

Criminology CRIM 2025 (982:025) Syllabus

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Gayle M. Rhineberger-Dunn, PH.D. (Sociology), Associate Professor of Criminology

I grew up in a small town in northwestern Minnesota. After receiving my B.A. in Sociology from the College of St. Benedict (and St. John's University) in St. Joseph, MN, I left for Colorado State University, where I obtained my Master's degree in sociology. Upon completion, I moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan, to pursue my Ph.D. in sociology from Western Michigan University, which I received in 2003. My dissertation involved a comprehensive test of systemic social disorganization theory. Using data from the *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods*, I tested how conditions associated with social disorganization impacted the interaction among neighborhood residents, and how this interaction in turn impacted victimization rates within and between neighborhoods.

I have been at UNI since Fall 2005. I teach the following courses Criminology; Ethics in Crime, Law, and Justice; Juvenile Delinquency; Senior Seminar; Community Corrections; and White Collar Crime. My research interests include ethics in crime, law, and justice; media, popular culture, and crime; and juvenile delinquency.

I currently live in Fayette, Iowa, where my partner is the Chief of Police. We share our home with two young children, two geriatric cats, one geriatric (and blind) golden retriever and one needy, annoying, but lovable English Pointer/Lab mix dog.

OVERVIEW

This course is designed to provide you with an introduction to the field of criminology- the study of crime and criminal behavior as a social phenomenon. We will study theoretical explanations, including biological, psychological, and social theories, of why individuals and groups engage in criminal behavior. You will be expected to apply these explanations to a variety of scenarios. We will also examine the nature and extent of criminal behavior in our society, the major types of crime, how crime is measured and how crime data are collected. You will be challenged to break through cultural biases, societal stereotypes, and media images of crime and criminals in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how these images are socially constructed in our society.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of what is encompassed in the study of criminology. This course will benefit the student by providing knowledge about what criminology is, the theoretical perspectives used to explain crime, and the definitions and patterns related to specific types of criminal behavior. This course stresses critical thinking, writing, and communication skills through the process of reading course material and critically reflecting on course content in the form of writing assignments and discussion board participation.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand how the sociological perspective pertains to the study of criminology.
2. Distinguish between the various research methods used to study crime and criminology.
3. Understand how media and political stakeholders influence the construction of crime and how these images influence crime policies/programs.
4. Identify myths of crime in the media, and their impact on the criminal justice system.
5. Be familiar with sources of information about crime and delinquency, and their limitations.
6. Understand patterns of criminal behavior (e.g., geographical, seasonal, gender, race, ethnicity, social class, etc.).
7. Distinguish between the various types of theories and identify the school to which they belong.
8. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of each theoretical perspective.
9. Apply theoretical explanations to current issues.
10. Identify and define various types of crime and their associated patterns.
11. Use criminological knowledge to understand and critically evaluate criminal justice issues and policies.

This course also meets several objectives from the Criminology Major Student Outcomes Assessment Goals (for a full list of these goals, please see the [Criminology Major Student Outcomes Assessment Goals PDF](#))

Course Objectives, as they relate to Student Outcomes Assessment Goals

Goal 1: Students should be able explain the social causes and consequences of crime

Competency 1.1 Understand the core concepts and propositions of criminological theories.

Competency 1.2 Describe and discuss the social factors which cause crime or are risk factors for crime.

Goal 2: Students should understand the operation of the U.S. criminal justice system

Competency 2.1 Have a working vocabulary of the US criminal justice system.

Competency 2.2 Have an understanding of the structure and operation of the U.S. criminal justice system.

Goal 3: Students should have a basic familiarity with the research methods used by criminologists.

Competency 3.1 Be familiar with sources of information about crime and delinquency, and their limitations.

Competency 3.3: Interpret statistics pertaining to criminological research, patterns of crime and responses to crime.

Goal 4. Critical Thinking Skills

Competency 4.1. Analyze an argument by identifying its assumptions, reasoning and conclusions, and evaluate the supporting and contrary evidence.

Competency 4.2. Understand the socially constructed nature of crime.

Competency 4.3 Use criminological knowledge to understand and critically evaluate criminal justice issues and policies.

Goal 5. Communication

Competency 5.1. Prepare and present an oral report that is clear, cohesive, concise, and factually accurate in a manner that demonstrates confidence and professionalism.

