San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS 151, Criminology Theory, 01, Summer 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	(Dr. Claudio G. Vera Sanchez)
Office Location:	(NA)
Telephone:	(NA**)**
Email:	(claudio.verasanchez@sjsu.edu)
Office Hours:	(All day, every day, I am your humble servant. No seriously, my office hours are on **Tuesday and Wednesday from 9am-10am** (ONLINE ONLY).
Class Days/Time:	(Online, Asynchronous)
Classroom:	(Online, Asynchronous)
Prerequisites:	(JS 10, JS 12, JS 25 or FS 11. Pre/Co-requisite: JS 100W Note: Must achieve a grade of "C" or better to fulfill Justice Studies major requirements)

Course Format: Online/Asynchronous (no in-person or Zoom meetings)

Course Description:

Analysis of the nature and extent of crime, including causation and prevention. Description of offenses, criminal typologies and victim surveys. Evaluation of various control and prevention strategies. Prerequisite: JS 10, JS 12, JS 25 or FS 11 Pre/Co-requisite: JS 100W Note: Must achieve a grade "C" or better to fulfill Justice Studies major requirements.

Course Goals:

The objective of this course is to provide students with an in-depth understanding, based on various theoretical frameworks, as to why individuals participate in criminal activities. This course will also cover legal aspects, including major legal cases, within the field of criminology.

The Goals of the Course are as follows:

You will learn various theoretical frameworks that explain criminality.
You will learn the limitations of criminological theories.
You will learn critical (unorthodox) approaches to understand crime and delinquency.
You will learn some of the legal considerations surrounding criminal behavior.

Required Texts/Readings (Required):

Textbook
Schram, Pamela J., & Tibbets, Stephen G. (2020). Introduction to criminology (3rd edition). Why do they do it? Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1544375731

Garcia Hernandez, C. C.. (2019). *Migrating to prison: America's obsession with locking up immigrants*. The New Press. ISBN: 9781620974209

You may not use the previous editions of both aforementioned books.

Grading Information:

The course requirements consist of twelve quizzes (20 points each), four theory application/discussion boards (10 points each), and a theory application research paper (40 points). The grades will be calculated as follows:

My grading scale is:

98 – 100 A+	91 – 97 A	90 A-
88 – 89 B+	81 – 87 B	80 B-
78 – 79 C+	71 – 77 C	70 C-
68 – 69 D+	61 – 67 D	60 D-
59 and below F		

Your grade is composed of:

Weekly Quizzes	220 points
Theory Applic./Discussion	100 points
Research Paper	100 points
Total Points	**420**

Introductory Post

In order to better create/build an online community, the introductory post requires each student to introduce themselves and provide the following information: (1) your name, (2) future career aspirations, (3) something enjoyable you did within the last month, and (4) something you would like to accomplish in 2021.

Theory Application Discussion Board Posts and Responses (discussion board)

Four theory application discussion board posts and responses will be completed during the session (20 points each). Each theory application discussion board post is connected to specific chapters from the assigned text. **You must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the material in the text**. It is abundantly clear when a student has not adequately read and studied the material. Each theory application discussion board post has an individual prompt. In addition to addressing all aspects of the individual prompts, please ensure that your initial post be at least one page in length, single-spaced, in Times New Roman, 12 point font, with one inch margins. **Quotations of any type are not allowed on the theory application/discussion board posts.**

Each student must respond to at least **two** of their classmates' posts in order to receive full credit for theory application discussion board posts and responses/discussion board. Responses to classmates' theory application discussion board posts should be discussion based. Students may respond to aspects of the post that intrigued them, highlight aspects they would like more clarification on, continue the development of a thought/argument, etc. Comments may be based on opinion and do not need to, but may contain, empirical support.

Theory Application Discussion Board Post and Response 1

(1) Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cH-4f_eYsd4 (2) Do a basic internet search for information about the murder of Zainab Ansari. (3) Review the material presented in chapters 3 and 4. (4) Select a theory that best explains the occurrence of Zainab's (and the other little girls') murder. **OR** Select a theory on punishment that you think would be best suited to preventing similar crimes. (5) Detail the components of the theory selected. That is, describe this theory's rationale for criminal behavior **or** punishment. (6) Clearly explain what specific aspects of the case are explained by specific components of the selected theory. (7) Describe what aspects of the case are not explained by the theory. (8) Respond to at least **two** of your classmates' posts.

Theory Application Discussion Board Post and Response 2

(1) Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-jCSZh2tMk (2) Do a basic internet search for information about Elliot Rodger and his family. (3) Review the theories presented in chapters 6 and 7. (4) Choose one theory from chapter 6 or 7 that best explains Elliot Rodger's behavior. (5) Detail the components of the theory selected. That is, describe how this theory explains criminal behavior. (6) Clearly explain what specific aspects of the character's behavior are explained by specific components of the selected theory. (7) Describe what aspects of the character's behaviors are not explained by the theory. (8) Respond to at least **two** of your classmates' posts.

