b. White 2005 	<p>Write a two-page (min) proposal that introduces your research questions as well as the data and methods you plan to use to address your research questions. 12-pt font, double-spaced, 1-in margins.</p> <p>List of at least six questions you plan to ask the guest speaker. These should be about their specific study, a larger project, or their career in research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guest: Anna Haskins, QA 2. Rules of writing 3. In-class writing workshop
10	Oct 30	Research design. What are methods?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Read the following chapters on ELMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Nachmias and Nachmias 1976 Chapters 2-3 b. Kubrin et al. 2009 Chapter 1 	<p>Write a five-page (min) proposal that includes an introduction section, background section including literature review and theoretical development, section that summarizes your hypotheses and the contributions of the study to prior research, and a section that describes your data, analytic sample, and methods. 12-pt font, double-spaced, 1-in margins. Prepare draft for peer review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic elements 2. Basics of research design 3. Guest presentation, QA
11	Nov 06	Data Collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Nachmias and Nachmias 1976 Ch. 5-7 2. Find and read the following articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Larroulet article b. Reichman et al. 2001 	<p>Peer review. Instructions on ELMS</p> <p>List of at least six questions you plan to ask the guest speaker. These should be about their specific study, a larger project, or their career in research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observation 2. Survey research 3. Administrative data 4. Guest: Pilar Larroulet, QA
12	Nov 13	Descriptive methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Hagan 2006 excerpt 2. Review UCLA notes 3. Find and read Ragan 2020 	<p>Worksheet on using Stata for descriptive statistics.</p> <p>List of at least six questions you plan to ask the guest speaker. These should be about their specific study, a larger project, or their career in research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequency distributions 2. Central tendency 3. Dispersion, variability 4. Guest: Dan Ragan, QA

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13	Nov 20	Regression analysis. Causal methods.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the following chapters on ELMS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hoffmann 2010 Chapter 2 b. Firebaugh 2008 Chapter 5 2. Find and read Sugie et al. 2020 	<p>Worksheet on using Stata for inferential statistics. Submit on ELMS and prepare to discuss in class.</p> <p>List of at least six questions you plan to ask the guest speaker. These should be about their specific study, a larger project, or their career in research.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Means comparison 2. Statistical correlation 3. Basics of linear regression 4. Comparing like with like 5. Guest: Naomi Sugie, QA
14	Nov 27	Qualitative methods.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find and read the following articles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brunson and Wade 2019 b. Lareau 2002 c. Turney et al. 2023 	<p>Write a revised ten-page (max) proposal that includes an introduction section, background section including literature review and theoretical development, section that summarizes your hypotheses and the contributions of the study to prior research, and a section that describes your data, analytic sample, and methods. 12-pt font, double-spaced, 1-in margins.</p> <p>List of at least six questions you plan to ask the guest speaker. These should be about their specific study, a larger project, or their career in research.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observation 2. Interviews 3. Data analysis 4. Participatory action research 5. Guest: Kristin Turney, QA
15	Dec 04	Student presentations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read 6 Tips by Wiley 2. Read UCLA tips 3. Prepare a final version of your talking points and presentation materials. 4. Practice your presentation. 	Talking points and other presentation materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation 2. Peer review
16	Dec 11	Student presentations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a final version of your talking points and presentation materials. 2. Practice your presentation. 	Talking points and other presentation materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation 2. Peer review