

SOCI 288 – CRIMINOLOGY ONLINE

Fall 2022 Syllabus

Instructor: Keri Burchfield, PhD
907 Zulauf Hall, NIU
kburchfield@niu.edu

Virtual Office Hours: Mondays 4-5 PM and by appointment. I am also able to address many questions and concerns via email.

This syllabus is a contract. You are responsible for abiding by all policies contained within.

These are trying times to say the least. Both the pandemic and social justice issues have taken an emotional toll on everyone - and reminded us that the future is unpredictable. Remember that my priority (and what I am trained to do) is to teach you. But, with all that is going on, I am also committed to fostering a climate of patience, compassion, and inclusivity as we work together to create a caring and safe place to learn.

For more on the University's response to COVID-19, please consult <https://www.niu.edu/protecting-the-pack/>

And for other resources, I've included a document **RESOURCES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE TIME OF COVID** under **Help and Resources** on Blackboard.

It is my intention to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.).

To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official NIU records, please let me know.
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, don't hesitate to talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.
- Undocumented students are welcome in this class. If you are undocumented and need assistance with successfully completing courses or a degree at NIU, the coordinator for Undocumented Student Support, Sandy López, can help you with advising, campus services designed for undocumented students, and other university resources. Visit Sandy in the Campus Life Building, room 236 or contact her at slopez1@niu.edu or 815-753-2391.

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of crime and criminals. The task is not an easy one. Crime is a controversial and multi-faceted topic and criminologists are faced with many difficult questions, including: How do we measure crime? Who commits crime, why and where? What can we do to prevent crime? In this course, we will explore these questions as well as many others.

This class covers a number of topics students may find upsetting or disturbing. I recommend not taking the class if you feel you cannot

handle the material. Also, the issues examined in this course may trigger strong emotions and experiences. If for any reason you feel that you would like to talk to someone about any emotions that arise while participating in the class please contact NIU's Counseling and Consultation services any time at [815-753-1206](tel:815-753-1206).

Call 911 if you're experiencing a mental health emergency or are concerned about your or another person's immediate safety.

WHAT SHOULD I LEARN?

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Define crime and criminology and be able to distinguish criminal from deviant behavior.
2. Apply the scientific method to the study of crime.
3. Explain and evaluate theories of crime.
4. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various crime statistics.
5. Define and describe various violent and property offenses and discuss the nature and extent of crime in the U.S.
6. Apply understanding of causes of crime to evaluate current crime control policy.

In addition, as you progress through the course, you should become better able to critically think about and analyze complex issues and communicate your ideas orally and in writing.

1. Barkan, Steven E. *Criminology : A Sociological Understanding*, 7th edition.
2. Additional reading materials and videos will be available through the course Blackboard site.

WHERE IS THE INFORMATION I NEED?

The course Blackboard site will contain important announcements, an updated syllabus, course handouts and readings, lecture outlines, and discussion questions. These items will be modified as needed - depending on the pace of the class. You are expected to consult with Blackboard at least daily to make sure you stay current with the course material. You may want to print out the lecture outlines before class so that you can follow along.

We will utilize Blackboard to disseminate material and conduct assignments, though lesson lectures will utilize VoiceThread. You

will see all relevant materials in weekly Lesson folders on Blackboard.

Each course week will correspond with a Lesson (i.e. Week 1 = Lesson 1). Each course week will run from midnight Monday to 11:59 PM Saturday. All lessons, activities and assignments FOR THAT WEEK will be due by 11:59 PM Saturday.

Be sure to consult the BlackBoard Calendar to keep up with due dates! Online classes require you to be well-organized, self-motivated and willing to learn independently to succeed. Further, your verbal, written and analytical skills should be strong, and you should be well-versed in basic sociological concepts and be able to exercise your “sociological imagination.”

Students can earn a total of 400 points in this course, as follows:

- **EXAMS**
There will be 4 exams administered on Blackboard. Exams will assess understanding of the major themes of the course, and will cover material from lessons, readings, discussions and assignments. The exams will consist of 25 multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions and will be timed.
- **JOURNAL ENTRY ASSIGNMENTS**
There are a total of 5 required journal entries to be completed using the Journals section of Blackboard. The first is an “Introduction” entry. The remaining entries are described in a separate document and graded with the rubric available on Blackboard.
- **THE STATE OF CRIMINOLOGY GROUP PRESENTATION**
Groups will work together to produce a 10-minute VoiceThread presentation in response to a final question that I will post on Blackboard; your answer should draw on ALL that you have learned in this course. This assignment will be due December 5 by 11:59 PM and graded with the rubric available on Blackboard.
- **PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**
Students should be commenting on the VoiceThread lessons, and otherwise keeping up with and engaging with the material. This engagement will be reflected in their participation score.

Course Objectives	Define crime & criminology	Apply the scientific method	Evaluate theories	Discuss crime statistics	Define Part I & Part II Offenses	Evaluate current crime control policy
Exams	x		x	x	x	
Journal Entries	x	x	x	x	x	x
Group Presentation	x	x	x	x		x

Calculating your grades simply involves adding up your total points and dividing that number by the total number of points available in the class to date. Grades are yours to **earn**, not mine to **give**.