Theory Application Discussion Board Post and Response 3
(1) Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0M62mHQ1EA (9:25 to 14:03 minutes) **and** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utkk7dyFIrI (0:00 to 10:59 minutes). (2) Review the theories presented in chapter 10. (3) Choose one theory from chapter 10 that best explains the behavior of the character(s) from the video clip. (4) Detail the components of the theory selected. That is, describe how this theory explains criminal behavior. (5) Clearly explain what specific aspects of the character's behavior are explained by specific components of the selected theory. (6) Describe what aspects of the character's behaviors are not explained by the theory. (7) Respond to at least **two** of your classmates' posts.

Theory Application Discussion Board Post and Response 4
This theory application discussion board post and response focuses on addressing juvenile delinquency. Considering the experiences of the youth in the below video, come up with 1 detailed policy recommendation aimed at preventing young people in similar situations from engaging in crime/deviance **or** helping juveniles desist from crime/deviance. (1) Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NifPxtGi-Ns (2) Target a specific problem for intervention. Discuss what the problem is and why is intervention needed. (3) Come up with a detailed recommendation that answers the following questions: a) What is your recommendation? b) Who is it targeting? c) How will it be implemented? d) How long will it last? e) Who will implement it? f) How will it be funded? g) How will you measure success? (4) Respond to at least **two** of your classmates' posts.

Weekly Quizzes. You will take three quizzes per week, each worth 20 points. I will remove the lowest quiz score for the summer term (220 points total). If you miss a quiz, the zero will be your lowest quiz score. The quizzes will remain open for the entire day on the due date. **However, all quizzes will close on the due date by 11:59PM. You will not be allowed to retake a missed quiz.**

Theory Paper Requirements

Assignment: Students will be required to write a paper on one of the criminological theories we covered during the course. Students should select the theory they believe is the most valid explanation of criminal behavior. Students may select more than one theory if they believe a combination of theories best explains the criminal behavior. Each student must incorporate **at least 10** peer-reviewed journal articles into his or her paper. Papers should be at least 8 pages in length, double-spaced, paginated, and in Times New Roman font. Cover pages and references do not contribute to the required pages. **Quotations are not allowed in the research paper.** Students may paraphrase authors' words; when this is done, remember to cite your sources in text. All references must be cited in a bibliography using APA format.

Please address the following prompts in your paper. You should use the boldfaced items below as subheadings in your paper.

Introduction

In this section students should name the theory they selected and briefly state the crime or criminal incident to which they will apply the selected theory. A clear objective or thesis should be incorporated into this

section. For instance, at the end of the introduction you might state, "The objective of this paper is to explain and provide support for Merton's strain theory. More specifically, this paper will explain the utility of strain theory, provide empirical support for the theory, and discuss policy implications for the theory."

Body

Description of Incident

Detail a criminal incident that occurred in the United States (e.g., the DC Sniper; Boston marathon bombing, etc.). Students are not allowed to use criminal incidents incorporated into the theory application discussion board posts. Be sure to provide background on the criminal incident including but not limited to: 1) details about the offender (e.g., age, sex, race/ethnicity, family history, previous crimes), 2) details about the victim(s) (e.g., age, sex, race/ethnicity, number of victims, etc.), 3) other pertinent information about the criminal incident (e.g., location, how the offender was caught, collateral consequences of the crime, etc.).

Justification

Detail the selected theory. Explain why this theory does the best job of explaining the occurrence of the selected criminal incident. For instance, what does this theory take into consideration that other theories do not. Be sure to discuss the various components of the selected theory. For example, if Merton's strain theory was selected, the student should speak about people's goals in society, legitimate means for achieving the goals, and the 5 adaptations that people implement in relation to these goals and means. Students may incorporate a combination of theories in the justification section. When this is done, be sure to discuss the components of each selected theory.

Empirical Support

Has the theory been empirically supported? In other words, cite at least 10 studies that have tested the theory and be sure to report the findings of these studies. Students should incorporate at least ten peer reviewed journal articles that tested the selected theory.

Theory Application

In this section students should detail how the selected theory best explains its occurrence of the criminal incident presented in the "description of incident." Be sure to make direct connections between components of the theory and the criminal incident. Deep analysis is more important than loosely connecting the criminal incident to all components of the theory. That is, discussing how specific components of the theory explain the criminal incident, and where the theory fails to explain the criminal incident is ideal.

Policy Implications/Conclusion

What policies could be implemented to reduce the occurrence of similar criminal incidents if the selected theory were adopted by the criminal justice system?

