American society is a divided about policing as it is about many other issues. Many Americans demand change, while others defend current police practices. Fault lines of values and causal assumptions shade the interpretation of facts based on research. Yet criminology offers a vast store of ideas and facts that are often overlooked in both police administration and public debates. This course examines what criminological knowledge about policing can offer to both the police and the public. Our aim is discover better ways for criminologists to help put knowledge into practice for better policing.

The central aim of this course is to equip students with the best conceptual frameworks, theoretical insights, and research designs to address the central policy concerns about policing, including:

- Creating and sustaining police legitimacy,
- Improving police effectiveness in maintaining community safety, and
- Minimizing the use of force deployed by police in proportion to its necessity.

Our premise will be that we do not know nearly enough about how societies can accomplish these objectives, although we do know how to learn more soon.

The course has four parts. Part I introduces students to a history of criminological ideas about policing. Part II illustrates the evidence on each of the major levels of analysis of the causes of police behavior: individual, situational, organizational and other factors. Part III reviews the evidence of the effects of police behavior on key outcomes such as crime prevention and detection. Part IV considers the application of criminology to policing, in ways that can improve its fairness and effectiveness.

Requirements. The course requires students to attend all seminars, to read required materials before each seminar, to discuss the readings thoughtfully during the seminar, to write a paper, and to deliver a 15-minute, powerpoint slide-assisted presentation summarizing the paper in class, which will then be discussed immediately afterwards in class and prior to the due date for the written version of the paper (due on 21 May).

Grading. Grades will be based on the following work elements in the indicated proportions:
• Class participation (50%)
• Written paper (25%)
• Oral Presentation (25%)

**Guest Instructor Seminars.** All class meetings will be held face-to-face in the small conference room, with three of the 15 meetings led by guest instructors.

**Paper.** The paper should identify and address a key issue in one of the three central policy areas (Legitimacy, Public Safety or Police Use of Force) in an integrated analysis that answers all three of these questions:

1. What is the state of criminological knowledge relevant to this issue?
2. What is the most important gap between criminology and police practice?
3. What plan would you propose for bridging that gap (in part 2) by applying criminology to police practice, and to obtain what specific outcome?

By an “issue” in a policy area I mean one clearly delimited subject of public debate, such as police shootings of citizens, body-worn video cameras, stop and search, or preventing gang violence. The paper should not exceed 6,000 words (excluding references and graphics). The paper is due by email submission to Professor Sherman by 5:00 pm on Monday, May 20, 2019.

**Readings:** All students will receive a free copy of POLICING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (1992) and several reprints. All other assigned readings will be available by PDF, and are listed below for each class meeting.

This syllabus incorporates all policies stated at [http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html](http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html).
Summary Schedule

I. Introduction: Criminology and Policing

   Reading: Skogan and Frydl 2004

II. Causes of Police Behavior

2. February 4: What explains police practice and its variation?
   Readings: Sherman 1980
   https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/002242788001700106
   Black 1970
   https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/stflr23&div=62&g_sent=1&case_token=FojnEltxbE0AAAAA:I7sZNP9MOiq_s07hHsdnzutW15OVAU8L8RiADoxy3lAdYRDnX05aypQ9Q31CgfbVMZAm73ug&collection=journals
   Muir 1977
   https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Tbd0chRC7mEC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=Muir+Police&ots=eDf9PFzd-_&sig=alinr-B1apY1WzZtpcchPK_zQ#v=onepage&q=Muir%20Police&f=false

3. February 11: Individual differences across police officers
   Readings: Ridgeway 2016
   https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2330443X.2015.1129918
   Riksheim & Chermak 1993

4. February 18: Situational differences in patterns of police behavior
   Readings: Friedrich 1980
   https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/000271628045200109
   Mastrofski et al 1996
   https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022427896033003001

5. February 25: Systemic causes of police “crashes”
   Readings: Sherman 2018
   Klinger 2005

III. Effects of Policing

6. March 4: Does Policing Deter Crime?
   https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/670398

7. March 11: Does Policing Increase Crime—and Harm?
   Readings: Sherman 1992 (handout);
   Sherman & Harris 2015
   https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11292-014-9203-x
   Petrosino et al 2010
Mar 18—no class SPRING BREAK

8. Mar 25 (Dr. Lauren Porter, Guest Instructor): *Understanding Crime “Hot Spots”*

9. April 1 (Dr. Cynthia Lum, Guest Instructor): *A Matrix of Police Effects*

10. April 8 (Dr. Charles Wellford, Guest Instructor): *Do Police Solve Crimes?*
    Readings:

**IV. Applying Criminology to Policing**

11. Apr 15: *What Is Evidence-Based Policing?*
    Readings: Sherman 2013 [https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/670819](https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/670819)


13. Apr 29: *How Can Police Use Criminology to Do What Works Best?*
    Reading: President’s Task Force on 21st-Century Policing (2015)
https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10940-014-9236-3
15. May 13: Oral Presentations in Class

MAY 20: All Papers Due by email to Lawrence.Sherman@crim.cam.ac.uk

**Causes and Effects of Police Behavior: A Selected Bibliography**


Black, Donald. 1971 “The Social Organization of Arrest.”


Kubrin et al 2010.


