

San José State University
Spring 2021
Justice Studies 151-04 Criminological Theory
Dr. Chris Hebert
Online Only

Contact Information

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On Burglary:

The owners! Shoot, this is country folk. These people don't believe in calling the cops. You in their yard stealing something; they coming out with shot-guns. You don't know who's land you're on. You don't know who or what they are capable of doing. People shoot you around here and bury you in their backyard and no one will ever miss you ... Think about it, if you in their yard stealing you ain't telling no one you was going to steal this.

(A young thief in response to whether he feared the police or property owners more.)
From "Managing Fear to Commit Theft," Hochstetler and Copes in "In Their Own Words: Criminals on Crime." Paul Cromwell (ed.).

On Human Perfectibility

Crime is eternal—as eternal as society. So far as we know, human fallibility has manifested itself in all types and forms of human organization. Everywhere some human beings have fallen outside the pattern of permitted conduct. It is best to face the fact that crime cannot be abolished except in a nonexistent utopia.

Frank Tannenbaum (1949).

Course Information

Pre/Corequisite: JS 100W

Catalog Description:

Analysis of the nature and extent of crime, including causation and prevention. Descriptions of offenses, criminal typologies and victim surveys. Evaluation of various control and prevention strategies.

Section Specific Description and Student Learning Objectives:

There are four major themes to the course: 1) Why are some harmful behaviors defined as criminal and others are not? 2) How are the common measures of crime constructed and how does this influence public perceptions of the “crime problem?” 3) The social and physical organization of crime and victimization. 4) Theoretical explanations of criminal behavior.

Justice Studies Required Course Notice:

Note: Justice Studies 151 is a required course for the Justice Studies major. As with all JS courses, to be accepted for credit towards a degree a grade of “C” or better is required. In addition, because JS 151 is a required course, failure to obtain a grade of “C” or better after two attempts will result in disqualification from the degree program.

If you are taking JS 151 for the second time, be sure to contact me early and often regarding your progress in the course

Course Requirements

Required Readings:

1) Walsh, Anthony and Cody Jorgensen, “*Criminology: The Essentials* 4th ed.” Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, USA

New copies are available at:

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/criminology/book259188>

and no doubt elsewhere on the web.

I have also made the text available chapter by chapter in the class modules. Also included in the chapter modules are practice quizzes and flash cards. (You must, alas, still have bought or rented the textbook from Sage) Any supplementary material of my own creation are also found in the chapter modules.

2) I may assign other readings such as news and journal articles.

Evaluative Material (Overview)

Quizzes and Exams:

The “chapters” are in reference to quizzes and exams are the textbook chapters and any material assigned during the class period to which the textbook chapter was assigned. Quizzes and exams are largely multiple-choice with a couple of short-answer questions.

Assignments:

Between two and five short assignments will be assigned during the semester. Content and dates to be distributed later. These are short assignments, so don't panic.

Discussion / Participation

As I will not be able to devote as much time to this class as I would like to, it will be up to you the students, to initiate discussions. Topics can be found in the "Critical Thinking" boxes, at the end of each chapter, and your own imagination. Please use the following naming convention:

Chapter "X" "Topic for Discussion"

Replace X and Topic for Discussion with the chapter number and a brief description of the topic discussed. Example:

Chapter 1 Legal Drinking Age

(The critical thinking box on page 18 provides some questions to mull over.)

I will stop in to check on participation, but won't be replying too much, so don't hang a question out there expecting me to answer it. The point of discussions is not to come to the "correct" answer, though eliminating clearly wrong answers is one of the reasons for discussion. You'll know you had a good discussion if the next day, or during the next few days, you come up with a far better reply than the one made or the one never made.

Course Grade Determination

Course grades are based on quizzes, exams, assignments, and participation. All assessment materials are graded on a percentage basis. No extra-credit is offered in this course.

Course Weighting and Description of Material:

- 1) Quizzes ($11 \times 4.545\% = 50\%$) There are thirteen multiple choice quizzes, each covering 1 chapter. I may throw in a short answer or a multiple-choice question or two based on a previous material. Eleven of these quizzes will be used to calculate the course grade and are chosen as follows: The lowest score of the first seven and the lowest score of the last six quizzes will be excluded from the course grade calculation. A quiz not taken is assigned a score of zero and thus becomes the low score. Between 15 and 30 minutes will be allocated for quizzes. Unless otherwise noted, quizzes will be available no later than Thursday and are due the Friday of the assigned week. You will not be able to review your answers until the quiz has closed for all students.

