

SOC 232 Deviance
Summer 2020 On-line Course Syllabus
Bob Robinson
rrobinson@marybaldwin.edu
Office: Carpenter Academic 112

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Durkheim explained that deviance occurs in all societies, even a society composed entirely of saints. A sociological approach recognizes that deviance is not inherent in the act itself; it depends upon the response to a person's actions by the other members of the society and serves to let the members of the society know which actions are considered outside the boundaries of acceptable behavior. Reactions by those in power in the society help to emphasize these boundaries, and these reactions help to define the culture of the society.

This course will survey many of the sociological theories and research projects that have been developed and conducted about the issues of deviance and deviant behavior. Students will learn how deviance is socially constructed, how the members of the society respond to deviant behavior, and how people from deviant groups respond to these definitions as well.

This course should also help you to develop your academic and professional skills, your understanding of how sociologists define and research deviance, your sociological imagination, your understanding of how the social world operates, and your voice (an important concept for feminist scholars). In order to be successful, I need for you to share how the ideas we consider in the class material relate to your own beliefs and experiences in your life, so that I can provide feedback to your specific interests. I use this approach to help you consider different ways of thinking about your own life and also to help you learn how to construct your own ideas into paragraphs and essays for higher level courses in sociology and other disciplines as well.

TEXT:

Patricia Adler and Peter Adler. Constructions of Deviance: Social Power, Context, and Interaction. (Seventh Edition). Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishers. ISBN 978-1-111-18637-1.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- One midterm exam and one comprehensive final exam.
- Bi-Weekly Canvas discussions
- graded assignments (posted in the Canvas shell)

COURSE OUTLINE:

- Introduction to sociological definitions of deviance
- Theories and perspectives about deviance—Functionalist Perspective, Conflict Perspective, Social Learning Theory, Social Structure and Anomie Theory, Control Theory, Labeling Perspective,
- Constructing Deviance—Stigma, Labeling, and Becoming Discredited
- Building Deviant Careers and Identities—peers, gangs, and organizations (differential association)
- Deviance by Elites (and white collar crime)
- Changing the Definitions of Deviance

COURSE STRUCTURE AND DEADLINES:

The class is structured into 4 Parts. Creating threads and responding to your classmates' threads in 8 different discussion boards in Canvas (2 threads for each part of the course) will be required throughout the semester (with the same deadlines as listed for the assignments for the 4 Parts of the course listed below). Files that contain the details about the discussion board posts, the assignments, and the midterm and final exams are posted in the assignments tab in the Canvas shell.

Part One of the class will include readings that are posted on Canvas as well as the readings from Parts One and Two from the textbook. There are two short assignments other than the Canvas discussion board posts during Part One of the course. Assignment One consists of reading through the Table of Contents and writing down which sections you find most interesting and why you find them interesting. Send these comments to me as soon as possible. Please do the same for some of the earliest readings in Part One of the text as well. I don't want you to give me a summary of the work; I just want your impressions of the specific ideas that are of particular interest to you. I will make sure that you cover the material for the midterm and final exams, but I want you to focus on and explore the topics that interest you at first and throughout the semester. Assignment Two is a short essay about your world view and some of the important socializing agents in your life. The detailed instructions for these assignments and all of the assignments for the course are in the "Assignments" tab in Canvas.

Part Two of the class includes readings from Parts Three and Four of the book. After this section of readings and assignments, students will complete your midterm exam answers. Assignment Three will be due during this part of the course. Assignment Three is a short essay in response to the short story, "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe" that is posted on Canvas.

Part Three of the class includes readings from Parts Five and Six of the text. There is one new assignment for this section of the course that relates to aspects of deviance that you find particularly interesting. You will also be asked to revise and expand upon your assignments from Part One of the class in light of what you have learned thus far in the course.

Part Four of the class will include readings from Parts Seven and Eight of the text and covers the issues of the deviance of elites and the changing definitions of deviance. The final exam is due after you complete the readings.

<u>First Discussion Board Post due:</u>	May 29th
<u>Assignment One due:</u>	June 1st
<u>Other Assignments from Part One due:</u>	June 12th
<u>Assignments from Part Two due:</u>	June 26th
<u>Midterm Exam due:</u>	July 10th
<u>Assignments from Part Three due:</u>	July 27th
<u>Assignments from Part Four due:</u>	August 7th
<u>FINAL EXAM due:</u>	August 14th

COURSE GRADING:

A 93-100
A- 90-92
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C 73-76
C- 70 -72
D+ 67-69
D 63-66
D- 60-62
F 0-59

Students' grades are based on a midterm exam, discussion board posts, assignments, and a final exam. The weighting for each of these grading elements is listed below:

Midterm Exam:	25%
Discussion board posts:	25%
Assignments :	25%
Final Exam	25%

Note: The MBC Honor Code Policy concerning cheating and plagiarism will be strictly followed. Any assignment will receive an automatic “0” (zero) and an “F” will be recorded for the course grade should a student be caught plagiarizing. This type of offense demonstrates a disregard for the very foundations of academic thought and the learning process itself.

Policy on “Extensions”:

Should you find that you cannot complete all of the work for the course, you may take an **ET** (extended time) for the course ***ONLY IF you have a documented illness or have completed at least half of the work in the class. This policy means that you must post to at least 4 discussion board topics and complete the work for the first two parts of the course (including the midterm exam) by the ADP deadline for all semester coursework to be eligible for an ET.***