Competency 5.2. Use criminological knowledge in a written report that is clear, cohesive, concise and appropriate to the target readership.

Textbooks:

Barkan, Steven. 2011. *Criminology: A Sociological Understanding*. 5th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN- 9780132769051

Wright, Richard T. and Scott H. Decker. 1997. *Armed Robbers in Action: Stickups and Street Culture*. Boston, MA: Northeastern. ISBN: 155553323X

COURSE ORGANIZATION

This is a fully online course, which means that all of our interactions and course requirements will be completed online using **eLearning**. If you need help learning how to use eLearning, please see [eLearning Tutorials](#). You must have access to a computer from which you can access the internet, and open pdf and word files. This course is organized in 11 Assignments with four proctored exams. Each Assignment includes a reading assignment, a PowerPoint and a written (paper) assignment.

Assigned Readings

All readings for a particular assignment should be read in full before you complete associated written assignments. You will also need to read the associated PowerPoint for each course assignment. It will be to your advantage to read, take notes on the material and then read the material and your notes a second time prior to the exam covering that chapter. Do this before completing the assignments, as these materials likely contain information on what you are expected to write about in the written assignments.

PowerPoint Slides

I have created a detailed PowerPoint slide for each course Unit. It is to your advantage to read through the slides after reading through the Barkan (2011) chapters, and weaving the material together in a set of notes.

Written Assignments

Each Written Assignment must be typed and single-spaced with 1" margins. The number of points will vary for each of the 11 written assignments. Be sure to type the assignment question at the beginning of your response.

Type each assignment using a word processing program and save as a file. If you are using a word processing program other than Microsoft Word, then please save the file as Rich Text Format. Submit your assignment by clicking on the **Assignment Submission** link in the **Course Content** menu on the left and uploading your assignment. **Need help?** See the [eLearning Tutorials](#) for instructions on how to submit an assignment.

Assignments 3, 9, and 11 must be submitted to the plagiarism website Turnitin.com. Please refer to the **Turnitin.com Assignments Tutorial** for further instruction.

All assignments must be original. Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and will result in failing the assignment and possibly the course, depending on the nature of the plagiarism.

Exams

There are a total of four proctored exams. Exams 1-3 are each worth 100 points and Exam 4 is worth 140 points. Exams 1-3 each have a one hour time limit, while Exam 4 has a one hour and forty-five minute time limit. All exams will contain a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, short essay, and long essay questions. Exams will cover material from the Barkan text, and Power Points (including embedded reading assignments). Exam 4 is cumulative, covering material from sections 2, 3, and 4 of the course. There is a study sheet for each exam. Study sheets can be found at the end of the assignment instructions for assignments 3, 5, 7, and 10.

Assignments and Exams Outline

Assignment 1	Goals of Criminal Law	10 pts
Assignment 2	News media and identification of rape victims	10 pts
Assignment 3	Crime Data Analysis Project	20 pts
Exam 1		100 pts
Assignment 4	Theory Exercise #1	10 pts
Assignment 5	Theory Exercise #2	10 pts

Exam 2		100 pts
Assignment 6	Theory Exercise #3	10 pts
Assignment 7	My Life Through Theory Paper	10 pts
Exam 3		100 pts
Assignment 8	Reflection on property crime	10 pts
Assignment 9	<i>Armed Robbers</i> Critical Analysis Paper	20 pts
Assignment 10	Reflection on white collar/corporate crime	10 pts
Exam 4		140 pts
Assignment 11	Crime Film Analysis	100 pts

GRADING

Please note that UNI Guided Independent Study requires that you submit all assignments and complete all exams to receive a grade in the course. Course grades are determined as follows:

11 Assignments	33%
4 Exams	67%
	100%

Your semester grade is based on the following scale:

A	94-100	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	C	73-76	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B	83-86			F	59 and below
B-	80-82				

Grade Appeals: If you dispute an assignment or test grade, submit a written complaint via email to the professor within one week of receiving the grade. In writing the complaint, address all comments given to you on the assignment/exam by the professor. Write a clear, rational paragraph addressing these comments and explain why you feel you didn't earn the assigned grade. If you have extenuating circumstances that are prohibiting you from completing course requirements, contact the professor immediately.

