



# Contemporary Criminological Theory

CCJS 454

Spring 2016

<i>Instructor</i>	Professor David Maimon
<i>Lecture</i>	Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:45 Susquehanna Hall 1117
<i>Office hours</i>	Tuesday and Thursday 10:15-12:15 and by appointment
<i>Phone</i>	(301) 405-4716
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## Course Synopsis

The purpose of this course is to provide knowledge on the main theoretical accounts that explain the underlying causes of criminal behaviors. We will highlight and explore various theories of crime causation. Particularly, we will examine how individual choices, socialization experiences, biological factors and our social structure affect criminal behaviors. We begin with an overview of the early classical and positivist foundations of criminological thought and then move on to discuss more recent extensions of anomie, differential associations, social control, social disorganization, routine activities, deterrence, developmental and other theories.

The major objectives of the course are:

- To become familiar with the foundations of current theoretical debates in criminology.
- To describe the contemporary dominant theories of criminal behaviors.
- To apply the theoretical approaches considered to the explanation of crime.
- To critically evaluate the theoretical approaches considered.

## Required Texts

1. Thomas J Bernard, Jeffrey B. Snipes and Alex L. Gerould. 2010. *Vold's Theoretical Criminology (6<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-538641-7)
2. Francis T. Cullen, Robert Agnew and Pamela Wilcox. 2014. *Criminological Theory: Past to Present (5<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-930111-9)
3. Additional required readings will be posted on ELMS. You must be registered in this class to log on to the website. You may use the website to obtain class information, check announcements and your grades and obtain course readings. The address for the website is <http://elms.umd.edu>.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

**Exams. 42%**

- Midterm Exam 21%
  - Final Exam 21%
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**Term paper project. 44%**

- Topic Statement 6%
  - Article Review 8%
  - Final Paper 30%
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**Quizzes. 14%**

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**1. Examination (42% of class grade)** - There will be mid-term and final examinations for this course. These exams may consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blanks and short answers. The midterm exam will be given on **March 10** during the regularly scheduled lecture time. The final exam will be held on **Tuesday May 17** between 1:30-3:30pm.

**2. Term paper project (44% of class grade)** - Students will develop a paper over the course of the semester. The grade for this project is composed of three parts (writing, simply put, is a process): the topic statement, the article review, and the final paper. This paper is designed so that you develop and construct a research proposal on a deviance related topic that genuinely interests you. For this proposal you will need to consult at least *six* outside sources, such as books and scholarly articles. A detailed handout on this assignment will come later in the semester.

1. *Topic Statement (6%)*: This is a single paragraph description of your proposed topic due to me in class on **February 16 (first draft) and February 23 (final draft)** for my approval.

2. *Article Review (8%)*: You are to write an article review on one of the outside empirical sources you have chosen for your topic. This should be a two to three page paper including a summary of the article, an evaluation of the article's argument, and a statement of how it fits with the greater structure of the paper. You should also attach the abstract of the article to the back of your assignment. This is due to me in class on **March 8 (1<sup>st</sup> draft) and March 29 (final draft)**.

3. *Final Paper (30%)*: The final paper should include an overview of the literature (how criminologists have thought about the problem you are discussing) and its implications for criminology. It should be 6-8 pages and will be due to me in class on **April 26 (first draft) and May 10 (final draft)**.

**3. Quizzes (14% of class grade)** – 8 *POP* quizzes will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes will test your level of familiarity with the assigned readings for the relevant class. To pass the quizzes, all you have to do is keep up with the readings.

Each quiz will count for 2 points from your final grade. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of lectures. Students who are late will not be allowed to take the quiz (and will lose 2 points!!). *Only 7 of the 8 quizzes will be count in your final grade.*

### Grading Scale

**Grades will be assigned following the University of Maryland standard grading scheme:**

Percentage	Letter Grade	Qualitative Description
97-100	A+	Achievement that is <u>outstanding</u> relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
93-96	A	
90-92	A-	
87-89	B+	Achievement that is <u>significantly above</u> the level necessary to meet course requirements.
83-86	B	
80-82	B-	
77-79	C+	Achievement that is <u>in keeping</u> with the course requirements in every respect.
73-76	C	
70-72	C-	
67-69	D+	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
60-66	D	
0-59	F	Work that was either completed but not worthy of credit, or incomplete

### Academic Misconduct

I take Academic misconduct seriously. Please do not engage in any form of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to): cheating (use of unauthorized materials, assistance on individual assignments or exams, etc.), fabrication (the falsification of information in an academic exercise), plagiarism (the presentation of ideas or statements of another person as one's own), and facilitating academic misconduct (helping another student to do any of the above). Any suspected case of academic dishonesty will be referred to the University Honor Council. For additional information on academic dishonesty and the accompanying procedures and penalties, see the University's Honor Code at: <http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html>

### Make-ups and Late Assignments

**EXAMS:** Exam dates are firm. This includes the final exam that is to be taken at the university appointed time during finals week. There are **no** make-up exams except under extreme circumstances. You should contact me **PRIOR** to the exam date if you are going to miss an exam. If a make-up exam is granted, you will be asked to provide official documentation.