1. Exams	200 points (50 points each)
2. Journal Entries	125 points (25 points each)
3. Group presentation	50 points
4. Class Participation and Engagement	25 points
TOTAL	400 points

The grade scale is as follows:

A = 93 – 100%	B+ = 87 – 89%	C+ = 77 – 79%	D = 60 – 69%	F = below 60%
A- = 90 – 92%	B = 83 – 86%	C = 70 – 76%		
	B- = 80 – 82%			

You should evaluate your assignments and exams carefully **before** turning them in to be graded. A thorough reading of the

descriptions of the assignments, available rubrics and/or exam questions will help you evaluate your work. If, after an assignment has been graded, you find there is a discrepancy in the assessment of your assignment, you are encouraged to schedule a meeting with me to discuss your grade. Students should also regularly check Blackboard to monitor their grades. Grading issues should be discussed immediately after an assignment or exam has been returned (or the grade posted), **not** at the end of the semester. Do **not** wait until the end of the semester to discuss a specific grade or your course grade.

Thoughtful participation and engagement are essential for your success in this course. This class has regular assignments, due dates, and participation requirements just like face-to-face classes. I should get to know who you are and how you are interacting with the material. You should be engaged in the content, asking questions and commenting on the VoiceThread lectures, contributing to discussions on the Discussion Board and completing assignments on time. I will monitor your activity in Blackboard.

ALL written submissions, including Journal Entries, should be submitted in a font and page set-up that is readable and neat. Students should try to adhere to a consistent format, as described below:

- Typed in double-spaced format with a readable style and font and submitted online
- 12 – point Times New Roman font
- Page margins Top, Bottom, Left Side and Right Side = 1 inch, with reasonable accommodation being made for special situations and online submission variances.

Assignments completed in a narrative essay format must follow ASA guidelines and include citations where appropriate.

Students should use the citation and reference style established by the American Sociological Association (ASA), in which case students should follow the guidelines set forth in ASA Style Guide (5th ed.)

You must let me know **BEFORE** you miss anything! Exams, papers and assignments are due via Blackboard on the due date. I do **not** accept any assignments late or via email.

If you encounter an emergency, you must provide **official written documentation** to be eligible to make-up any missed assignments.

If a student will be absent from classes for a week or more because of an accident, illness, or other emergency, instructors will be notified of the absence only if students or their parents **request it** through the Division of Student Affairs. Health Services will not release information about students unless they provide a written request.

HOW DO I SCHEDULE MEETINGS WITH DR. BURCHFIELD?

I encourage online office visits through Collaborate or Zoom to discuss course material, assignments, or anything else you would like to talk about. Please check-in during weekly office hours or contact me by email to set up an appointment; I can usually be available within one day of you contacting me.

Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she

WHAT IF I CHEAT?

has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are responsible for plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students responsible for, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university. In short, any form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated.

If you have questions about academic integrity, the University has provided some tutorials here:

<https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/index.shtml>

*If you attempt to take credit for someone else's work, without giving that person due credit, you are guilty of plagiarism and will face the consequences described above. If you have questions about how to properly cite someone else's work, simply **ask!***

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever such action is taken, and the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct shall receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition of the case, which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a sanction greater than an F in the course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or flagrant violations), the faculty member shall refer the matter to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report.

If you need an accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates

WHAT IF I NEED COURSE ACCOMODATIONS?

accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located in the Campus Life Building, Suite 180, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or drc@niu.edu.

Also, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations. Please note that you will not be required to disclose your disability, only your accommodations. The sooner you let me know your needs, the sooner I can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

This syllabus is a guide and every attempt is made to provide an accurate overview of the course and its requirements. However,

WHAT IF THINGS CHANGE DURING THE SEMESTER?

certain circumstances may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester for your benefit and the changes may

depend, in part, on course progress and our needs. I will announce any change to the syllabus on Blackboard as early as possible so that you can adjust your schedule.

COURSE SCHEDULE: Lesson Plan, Assigned Readings and Activities (subject to change)

Lesson	Week Of	Reading	Lessons, Activities and Assignments – DUE BY 11:59 PM Saturday
THE PICTURE OF CRIME			
COURSE INTRODUCTION 1. WHAT IS CRIMINOLOGY?	August 22	Chapter 1	Lesson 1 Journal Entry 1: Introduction
2. PUBLIC OPINION, THE NEWS MEDIA, AND THE CRIME PROBLEM	August 29	Chapter 2	Lesson 2
3. MEASURING CRIME	September 5	Chapter 3	Lesson 3
CRIME CAUSATION			
4. CLASSICAL AND NEOCLASSICAL PERSPECTIVES	September 12	Chapter 5	Lesson 4 Journal Entry 2: The Classical School and Punishment Exam 1
5. BIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES	September 19	Chapter 6	Lesson 5
6. SOCIAL STRUCTURE THEORIES & 7. SOCIAL PROCESS THEORIES	September 26	Chapters 7 & 8	Lessons 6 & 7
8. SOCIAL CONFLICT AND CRITICAL THEORIES	October 3	Chapter 9	Lesson 8 Exam 2
CRIME IN THE MODERN WORLD			
9. VIOLENT CRIME	October 10	Chapter 10	Lesson 9 Journal Entry 3: <i>The Violence Paradox</i>
10. CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN	October 17	Chapter 11	Lesson 10
11. PROPERTY CRIME	October 24	Chapter 12	Lesson 11
12. CONSENSUAL CRIME	October 31	Chapter 15	Lesson 12
13. WHITE COLLAR CRIME & 14. POLITICAL CRIME	November 7	Chapters 13 & 14	Lessons 13 and 14 Journal Entry 4: <i>The Untouchables</i> Exam 3
RESPONDING TO CRIME			
15. POLICING & 16. PROSECUTION AND PUNISHMENT	November 14	Chapters 16 & 17	Lesson 15 and 16 Watch <i>13th</i> Journal Entry 5: <i>Caught</i>
THANKSGIVING	November 21		
17. VICTIMS AND VICTIMIZATION	November 28	Chapter 4	Lesson 17 The State of Criminology Presentation Exam 4