

University of Calgary
Sociology 427.01: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
Fall 2017

Professor: Dr. Cora J. Voyageur
Office: 906 SS
Office Hours: Monday 2:00 – 4:00 or by appointment
Class: 1:00 – 1:50 MWF
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Course Prerequisite:

Sociology 325 and 313 or the consent of the Department. Sociology 331 and 333 are recommended.

Course Description:

The best criminals are the ones who never get caught. What happens to most of those who are caught is the topic of this course. This course is an overview of the various facets of the criminal justice system. It is designed to introduce students to the societal and institutional responses to crime and criminal behaviour in Canada. It addresses the sociological factors that influence events and outcomes of the administration of justice. It begins with the assumption that crime is a social construct. How is it that some actions are deemed criminal while others are not? Are certain behaviours always considered criminal? Who gets to decide? What is the role of the police, the courts, corrections, probation and parole? These questions will be explored. We will hear from practitioners from within the systems in an attempt to gain insights into the laws, policies, and procedures in Canada's criminal justice system.

Course Objectives:

1. To explore the genesis of laws and criminal behavior in Canada.
2. To identify and analyse the key components of the criminal justice system.
3. To provide a factual basis on which to assess issues and situations regarding the handling of criminal behaviour in the Canadian criminal justice system.
4. To become familiar with the statistical trends of criminal activity in Canada.
5. To make students aware of the problems, potential injustices and ironies inherent in the Canadian criminal justice system.
6. To explore the circumstances under which a person can be wrongfully convicted and to determine whether there is a "prototypical" wrongfully convicted person.

7. To discuss and remain aware of various justice issues and/or prominent court cases that may arise during the term.

Course Format:

Classes will combine several formats: lectures based on topics covered in the readings; small and large group discussion of issues raised in lectures; class presentations; guest lectures; videos; class questions; in-class quizzes; and in-class assignments. I will cover some of the assigned readings in class and will also lecture from additional materials on the topic. Therefore, you are responsible for any assigned readings. **Please be ready to answer or discuss course-related questions posed by me at any time throughout the class.**

Required Texts:

- 1) Reiman, Jeffrey and Paul Leighton. (2017). *The Rich Get Richer, The Poor Get Prison (11th Edition)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- 2) Mewitt, Allan and Shaun Nakatsuru. (2000). *An Introduction to the Criminal Process in Canada, (Fourth Edition)* Toronto: Carswell Thompson.

The assigned readings will *generally (but not exactly)* correspond with the topics covered in the lectures. Thus, lecture topics should serve as a tentative guide and may be adjusted by me. **Please read the weekly assigned materials prior to the class.**

Evaluation for a Passing Grade:

NOTE: Receiving a grade in all components of this evaluation (including the Colleague Evaluation) is mandatory to obtain a passing grade in this course.

1. Examinations 65%

There will be 1 mid-term examination and 1 final examination. The examinations will cover lectures, guest lectures, videos, class discussions, and assigned reading materials scheduled up to the exam. This means that students will also be responsible for readings and topics **not covered** in class.

Examinations will be a combination of any or all of the following: multiple choice, true/false, definition, short answer and essay questions. This manner of testing allows the student to demonstrate varying methods of academic skill. I do not expect the student to rely solely on rote memory. I expect application, analysis, synthesis, and **integration of course materials** into your reasoned and concise answers. Therefore, you must be **specific** rather than **general** in your responses. The short answer and long answer questions require a reasonable standard of writing. Poor spelling, disjointed or incomplete sentences, poor grammar and punctuation, inadequate sentence and paragraph structure will only detract from the ideas you are trying to express and will negatively impact your mark.

The final exam is **non-cumulative**. This means that the mid-term will cover only materials from the first class to the class prior to the mid-term exam. The final exam will cover materials from the mid-term to the last day of class. Although the final exam is non-cumulative, students might find reviewing the mid-term exam valuable in preparation for the final. In other words, do not forget everything you learned prior to the mid-term. **Examination dates are strictly enforced.** The dates and assigned weights for exams are as follows:

Mid-term	October 20	30 %
Final Examination	Date set by Registrar	35 %

2. Group Research Project/Class Presentation 25%

Research Project/Class Presentation 20%

Our criminal justice system has glitches. One example of the system not delivering justice is the case of the wrongfully convicted individuals. Groups can choose a research topic/individual from my list or you can research another with my approval. Your group research project/class presentation will consist of a half-hour class presentation. Groups must supply handouts for the class. The group research project/class presentation should answer the following questions: Who was the individual? Were there elements of social inequality (race, class, gender, etc.) surrounding the arrest/conviction/sentencing of this person? What evidence led to the conviction? How and why was the verdict overturned? Where did the system go wrong? Presentations will begin in late October. I will allow class time for group members to confer.

Colleague Evaluation 5%

Your group members will evaluate your contribution to the group project. This evaluation accounts for 5% of your final mark so you **must** do your share of the work. The mark you get on your colleague evaluation will be proportional to your final grade on the presentation. Further, if you receive a participation grade of "0" from all of your fellow group members then you will not receive a grade for the poster presentation, and thus, fail the course. This will be done after all the class presentations are completed. I may require you to justify the grades you give to your research partners.