- 2) Mid-Term Exam (10%): All material assigned or presented in class from the first day to the day prior to the Mid-Term exam. Format is the same as quizzes, just more of it.
- 3) Final Exam (15%): Predominately material covered since the mid-term, though course material from any part of the course will be included. Format is the same as quizzes, just more of it.
- 4) Assignments (15%): Dates for assignment #3 and #4 are tentative and subject to change.
- 5) Participation (10%): These are some of the easiest points you are likely to earn at SJSU. Basically, contribute usefully to the discussion. How can you tell if you are contributing usefully? First, you have to type something in discussion. Yes, obvious, but so often overlooked. Do other students respond to your comments?¹ Are you the first to express the thought or answer a question? These are good. Throwing out dumb questions – such as when is a quiz or asking what page number is x on, or “me-too’ing,” no matter how cleverly disguised, are not good.

Curves and Percent to Letter Grade Correspondence:

I usually apply a curve to quizzes and exam. Posted scores reflect any curving that I have done (I only curve up, never down). If a curve is applied, my target is that 20 to 25 percent of the class receive an A- or better on that exam.

All assessment materials are graded on a percentage basis, and correspond to the following letter grades.

The percentages listed are threshold scores and no rounding is done. That means, for example, a score of 89.9% is a B+.

Percentage to Letter Grade Correspondence											
A+	96%	A	93%	A-	90%	B+	86%	B	83%	B-	80%
C+	76%	C	73%	C-	70%	D+	66%	D	63%	D-	60%
F Less than 60%											

Quiz and Exam Score Postings:

Grades will be posted off the Home Screen in the module cleverly labeled “Grades.” Those are the only official grades for the course.

¹ I shouldn’t have to say this, but be respectful of others. It is not acceptable to generate an angry response your comments simply to make a number.

The scores found in the grade module (or wherever they are on the student side.) for the quizzes and exams are raw scores. If no curve is applied, these scores will match the official scores. But again, they are not the official grades.

Scores will be posted using a synthetic number called a “Posting ID in a .pdf file found in the module grades. ” To create your posting ID number, multiply the first five digits (including the leading zeros) of your SJSU student ID number by the last four digits of the ID number. The last four digits of the product is the posting ID number.

EXAMPLE: SJSU ID number is 004199408
 First five digits are: 00419
 Last four digits are: 9408
 Multiply = 3941952
 The last four digits, 1952, is the Posting ID number.

Late Test and Assignment Policy:

No to full credit depending on circumstance. The possible combinations of circumstance are damn near infinite and thus an attempt to assign specific penalty weights a truly Herculean task. Instead, the following are the factors I consider, along with examples of good, OK, and bad excuses. OK, I’ll admit that I haven’t updated this for online courses. But since you typically will have a window of at least 36 hours for a quiz that will take 30 minutes, there aren’t as many legitimate excuses.

Dimension	Good	OK	Bad
Notification:	Notification delivered in class at least one class meeting prior to absence	Note in mailbox / e-mail day of exam.	Five weeks after assignment due date.
Reason:	Work-related travel. Getting married, personal illness, serious illness of a close relative, death of a close relative.	Too much coursework/job stress. Relationship troubles, ceremonial participation.	Hung over, forgot, getting married more than once, weekly participation in ceremonies of death or other.
What Missed:		Quizzes and Mid-Term Exam.	Assignment, Crime Portfolio, Final Exam.
Documentation:	Newspaper article, Medical appointment note, receipt for automotive repair, court summons	Note from Mom.	Insultingly bad forgery.
Made up by:	Next Class Meeting	Two Class Meetings	Final Exam Week.
Attendance:	I can match name to face.	Pretty sure that you are, or were, in one of my classes.	Couldn’t pick you out of a lineup for \$100,000.

It is your responsibility to notify me of your need to take a make-up exam or quiz and to arrange a time that accommodates my schedule. Except under extraordinary circumstances, if an exam has not been taken within two weeks or a quiz within one week of its administration to the class, you will forfeit that quiz/exam and receive a zero.

Mandatory Statements

These things have reproduced more rapidly than bacteria in a petri dish. But in a spate of sanity, we can now link rather than reproduce the statements which are found here:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>
(Verified January 26, 2021)

My remarks on selected statements follow.

