

SOCI 380 - DEVIANCE IN SOCIETY

Spring 2024 Syllabus

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Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1-2 PM and by appointment.

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

These are trying times to say the least. Pandemic reverberations, social injustice, climate change, mass violence...the list goes on. How is this sociohistorical context unique? Or is it? This is one of the questions we will tackle in this class. In addition, it will impact our ability to teach and learn. 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.

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.

What is deviance? That is a good question, and one that this course is designed to answer. This course will examine how society produces deviance, how it tries to reduce deviance, and how it deals with those who act in unconventional ways – those we call deviants. We will read and discuss some of the best writings available on the subject of deviance, learn about specific deviant groups in society, and explore our own acts of deviance. Keep your minds open, and be ready for some interesting discussions, a lot of learning, and a little hard work!

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.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define “social construction” and its relevance for the study of deviance.
2. Be familiar with the major theories of deviance and be able to use them to explain why some people engage in deviant behavior while others do not.
3. Recognize the moral enterprise of deviance and the role that social power plays in defining deviance.
4. Understand how sociologists study deviance, the methods they use to observe deviance, and how they draw conclusions from their observations.
5. Recognize your own deviant behavior (or lack thereof), as well as the deviant behavior of others.

The required reading for this course includes:

1. *Constructions of Deviance*, edited by Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler (8th edition - 2016).
2. Additional reading materials be available through the BLACKBOARD web site.

The course Blackboard site will contain everything you need to succeed in this class, including this syllabus, important announcements, a course schedule, and calendar with due dates. These items will be modified as needed - depending on the pace of the class - so I recommend that you check it daily to make sure you stay current with the course topics, readings, and assignment due dates. If you have a question, it is probably answered here or somewhere on Blackboard. Please check before emailing me.

EXAMS

There will be 4 in-class essay exams worth 50 points each. Exams will cover material from class readings **AND** lectures and will be open-note.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

Throughout the semester, you will complete 6 journal entries worth 25 points each. I will post a prompt Sunday and your entry will be due Friday at 12 PM. More information about the journals and their grading rubric are provided on BlackBoard.

CREATE A STIGMA

Group exercise to be discussed later in the semester.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance will be checked randomly throughout the semester to ensure that everyone is coming to class. In-class participation is always encouraged.

Course Objectives	Define “social construction”	Understand and apply theories	Recognize the morality of deviance	Discuss the study of deviance	Realize your own and others’ deviance
Exams	x	x		x	
Journal Entries	x	x	x	x	x
Create a Stigma	x		x		x
Moral Panic Paper	x	x	x		x

HOW ARE GRADES DETERMINED?

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Exams	200 points
Journal Entries	150 points

Stigma Exercise	50 points
Attendance and Participation	50 points
Total Points	450 points

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**.

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.** This class *requires* preparation, attention and participation. **Preparation** means critically reading all assigned readings before class,

checking Blackboard for any important announcements, and looking over the course schedule to know what we will be doing in class that day. **Attention** means coming to class, engaging with the material, with me, and with your fellow students; it does not mean reading the newspaper, texting, sleeping or talking with friends. **Participation** means answering questions when asked of you, raising critical comments of the material, and asking your own questions when you do not understand something.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Why is Class Attendance Important? (From *NIU's Attendance Matters*)

1. You retain more when you listen to your instructor; missing just one day could put you behind.
2. Your teacher explains material better than you can learn it yourself.
3. There's a direct correlation between going to class and doing well in it.
4. Your attendance shows your professor the class is important to you.
5. You are paying to be in class.
6. If your grade is borderline, your teacher may give you extra points for good attendance.

Attendance and participation are almost 10% of your grade. Take them seriously!

Some professors do not care if you attend class. I do! I will record attendance randomly throughout the semester. Anyone who arrives 15 or more minutes late will be recorded as absent. If you know ahead of time that you have to be late or leave early, notify me the class period before. There are no excused absences. If you are not in class, and I take attendance, you will be marked as absent.

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.

Leaves of absence will be granted for volunteer services related to disaster relief in accordance with applicable Illinois statutes or executive orders issued by the State of Illinois in response to emergency situations. To initiate a leave of absence, students should contact their College Dean's office, or the vice provost (or the vice provost's delegate) for any student who has no college affiliation. Following the period of volunteer service, Registration and Records will facilitate reenrollment of the student.

In the case of an absence due to required attendance at a university-sponsored event such as a department trip, performing arts activity, ROTC function, or athletic competition, reasonable attempts shall be made by faculty members to allow the student to make up missed work. Both the sponsoring unit and the student should inform the faculty member as soon as possible in the semester in order for arrangements to be made for completing missed assignments, examinations or other required course work. The student is required to provide each instructor with an official notification in advance of the absence (e.g., a letter from the chair of the sponsoring department, the head of the sponsoring unit, or the coach).