3. In-class Pop Quizzes: 10%

Throughout the course I will give five in-class pop quizzes worth 2% each. These quizzes will be based on information from that day's class. Your answers must be turned in at the end of the class. **You must be present on the days these quizzes are given to receive these marks.**

Final grades will be assigned according to the University of Calgary's 4-point grading system based on the following percentage distributions:

Percentage	Grade	Meaning
95+	A+	Outstanding
89 - 94	A	
86 - 88	A-	
82 - 85	B+	Very Good
79 - 81	B	
76 - 78	B-	
72 - 75	C+	Good
68 - 71	C	
64 - 67	C-	
60 - 63	D+	Minimal Pass
55 - 59	D	
0 - 54	F	

The A+ grade became an official grade at the University of Calgary in fall, 2002. The A+ grade is described as an honorific grade with the same grade point value as an A grade (4.0). It will be used to indicate outstanding performance in a subject area but not have a higher grade point average.

Grade Reappraisal:

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

Deferrals:

When possible, please provide advance notice if you are unable to write an exam or complete/turn-in assignments on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the health issue rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements, misreading the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a "make up" test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a "make up" test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

Deferred Final Exam Form:

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>

Deferred Term Work Form:

Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

Email:

Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line, and include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored. All other emails will be answered within one business day. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining to assignments or exams. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline will not be answered. Please email me for administrative purposes only, for example, to set up an appointment. Please do not use email as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss. Questions about the course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in-person during my office hours.

Ethics Research:

Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee. **In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.**

Safewalk:

The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

Academic Misconduct:

Cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty, with definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

Handing in Papers and Assignments:

The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.

Protection of Privacy:

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Student Representation:

The 2018-19 Students' Union VP Academic is Tina Miller (suypaca@ucalgary.ca). For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student's Union, please visit this link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/> You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds/role>

Academic Accommodation:

The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

Emergency Evacuations:

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom, please proceed to the assembly point at the Professional Faculties Food Court. Please check these assembly point locations for all of your classes at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Technology Use and Electronic Classroom Etiquette:

Technology can be both a blessing and a curse. In recent years, electronic devices have been the cause of a tremendous amount of disturbance in the classroom. Please get the most out of your (or your parents') hard-earned tuition dollars by devoting your class time exclusively to classroom activities. Please ensure that your cellphones, pagers, or any other electronic devices are turned off and remain off for the duration of the class.

For those taking notes on a laptop please be aware that your screen is visible to both those beside you and behind you. I have received many complaints from fellow classmates who have been forced to endure distracting, offensive and otherwise unsuitable images from others' laptops. Please remember that laptops are to be used exclusively for the purposes of taking notes during class.

Checking emails, text messaging, Facebooking or MSNing, or engaging in any other type of internet/or electronic activity during this class is not permitted. Those who choose to ignore this rule will be asked to leave my classroom immediately. Students who have been asked to leave my classroom must meet with me before returning. Students taking class notes on a laptop computer will be asked to close their laptops from time to time to answer questions and/or engage in classroom discussion throughout the class.

Please be on time for class. Arriving late for class is very distracting to me and your fellow students. The door will be closed at the beginning of class, if you are late please quietly find a seat near the back of the room.

My Teaching Philosophy:

I love to teach and I hope it shows. I believe that learning is an active rather than a passive activity. I want to assist you in your learning journey. Although attendance is not mandatory, I urge you to attend class regularly. I will not post my lecture materials or give you my lecture notes if you are absent. Class discussions, issues raised in class and information obtained from videos, lectures and other class activities can be give you some valuable insights and help you with assignments and exams. You will not have access to that information unless you attend class. I strive to provide a safe and non-competitive learning environment but one that periodically takes students out of their comfort zone. I encourage class discussion as a means of exploring topics, ideas, and sometimes controversies. We may be dealing with sensitive and sometimes contentious issues in class. Your point of view is important but may be challenged by your fellow students or me during this course. Your opinion may differ from those of your classmates. So please, remain open-minded and remember to be respectful of opinions that differ from your own.

Proposed Course Schedule
Sociology 427:01: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Winter 2017

Week of	Topic	Readings
1 September 11	Introduction	Reiman Intro & Chapter 1
2 September 18	Crime as a Social Construction	Mewitt Chapters 1-2
3 September 25	Presentation Preparation	Reiman Chapters 2-3
4 October 2	Criminal Justice in Canada	Reiman Chapters 4-5
5 October 9	Criminal Statistics and the Extent of Crime	Mewitt Chapters 3-5
6 October 16 October 20	The Justice Process Midterm Exam	Mewitt Chapters 6-8
7 October 23 October 27	Law Enforcement in Canada (Presentations Begin)	Mewitt Chapters 9 - 10
8 October 30	Presentations	No Readings
9 November 6	Presentations (as needed)	Mewitt Chapters 11-12
10 November 13	Courts, Procedures and Sentencing	Mewitt Chapters 13-14
11 November 20	Correctional Institutions	Mewitt Chapters 15-16
12 November 27	Probation and Parole	Mewitt Chapters 17-18
13 December 4	Residual/Course Wrap-up	Mewitt Chapters 19