Academic Integrity:

In the long run academic dishonesty hurts only you. Academic dishonesty can also cause pain in the short run, see [Academic Senate Policy F15-7](#)

Course Requirements and Assignments:

This statement is required by Federal regulation. And, unsurprisingly, is close to incomprehensible unless schooled in educratspeak. It translates as this: This is a three credit course so you should spend $3 \times 3 = 9$ hours/week on the course. Three of those hours are spent in the classroom ($1 \frac{1}{4} \times 2 = 2 \frac{1}{2}$), which we fictionalize to 3 hours, so you should spend 6 hours/week outside of class reading, studying, etc. for this course. Since this is an online course, you really aren't spending 3 hours/week in a class room, but the expectation is the same: 9 hours per week for this course.

Religious Accommodation:

[Included under protest as appears to be a violation of the 14th (Equal Protection) Clause.]

Note: I will continue to use my long-standing and far more liberal notification requirement specified above.

Recording and Distribution of Class Material:

If you want to record my or any instructor's lecture, receive permission first. Just as a reminder (also reproduced from S12-7): "Audio recording without consent in private settings is prohibited by California Penal Code 630-635."

Miscellaneous Items and Some Repeating:

Course material will be distributed via Canvas. Be sure that MySJSU has your current e-mail address.

You are adults and I treat you as such. I don't require attendance because I assume that you are the best judge of the use of your time. A corollary to this is don't expect a lot of sympathy from me if you fail an exam because you knew nothing about material that was only presented in class. Instructors are prohibited from [grading on attendance](#) (see [F15-12](#)). BTW: F15-12 had absolutely no effect on my grading. As a student I disliked classes that graded on attendance and since I could do something about it as a professor. If you are going to miss a class for any reason and there isn't an assignment due or a quiz or exam scheduled, I don't need to be notified. As I said, I assume you are the best judge of the best use of your time. OTOH: If you miss an exam or quiz, you must contact me to arrange a time to make it up and the sooner the better (see Late Test and Assignment Policy above).

Have I mentioned that it is probably in the syllabus / greensheet?

Hey, I forgot to mention that if it isn't in the syllabus, have you read the assignment? I receive many inquiries about assignments. 80% of these inquiries I answer by responding: "It's in the assignment."

I highly recommend checking out the greensheet / syllabus. While you are at it, read any assignments that have been distributed.


If a substantial change in due dates or assignments is required, I will distribute an updated syllabus via Canvas or e-mail. A quiz may be postponed for a couple of days without creating a new schedule.

To get started on the semester: It's probably in the greensheet / syllabus.

I am upfront about changes to the class schedule and assignments and document the changes through a version numbering system based on that used in the software industry. As a general rule, moving the opening and closing date of a quiz by a day or two will not result in a new version number.

This syllabus, like any [syllabus is subject to revision](#).

ONLINE

Week of:	Read / Watch	
January 27	HELLO!	
February 1	Chapter 1: An Overview of Crime and Criminology	Quiz 1*
February 8	Chapter 4: The Early Schools of Criminology	Quiz 4
February 15	Chapter 2: Measuring Crime and Criminal Behavior	Quiz 2 Assignment #1 Due*
February 22	Chapter 12: Crimes of Violence	Quiz 12 Assignment #2 Due
March 1	Chapter 14: Property Crime	Quiz 14
March 8	Chapter 15: Public Order Crime	Quiz 15
March 15	Chapter 3: Victimology: Exploring the Experience of Victimization	Quiz 3 Assignment #3 Due
March 22	Review, Missed Items, etc. Mid-Term! Mid-Term!	Mid-Term
March 29		Spring Break
April 5	Chapter 5: Crime as Choice: Rationality, Emotion, and Criminal Behavior	Quiz 5
April 12	Chapter 6: Social Structural Theories	Quiz 6
April 19	Chapter 7: Social Process Theories	Quiz 7 Assignment #4
April 26	Chapter 8: Critical and Feminist Theories	Quiz 8
May 3	Chapter 16: White-Collar Crime	Quiz 16
May 10	Chapter 17: Organized Crime	Quiz 17
May 17	Review Day. missed material, etc.	
May 21 (Friday, as it turns out)	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM

*Unless otherwise notified, all quizzes, exams, and assignments are due by 11:59PM on the Friday of the assigned week.