Assistance: You are encouraged to contact the professor as soon as you encounter difficulty. Assistance is readily available for those who make sincere efforts to understand the material (i.e. reading daily assignments, participating in class, etc.). If you need assistance with writing, contact the Writing Center at 319-273-6023 or 319-273-2361 or in ITTC Rooms 007 and 008

Extra credit: Extra credit will not be offered in this course.

Technology

You will need to have access to a computer, either personal or on-campus, from which you can access all course materials on the internet in BBLearn9 as well as various websites and videos as indicated in several of the Power Point slides. Documents will be either pdf or word files. You will also need to have computer access that is capable of viewing online streaming of two videos on which you are required to complete course assignments.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Communication

I prefer that you communicate with me via email as the standard method of communication for this class. gayle.rhineberger@uni.edu I typically return emails within 24 hours, except on weekends and university holidays.

Email Etiquette

Because this is a fully online class, you will be communicating with me through email. It is important to think of this communication as a formal dialogue between professor and student. Be sure that in all emails you send properly address me, identify yourself, and make an appropriately worded request. For example, if you are asking me if you can do something, be sure the body of the email includes at a minimum the word please. I will not respond to what I consider rude or inappropriately worded emails or emails that lack an appropriate salutation and sender identification. Do not email me assignments. I do/will not accept them.

Academic Ethics/Discipline/Integrity

Students at UNI are required to observe the commonly accepted standards of academic honesty and integrity. Except in those instances in which group work is specifically authorized by the instructor of the class, no work which is not solely the student's is to be submitted to a professor in the form of an examination paper, a term paper, class project, research project, or thesis project.

Cheating of any kind on examinations and/or plagiarism in papers/projects is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Also unacceptable are the purchase of papers from commercial sources, using any part of paper to meet the requirement of more than one class (except when authorized by the professors of the two classes), and submission of a term paper or project completed by any individual other than the student submitting the work. Students are cautioned that plagiarism is defined as the process of stealing or passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another, or presenting as one's own an idea or product which is derived from an existing source. It is not acceptable for the work or ideas of another scholar, student, or author to be presented as a student's own or to be utilized in a paper or project without proper citation. Do not copy and paste information for any internet sources, book, article or other sources.

Be sure to properly cite material, either as a paraphrase or a direct quote. It is not appropriate to

change a few words and call it a paraphrase—this is plagiarism. If you can restate the material (the author's idea(s)) in your own words, or apply it to a situation you are describing, you are paraphrasing (be sure to cite the authors). If you can't do this, then you should use a direct quote. If you take a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, etc., directly from the author and do not put quotation marks around it, you are committing plagiarism, even if you put the author's name in parentheses after it. When in doubt, cite sources.

Note that the Turnitin.com software compares your submitted paper to all other papers that have ever been submitted nation-wide. This includes papers from the internet. The software compares your paper and makes a note on how much (percentage-wise) your paper matches (and in what way it matches) material previously submitted. To avoid any appearance of direct or accidental plagiarism, it is important that you become fully cognizant of the citation procedures utilized in your major field and in the classes you take. The plea of ignorance regarding citation procedures or of carelessness in citation is not a compelling defense against allegations of plagiarism. A college student, by the fact that s/he holds that status, is expected to understand the distinction between proper scholarly use of others' work and plagiarism. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the UNI policy on academic ethics/discipline/integrity. The full text of the policy and associated punishments can be found at: <http://www.uni.edu/pres/policies/301.shtml> You must follow university procedures for disputing a grade. You must first discuss the grade dispute with me by phone or by email. You may then talk with the SAC Department Head, followed by the CSBS Dean, and lastly, the Provost.

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of UNI that there will be equal employment and educational opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal and/or state law. This includes the provision of a campus environment that is free from illegal discrimination and harassment. The University will not tolerate any form of illegal discrimination or harassment and will not condone any actions or words from employees or students that constitute such.

Disability Accommodation

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Notify me immediately if you have a disability requiring an accommodation. Students with a disability, who require assistance, will need to contact the Student Disabilities Services office for coordination of academic accommodations.

Office: 103 Student Health Center

Phone: 273-2677 (voice)

For deaf or hard-of-hearing use Relay 711

Fax: 273-6884

Contact: [Ashley Brickley](#) – Coordinator; [Joseph Bishop](#) - Disability Specialist

Web Site: <http://www.uni.edu/sds/>

Incompletes

Incompletes will not be given except under exceptional circumstances, with proper documentation.