If you do miss class, it is **YOUR** responsibility to keep up with happenings in the course. Specifically, you are responsible for all materials covered in class while you were gone as well as any in-class exercises, videos, schedule changes, and / or deadlines announced or given during the class you missed.

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 other assignments are due 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.

I encourage online office visits through Blackboard Collaborate 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.

You are welcome to use a laptop or tablet in this class as long as it contributes to your learning. This class, once again, is discussion based. This means that all students are expected to actively listen to one another in order to participate in classroom activities. If you are unable to contribute to the discussion or are otherwise distracted by your computer, cell phone, or tablet, I will ask you to refrain from using it in class. If you have any questions, please contact 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

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!***

Also, students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools.

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 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, 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 accordingly.

COURSE SCHEDULE: Lecture Plan and Assigned Readings (subject to change)

Theme	Dates	Reading Assignment
COURSE INTRODUCTION	January 16	No reading
Identifying Deviance		
DEFINING DEVIANCE	January 18	Adler and Adler: General Introduction Adler and Adler: Defining Deviance Adler and Adler: A Typology of Deviance Applied to Ten Middle Class Norms
THE FUNCTIONS OF DEVIANCE	January 23	Adler and Adler: On the Sociology of Deviance Adler and Adler: Functionalism: The Normal and the Pathological
FILM	January 25	<i>Brother's Keeper</i>
EXAM 1	January 30	
Theories of Deviance		
THEORIES OF DEVIANCE	February 1	Adler and Adler: Theories of Deviance
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DEVIANCE I	February 6-8	Adler and Adler: Social Structure and Anomie Adler and Adler: Social Power: Conflict Theory of Crime
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DEVIANCE II	February 13-15	Adler and Adler: Differential Association Adler and Adler: Control Theory of Deviance Adler and Adler: Relativism: Labeling Theory Adler and Adler: The Constructionist Stance
Constructing Deviance		
CONSTRUCTING DEVIANCE: MORAL ENTREPRENEURS	February 20	Adler and Adler: Constructing Deviance Via BLACKBOARD: Failure to Launch: Why do Some Social Issues Fail to Detonate Moral Panics? Via BLACKBOARD: Moral Entrepreneurs by Howard Becker Via BLACKBOARD: The "Discovery" of Child Abuse by Stephen J. Pfohl
CONSTRUCTING DEVIANCE: RACIAL AND GENDERED CONCEPTIONS	February 22	Adler and Adler: The Saints and the Roughnecks Adler and Adler: Homophobia and Women's Sport Adler and Adler: The Mark of a Criminal Record
EXAM 2	February 27	
CLASS CANCELLED	February 29	
The Deviant Identity		
DEVIANT IDENTITY	March 5	Adler and Adler: Deviant Identity Adler and Adler: The Adoption and Management of a "Fat" Identity Adler and Adler: The Paradox of the Bisexual Identity Adler and Adler: Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia
STIGMA MANAGEMENT	March 7	Via BLACKBOARD: Negotiating White Power Activist Stigma Adler and Adler: Fitting in and Fighting Back: Homeless Kids' Stigma Management Strategies Via BLACKBOARD: Collective Stigma Management and Shame: Avowal, Management, and Contestation
SPRING BREAK	March 12-14	
FILM	March 19	<i>To be announced</i>
STIGMA REVISITED	March 21-28	In-class Exercise and Assignment
EXAM 3	April 2	
Types of Deviance		

RESEARCHING DEVIANCE	April 4	Adler and Adler: Studying Deviance Adler and Adler: Survey of Sexual Behavior of Americans Adler and Adler: Researching Dealers and Smugglers
SEX	April 9	Adler and Adler (and Via BLACKBOARD): Artificial Love: The Secret World of iDollators Adler and Adler: Sexual Assault on Campus Via BLACKBOARD: Trading Sex for Crack: Gender and Power
THE BODY	April 11	Adler and Adler: Cyber-communities of Self-Injury Via BLACKBOARD: Marks of Mischief: Becoming and Being Tattooed by Clinton Sanders Via BLACKBOARD: Ink and Holes: Correlates and Predictive Associations of Body Modification Among Adolescents
DRUGS	April 16	Adler and Adler: The Social Construction of Drug Scares
ALCOHOL	April 18	Via BLACKBOARD: The Social Construction of an Alcohol Problem by Craig Reinerman Via BLACKBOARD: Deviance as Situated Phenomenon: Variations in the Social Interpretation of Marijuana and Alcohol Use by James D. Orcutt
WHITE COLLAR DEVIANCE	April 23	Adler and Adler (and Via BLACKBOARD): State-Corporate Crime in the Offshore Oil Industry: The BP Oil Spill Adler and Adler: Opportunity Structures for White-Collar Crime Via BLACKBOARD: Is "White Collar Crime" Crime? By Edwin Sutherland
CLASS CANCELLED	April 25	
FILM	April 30	<i>To be announced</i>
EXAM 4	May 2	