Grading: Grading will be based on the following criteria:

1. Completing ALL areas of the assignment.
2. Mechanics. Please PROOFREAD your work. Incorrect sentence structure, misspellings, grammatical errors, incorrect citation style, and other writing mistakes will adversely affect your grade.
3. Critical thinking. Concluding/summary paragraphs must show evidence of sophisticated, novel, and insightful interpretations of past research.
4. Incorporate at least 10 peer-reviewed journal articles. You may use books, music, poems, or any other information to supplement your thesis—these resources, however, DO NOT count as part of the 10 journal articles required.
5. Following the aforementioned structure and guidelines.
6. APA format is required throughout the paper and bibliography.

<u>This assignment is due to the respective dropbox on Canvas by the date listed on the syllabus.</u> Late assignments will NOT be accepted.

Detailed Outline of Theory Paper

In this assignment students are expected to thoroughly detail the sections of their theory paper. This outline should provide the reader with a blueprint of your final theory paper; it should present the sections into which your paper will be divided and the content that will be included in each section. **<u>Statements in this outline must be written in full sentences.</u> One to two sentences are required for each prompt.** The outline should be structured, with headings and subheadings, as follows:

Introduction

I. Name the theory selected
II. Thesis statement

Body

Description of Incident

I. Describe the incident

Justification

II. Describe the theory

Empirical Support

I. Provide one sentence to summarize at least three studies that tested the theory
II. Provide one sentence to summarize at least three studies the theory
III. Provide one sentence to summarize at least three studies that tested the theory

Theory Application

I. Describe the crime or criminal incident you will be presenting in this section
II. Explain how the theory selected explains this crime/criminal incident

Policy Implications/Conclusion

I. What policies could be implemented if the theory were to be adopted by the criminal justice system?

Outlines should be 1 to 2 pages in length, typed, single-spaced, paginated, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and have one-inch margins.

<u>This assignment is due to the respective dropbox on Canvas by the date listed on the syllabus.</u> Late assignments will NOT be accepted. **The grade for the detailed outline is incorporated into the grade for the theory paper.

All research papers, theory application/discussion boards, and quizzes must be submitted by the due date to Canvas. Otherwise, their grade will be zero.

Extra Credit Option 1. You can take your research paper to the Writing Center, have it reviewed **ONLY FOR GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX**, submit the rough draft along with your final paper, and you will receive

extra credit. You will not receive credit for receiving any other help other than grammar and syntax—please let the writing center know to ONLY help you in this regard: https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/onlinetutoring/

Extra Credit Option 2. Write a two page, single spaced, Times New Roman, analysis of the book "Garcia Hernandez, C. C.. (2019). *Migrating to prison: America's obsession with locking up immigrants*. The New Press. ISBN: 9781620974209" You may not use quotations anywhere in the analysis.

Classroom Protocol

Discussion Board Etiquette. Students should always be respectful of other students. I will not tolerate insensitive, rude, or abrasive comments. Do not be the student who suddenly has an abundance of attitude when lurking behind the relative anonymity of the online class. I will also not tolerate sexist, racist, homophobic, or any type of remarks that hinder instead of promote class discussion. Please remember that you are a community of professionals, and henceforth you are expected to interact with professionalism, courtesy, dignity, and ethical consideration for others. After one email from me indicating that your comments or behavior are inappropriate, you will receive a zero on the theory application/discussion board for the week.

E-mail etiquette: One of the best ways to contact me (besides coming to office hours) is by e-mail. However, I have general expectations about contacting me by e-mail:

1. Always place your name and the class you are taking with me in the e-mail.
2. Be sure to always include a subject heading.
3. E-mails should be professional.
4. If a question or concern cannot be answered by two email exchanges, then it will be addressed over the phone (or in person) during office hours.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is unacceptable under any circumstance. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, please visit me during office hours.

University Policies:

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/"

JS 151, Criminology Theory, Summer 2022, Course Schedule

This is a tentative schedule of topics and required readings that will be discussed in class. You will be responsible for all readings listed in the syllabus. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. If this occurs, you will be notified either on Canvas or in class. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with any announced changes in class.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	6/1	Read Chapters 3, 4, and 5
1	6/1	Quizzes due on Thursday (Chapter 3), Friday (Chapter 4), and Saturday (Chapter 5)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	6/1	Theory Application/Discussion Board Due on Friday by 11:59PM
2	6/6	Read Chapters 6, 7, and 8
2	6/6	Quizzes due on Tuesday (Chapter 6), Wednesday (Chapter 7), and Thursday (Chapter 8)
2	6/6	Theory Application/Discussion Board Due Friday by 11:59PM
3	6/13	Read Chapter 9, 10, and 11
3	6/13	Quizzes due on Tuesday (Chapter 9), Wednesday (Chapter 10), and Thursday (Chapter 11)
3	6/13	Theory Application/Discussion Board
4	6/20	Read Chapters 12, 13, and 14
4	6/20	Quizzes due on Tuesday (Chapter 12), Wednesday (Chapter 13), and Thursday (Chapter 14)
4	6/20	Theory Application/Discussion Board
5	6/27	Research/Theory Application Paper (8-10 Pages)