**QUIZZES:** There are only five valid circumstances under which make up quizzes will be allowed: (1) illness, (2) death in the immediate family, (3) religious holiday, (4) court

appearance, and (5) a required university activity. Documentation of these circumstances is required and you must notify me in advance of a situation (when possible). Documentation must contain information on the specific dates for which you were unable to take the quiz, and you are expected to take the quiz immediately after the circumstances have past.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** I ask that you *don't place assignments in my mailbox or submit them via e-mail*. Rather, I ask that you turn a hard copy of your assignments in to me **within the first 10 minutes of class**. Assignments that are not turned in to me during that time are subject to a 10% reduction (e.g. -7.5 points for a 75 point assignment) per each day, unless you have a credible excuse, official documentation, and you contacted me **BEFORE** (when possible) the assignment was due.

**NOTE :** Keep all of your class materials until you have received your final grade. This includes any papers that have been graded and handed back. In addition, please keep an electronic or additional hard copy of your papers until the end of the semester.

### The Classroom Environment

The important thing is to respect one another. It is crucial for our classroom to be comfortable and conducive to learning for all participants. We do not have to agree—hopefully we will have all kinds of intellectual disagreements—but we have to treat one another with respect. This means active listening and taking each other's ideas seriously. Keep in mind that we can learn a lot by listening to our colleagues.

I ask that everyone show up to class on time. In addition, please turn off your cell phones and other portable devices that can be distracting in the classroom. I will make exceptions to this rule if you explain to me why you need it turned on during class. Please inform me of this before class begins. **Surfing the web from your laptops for leisure or sending text messages during lecture time is prohibited.** Disruptive behaviors of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to show civility in class will be subject to referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

### Student Services

I am happy to discuss any issues or problems that you may have with this course during my office hours, or by appointment if needed. If you are experiencing special difficulties with this or other courses, especially in terms of writing or studying, I encourage you to take advantage of the services that The University of Maryland offers:

**Writing Center**  
1205 Tawes Hall  
College Park, MD 20742  
(301) 405-3785  
**Email: [writadmin@umd.edu](mailto:writadmin@umd.edu)**  
<http://www.english.umd.edu/writingcenter>

**Counseling Center Learning Assistance**  
3125 South Campus Dining Hall  
College Park, MD  
(301) 314-7651  
**Email: [LAS-cc@umd.edu](mailto:LAS-cc@umd.edu)**  
<http://www.umarc.miami.edu>

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you need accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you may contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You may also contact the office of *Disability Support Service* at (301) 314-7682 in 4155 Susquehanna Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodation for your documented disability (see also <http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/>). Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor, and seeking available assistance, in a timely manner.

### Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Announcements will be made in class as to changes in this schedule. Please complete the assigned readings before class. Additional readings may be assigned by the instructor in class.

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>READING ASSIGNMENT</u></b>
Jan 26	Introduction to course and syllabus review	
Jan 28	Introduction to criminological Theory	BSG (CH-1) CAW (pp 5-17)
Feb 2	The extent of deviance and crime	Title and Pateronester (elms)
Feb 4	Positivism and classical approaches	BSG (pp. 14-24) CAW (pp. 21-25)
Feb 9	Biological theories	BGS (CH-3) CAW (part II, pages 34-42)
Feb 11	Biological theories (cont.)	CAW (chapters 4 and 5)
Feb 16	Personality and crime <b>TOPIC STATEMENT DUE (1<sup>ST</sup> DRAFT)</b>	BGS (CH-4) CAW (CH-6)
Feb 18	Durkheim, anomie and modernization	BGS (CH-6)
Feb 23	Anomie and strain theories <b>TOPIC STATEMENT DUE (FINAL DRAFT)</b>	BGS (CH-8) CAW (chapter 13 and 15)
Feb 25	Anomie and strain theories (cont.)	CAW (Chapter 16) Agnew 1992 (elms)
Mar 1	Social disorganization theories	BGS (CH- 5 and 7)
Mar 3	Social disorganization theories (cont.)	CAW ( pp. 97-104 and CH-9)
Mar 8	Review <b>ARTICLE REVIEW DUE (FIRST DRAFT)</b>	
Mar 10	<b>MID TERM EXAM</b>	
Mar 15	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
Mar 17	<b>NO CLASS</b>	

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>READING ASSIGNMENT</u></b>
Mar 22	Differential association	BGS (CH-9) CAW (CH-10)
Mar 24	Social learning	CAW (CH-11) Matsueda 1988 (elms)
Mar 29	Cultural theories <b>ARTICLE REVIEW DUE (FINAL DRAFT)</b>	CAW (CH-12) Baller et al 2009 (elms)
Mar 31	Control theories	BGS (CH-10) CAW (CH-18)
April 5	Control theories (cont.)	CAW (CH-19)
April 7	Labeling theory	CAW (pp. 253-266)
April 12	Deterrence theory	CAW (pp. 417-436)
April 14	Routine activities	CAW (pp.454-465 and CH- 36)
April 19	NO CLASS	
April 21	Feminist criminology	CAW (pp.325-334 and CH-27)
April 26	Developmental and life course theories <b>FINAL PAPER DUE (1<sup>ST</sup> DRAFT)</b>	BGS (CH15)
April 28	Developmental and life course theories (cont)	CAW (CH- 40 and 41) Cohen & Vila 1996 (elms)
May 3	Integrated theories of crime	BGS (CH-16)
May 5	Integrated theories of crime (cont.)	CAW (CH-45 and 46)
May 10	Review <b>FINAL PAPER DUE (FINAL DRAFT)</b>	

Note: BGS refers to the Bernard Snipes and Gerould text: CAW refers to the Cullen, Agnew and Wilcox text



**Fear the Turtle**