

SPRING 2000
AJ 118, Section 1
MonWed 9:00-10:15am

Dr. Jan Johnston
Office: MacQuarrie Hall Rm 508
Office Phone: 408 924-2942
Home Phone: 650 366 3234
E-mail: johnston@email.sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Mon & Wed 1-5:30pm
(except for staff meetings).
Tuesdays by appointment.

AJ118 NATURE OF CRIME

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to criminology focusing on the nature and extent of crime, types of offenses, and methods of measurement. Emphasis is upon comparing and contrasting the major theories of what causes criminal behavior including the contribution of agents of social control. The implications of these theories for prevention and rehabilitation efforts are considered, along with the influence of socio-political and historical processes.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Review historical developments in defining and responding to crime
2. Evaluate crime statistics in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of different ways of measuring crime
3. Examine the concepts and processes of criminal law
4. Compare and contrast theories of what causes criminal behavior
5. Evaluate crime prevention and rehabilitation strategies
6. Critique incidence statistics and typologies of criminal offenses in terms of socio-political processes, including race, ethnic, gender, and class discrimination.

Required Texts: (available at Spartan Bookstore)

Siegel, L. (2000). Criminology, 7th Edition. Belmont, CC. Wadsworth
Reiman, J. (1998). The rich get richer and the poor get prison: Ideology, class and criminal justice. Fifth Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Students should do the assigned readings prior to the lectures in order to get the most out of the material.

Course Requirements:

Three examinations and a written paper will be required.

The two midterms and the final exam will be based upon lectures and text materials, and will be made up of true/false, multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

The written assignment will involve reviewing a movie or a book about crime and writing a paper (six-pages 12 point type) comparing and contrasting two different theoretical ways of explaining criminal behavior. Specifically:

- a) summarize the plot of the story and identify the type of crime committed (no more than 1 page)
- b) briefly describe one theory of crime (about one page)
- c) show how that theory explains the crime in the movie or book (about one page)
- d) briefly describe a second theory of crime (about one page)
- e) show how the second theory explains the same crime in the movie or book (about one page)
- f) summarize your analysis by describing the similarities and differences and/or the strengths and weaknesses of the two theories in understanding what caused the crime in the movie or book (about one page).

Students wishing to ensure a good grade on the paper are encouraged to submit their best possible draft at least one week before the due date in order to get feedback. No re-writes after the due date are permitted.

Evaluation:

Each of the three exams and the written paper are worth 25% of your grade. Academic standards for grades are listed separately (see attached).

Regular class attendance and participation is expected. Outstanding class participation may improve the final grade by ½ grade point and is within the discretion of the instructor.

In accord with departmental policy, make-up exams and acceptance of late reports after the due date will be provided only in extreme cases and only where appropriate documentation is provided. Make-up or re-takes of the mid-term exams can only be done at the time of the final exam.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

- Week 1 Course overview: Crime and criminology (Siegel, Chpt 1).
 Week 2 Criminal law and its processes (Siegel, Chpt 2)
 Week 3 The nature and extent of crime (Siegel, Chpt 3)
 Week 4 Victims and Victimization (Siegel, Chpt 4).
- Week 5 **Review & First mid-term exam: Wednesday, February 23.**
- Theories of Crime Causation:
 Week 6 Choice Theory (Siegel, Chpt. 5)
 Week 7 Social structure theories (Siegel, Chpt. 7)
 Week 8 Social process theories (Siegel, Chpt 8)
 Week 9 Conflict theories (Siegel, Chpt 9, Reiman, Appendix)
- Week 10 **SPRING BREAK, March 27,29**
- Final Paper Due: Monday, April 3**
- Week 11 Trait & developmental theories (Siegel, Chpt 6 & 10)
- Week 12 **Review & Second mid-term exam: Wednesday April 12**
- Crime Typologies
 Week 13 Violent crime (Siegel, Chpt 11; Reiman, Chpt. 1)
 Week 14 Property crime (Siegel, Chpt. 12; Reiman, Chpt 2)
 Week 15 White collar crime (Siegel, Chpt 13; Reiman, Chpt 3)
 Week 16 Public order crime & review for final exam (Siegel, Chpt 14; Reiman, Chpt 4 and Conclusion)
- Review in preparation for final, Monday May 17**

**FINAL EXAM ON DAY EXAM IS SCHEDULED FOR THIS CLASS:
 TUESDAY, MAY 23RD 2000 AT 7:15-9:30**

Academic Standards

- A+ grades are received by students who receive full credit for 95% of the objective questions on the examinations, and whose analytical written work are exceptional, providing evidence of conceptual skills and depth of analysis beyond what the instructor has provided to the class.
- A grades are received by students who have 90% correct answers on the objective exam questions and whose written work is excellent, mastering the depth of analysis of what the instructor has provided to the class.
- An A- grade is warranted for those with 85% correct answers on the objective exams and where written work is generally excellent, but might have one area of weakness.
- B + grades are for those with 80% correct answers on objective exams, and where written work is very good but is either weak in one or two areas or tends to be too general, lacking specificity.
- B grades are for those with 75% correct answers on the objective exams, and the written work is good but has two-three points of weakness, or lacks depth or specificity.
- B- grades are for those with 70% correct answers on objective tests, and written work has three-four weaknesses or lacks depth/specificity.
- C+ grades are for 65% correct answers on objective tests, and written work has two-three errors and lacks depth, specificity and clarity.
- C grades are for 60% correct answers on objective tests, and written work that is flawed with four or more errors and lacks depth, specificity, and clarity.
- C- grades are for 55% correct answers and written work that is sufficient to pass the course but is flawed by basic misunderstandings of the material and gaps in knowledge.
- D+ (50% correct answers), D (45% correct answers) and D- (40% correct answers), and written assignments that are completed but flawed by numerous errors and gaps in knowledge.
- F is given to students that do not complete examinations or the written assignments, who receive less than 45% on the objective exams, and who pass in written work, that shows little or no knowledge gleaned from lectures or readings, or show no attempt to correctly address the questions in the assignments.