CJ 300: THEORIES OF CRIMINALITY AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
ON-LINE COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2014

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REQUIRED TEXT:

AND


COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is designed to acquaint students with the general development of sociological theories about criminality and the criminal justice system from its earliest foundations to the modern era. The nature of the intellectual development of the theories will be explored in detail. Theories of Crime and Theories of the Criminal Justice System are two separate issues. This course will have a sociological focus as theories about why people commit crime must begin with how the society in question defines crime in the first place. Furthermore, students will write one critical book review of the book The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Develop greater writing skills through writing and re-writing essay exams on selected theories

2. Know the intellectual development of the theorists responsible for the dominant theories of crime and criminal justice systems within the fields of sociology and criminology.

3. Gain an understanding of the theories and research that describes crime, criminality, and the criminal justice system by considering how the criminal justice system fits in with the other institutions within society.


EVALUATION:
There will be three open book exams covering the material found in the assigned readings in the course. These exams will be broad, critical essays that will require answers that integrate the terms and perspectives of the theories in all of the readings in this class. For the first part of each exam, we will
create exam questions together as we consider the theories to provide the students the opportunity to discuss concepts of personal interest. Students’ exam answers must demonstrate critical reflection by focusing on how key concepts interrelate within these different theories.

In your essays, you will need to demonstrate the ability to present a cogent and reasoned argument of the strengths and weaknesses as well as the critical perspectives inherent in the theories and/or current topics under debate. The course is intended to introduce critical thinking, and you must be able to analyze and assess competing ideas in a thorough manner. These essays may be developed over a series of critical responses between you and me as necessary and as time permits throughout the semester.

You will need to make posts to at least five different discussion board topics.

You will also write a 7 to 10 page critical book review paper about The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison incorporating one or more theoretical perspectives into the discussion of the unequal treatment of people within the criminal justice system depending upon their socio-economic status. The paper will be written in stages with an introductory paragraph and thesis statement, then an annotated bibliography and outline, rough draft, and then a final draft.

**WEIGHTING OF GRADE:**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 Exams:</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>Discussion posts:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Paper:</td>
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A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F 0-59

The assignments and open book exams will be evaluated for clarity of thought, correct use of sociological and criminological terms, grammar, syntax, and critical thinking. The graded essays will be returned with comments to help you improve the quality of your work. If a grade lower than an “A” has been earned in the first draft of an exam or paper, and as long as the work was submitted on time, you will be afforded the opportunity to rewrite and resubmit the essays to improve the quality of your work and earn more credit towards the grade for the exam or paper in question. You will NOT be afforded the opportunity to revise drafts of any work that is submitted less than 2 weeks prior to the end of the semester.

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.
COURSE OUTLINE:
Week One: The Sociological Perspective and Criminology. C Wright Mills, Peter Berger and Chapter 1

Week Two: What is Crime? Chapter 2
First assignment: 1st Discussion email post September 12th

Week Three: Classical, Neo-Classical, and Rational Choice Theories Chapter 3
First meeting and/or phone conversation with instructor due and all Test questions handed out: September 22nd

Week Four: Chapters 4 and 5 Biological, Psychiatric and Psychological Theories about Crime
Test One due: October 6th

Week Five: Sociological Theories for Crime: Social Process Theories Chapter 6

Week Six: Control Theory, Social Bonds, and Labeling Chapter 7

Week Seven: Crimes of Place Chapter 8

Week Eight: Anomie and Strain Chapter 9
Test Two; 2nd and 3rd Discussion board posts; and annotated bibliography, outline, and introductory paragraph of Critical Review Paper due: November 3rd

Week Nine: Conflict and Radical Theories of Crime Chapter 10

Week Ten: Patriarchy, Gender and Crime: Feminist Criminological Theory Chapter 11

Week Eleven: New Directions in Criminological Theory Chapter 12

Test Three, 4th Discussion board post, and rough draft of Critical Review Paper due: November 26th

Week Twelve: Work on Critical Review Paper

Week Thirteen: Work on Critical Review Paper

Final Discussion board post and Final draft of Critical Review Paper Due: December 12th

COURSE SCHEDULING:
There are suggested deadlines for each of the elements for this course; and it is highly advised that you turn in work consistently throughout the semester. My feedback from work turned in early in the semester will be valuable for letting you know if you are including what I expect in your essays. As long as the work is submitted on time and before the final two weeks of the semester, I will allow you to revise and resubmit any of your work based upon my feedback so that you can raise your grades on exams and/or the paper. You should complete all of the work for the class prior to revising and resubmitting any other assignments unless I state otherwise, however.

Important note concerning Deadlines:
Should you become unable to meet a course deadline, please contact me **before** the deadline to schedule another deadline and discuss the plan of action moving forward in the class for the remainder of the semester. **I will not accept late work unless such arrangements are made prior to the due date.**

**GETTING STARTED:**

Please send an email to me from your Mary Baldwin email account after you have signed up for the class and have reviewed this syllabus. This way we can become acquainted, and I can answer your initial questions. Also, if you ever have a question or comment that you want to bring to my attention at any time during the semester, please do not hesitate to do so. I will be glad to answer any questions that come up for you while you trek through the readings and assignments for this course. You can expect that I will respond to your emails within a couple of days and that I will return comments to your exams and papers within one to two weeks.

To get started on your coursework, skim over the sections of the required readings for the class and begin looking over the entire table of contents of the text. Please let me know which chapters and sections are of particular interest to you as early in the semester as possible so that we may help you explore more deeply in those areas. Email is the best way to stay in contact with me.

I want to stress that you should contact me if you have not heard back from me within a week of when you submit an assignment or within 2 days if it is a simple question about some aspect of the class. There is a good chance I have missed your email, so please be persistent.

**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 2 discussion board topics and take at least two exams _or_ take one exam and complete the paper by the ADP deadline for all semester coursework to be eligible for an ET.**

Test one: pages 1-157 and other readings posted on Blackboard.
Test two: pages 158-288 and other readings posted on Blackboard.
Test three: 289-398 and other readings posted on Blackboard.