

University of Maryland
Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice
FALL SEMESTER -- 2019

Course Title: Developing Fluency in Criminological Research

Course Number: CCJS 418G

Class Time & Location: Tuesday 2-4:30, JMZ 3118

Professor: Dr. Jean M. McGloin

Office Hours: Tuesday 10am-12pm or by appointment

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Course Overview:

The purpose of this course is to sharpen your critical thinking, reading and writing skills with regard to criminological research. The course will begin by reviewing the nature of social science research and writing. It will then shift to learning how to critically judge published research on various criminological theories, criminal justice policies, and other issues related to crime. This course will operate as a seminar and students will be expected to discuss the assigned research articles in depth, paying attention to the content, the methodology, and the implications. Students will also write a research proposal, using the skills acquired in class.

Reading Materials:

- Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.C., & Williams, J.M. (2016). *The Craft of Research, 3rd Edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Articles posted on ELMS course site

Grading Schema:

Your final grade will be based on your performance in 4 domains: class participation (20%); two essays (30%); a final paper (25%); and, a final exam (25%).

Class Participation: Because this class operates as a seminar, participation is vital. Students are expected to complete all of the reading assignments and to share their perspectives and opinions in a manner that illustrates critical thinking during every class.

Essays: Each essay will be a critical evaluation of a research article. These 3-4 page essays will require you to discuss the thesis/research question, methodology,

findings, limitations, and impact of the piece. Specific directions for the essays are provided on the course website.

Final Paper: The final paper will be a 10 page research proposal. Specifically, students will generate a research question related to one of three theories. Then, the student will identify a data set with which s/he will test this hypothesis, justifying the selection of these data and the selected measures. Specific directions are provided on the course website.

Final Exam: Throughout the semester, we will discuss various empirical articles in a critical fashion. We will deconstruct the conceptual arguments, methodology, implications, and limitations. As the semester progresses, you will become more skilled at this enterprise. The final exam will ask you to engage in this process with an empirical article of my choosing.

Class Policies:

- **Attendance:** Unexcused absences will detrimentally affect your participation grade. Except during a Major Scheduled Grading Event, students may be excused from a single lecture one time per course per semester for a medically necessitated reason. The student should make a reasonable attempt to inform the instructor of his/her illness prior to the class, and present his or her instructor with a self-signed note attesting to the date of his or her illness. This note must include an acknowledgement: (a) that the information provided is true and correct, and (b) that the student understands that providing false information to University officials is a violation of Part 9(h) of the Code of Student Conduct. Any more absences will not be excused unless the student provides documentation of a medical or family emergency, which the professor will verify. In cases of extended absences, the student must meet with the professor in order to arrive at a plan that will address the missed material and his or her participation grade.
- **Missed Deadlines/Late Assignments:** Extensions for papers or presentations will not be given except in cases of a medical or family emergency. Accompanying written documentation, such as hospital admission papers or a physician's note (which the professor will verify), is required. If a *complete* assignment is late without my prior approval, it will lose 10 percentage points for every 24 hours that is past the due date.
- **Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form and any violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication of information used in assignments, plagiarism, and knowingly facilitating the academic dishonesty of another.

Class Schedule

- **August 27: Introduction**

- **September 3: *Research and writing in criminology and criminal justice***

Reading for this class:

The Craft of Research (the entire book)

- **September 10: *Learning Theory***

Reading for this class:

Paternoster, R., McGloin, J. M., Nguyen, H., & Thomas, K. J. (2013). The causal impact of exposure to deviant peers: An experimental investigation. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 50(4), 476-503.

Miller, B., & Morris, R. G. (2016). Virtual peer effects in social learning theory. *Crime & Delinquency*, 62(12), 1543-1569.

- **September 17: *The General Theory of Crime***

Reading for this class:

Vazsonyi, A. T., Pickering, L. E., Junger, M., & Hessing, D. (2001). An empirical test of a general theory of crime: A four-nation comparative study of self-control and the prediction of deviance. *Journal of research in crime and delinquency*, 38(2), 91-131.

Pratt, T.C., & Cullen, F.T. (2000). The empirical status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime: A meta-analysis. *Criminology*, 38(3), 931-964

- **September 24: *Hot Spots Policing***

Reading for this class:

Sherman, L.R. et al. (1989). Hot spots of predatory crime: Routine activities and the criminology of place. *Criminology*, 27, 27-56.

Weisburd, D & Green, L. (1995). Policing drug hot spots: The Jersey City drug market analysis experiment. *Justice Quarterly*, 12: 711-735.

- **October 1: *Terrorism and Final Paper Discussion***

Essay 1 Due (Due to Rosh Hashanah, the deadline for this assignment is 9am on Weds 10/2; please submit your paper via the course website)

Reading for this class:

Dugan, L., LaFree, G., & Piquero, A. (2005). Testing a rational choice model of airline hijackings. *Criminology*, 43, 1031-1066.

LaFree, G., Dugan, L. & Korte, R. (2009). The impact of British counterterrorist strategies on political violence in Northern Ireland: Comparing deterrence and backlash models. *Criminology*, 47, 7-45.

- **October 8: *Subculture of Violence***

Reading for this class:

Kubrin, C.E. & Weitzer, R. (2003). Retaliatory homicide: Concentrated disadvantage and neighborhood crime. *Social Problems*, 50, 157-180.

McGloin, J.M. et al. (2011). Predicting the violent offender: The discriminant validity of the subculture of violence. *Criminology*, 49, 767-794.

- **October 15: *IQ and Delinquency***

Reading for this class:

Cullen, F.T. et al. (1997). Crime and the Bell Curve: Lessons learned from intelligent criminology. *Crime and Delinquency*, 43(4), 387-411.

McGloin, J.M., Pratt, T.C., & Maahs, J. (2004). Rethinking the IQ-delinquency relationship: A longitudinal analysis of multiple theoretical models. *Justice Quarterly*, 21(3), 603-631.

- **October 22: *Race and Sentencing***

*****Essay 2 Due*** (due by start of class at 2pm; please submit via the course website)**

Reading for this class:

Paternoster, R., & Brame, R. (2008). Reassessing race disparities in Maryland capital cases. *Criminology*, 46(4), 971-1008.

King, R. D., & Johnson, B. D. (2016). A punishing look: Skin tone and Afrocentric features in the halls of justice. *American Journal of Sociology*, 122(1), 90-124.

- **October 29: Offender Profiling**

Reading for this class:

Alison, L. et al. 2003. Interpreting the accuracy of offender profiles. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 9, 185-195.

Canter, D.V. et al. (2004). The organized/disorganized typology of serial murder: Myth or model? *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 10, 293-320.

- **November 5: Boston Gun Project**

Reading for this class:

Braga, A.A. et al. (2001). Problem-oriented policing, deterrence, and youth violence: An evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38, 195-225.

Kennedy, D.M. (1997). Pulling levers: Chronic Offenders, High-Crime Settings and a Theory of Prevention. *Valparaiso Law Review*, 449,

- **November 12: NO CLASS (I will be at a conference)**

- **November 19: Desistance from Crime**

Reading for this class:

Bersani, B. E., & Doherty, E. E. (2013). When the ties that bind unwind: Examining the enduring and situational processes of change behind the marriage effect. *Criminology*, 51(2), 399-433.

Warr, M. (1998). Life-course transitions and desistance from crime. *Criminology*, 36, 183-216.

- **November 26: Topic of your choosing**

Readings TBD according to topic selected

- **December 3: *Topic of your choosing***

****FINAL PAPER DUE** (paper due by start of class at 2pm; please submit via course website)**

Readings TBD according to topic selected

FINAL EXAM DATE TO BE DETERMINED BASED ON THE UNIVERSITY SCHEDULE