

SOC 431
Analysis in Criminology/Juvenile Delinquency

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Crime is a central issue in our society. Our newspapers are saturated with it; our police fight it; our communities grieve it; our politicians campaign against it; our scholars and “bar-room” philosophers debate its origins; our imaginations fear it. Crime seems to be everywhere. But is it? How much crime is there? How likely is it that you will be a victim of some criminal act? This course attempts to understand crime scientifically. To this end, we will analyze the empirical patterns of crime (how much crime is there? Who commits it? Who are the victims?), as well as theoretical attempts to explain these patterns. Criminal behavior is diverse, as are the explanations of it. Moreover, we will address efforts to control crime within a “free society.”

The course consists of four broad sections. The first begins with basic definitions of law, crime, criminal types, the differentia of criminal behavior, and measurements of crime. The second section analyzes the empirical patterns of violent, economic, normative, “white collar,” and “organized” crime in modern America. A range of sociological theories of crime is presented in the third section, and the final section covers issues of crime control.

TEXT REQUIREMENTS

1. Crime and the American Dream (Wadsworth Series in Criminological Theory) by Rosenfeld
ISBN: 0534619584

2. Rich Get Richer and The Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Class, and Criminal Justice 8th or 9th edition by Reiman
ISBN: 0205461727

STUDENT EVALUATION

Your grade will consist of three writing assignments which must be a minimum of 5 pages each (15 points each), a final research paper which must be a minimum of 8 pages (30 points) and 10 assignments (2.5 points each). I will post information on writing assignment guidelines two weeks before the first assignment is due.

There is a total of 100 points in the class. Final grades will be determined using a +/- 90%, 80%, 70% etc. scale.

If you are a student with special needs or circumstances, have emergency medical information to share with me, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please see me as soon as possible.

SOME IMPORTANT ITEMS:

- NO EXTRA CREDIT IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS COURSE UPON REQUEST**
- NO GRADE NEGOTIATING**

Doing well in this class: In order to do well in this class, it is important that you a) view all the lectures, stay up with the discussion board, and (b) do all required readings

It is critical that you do the readings. Doing the readings will help you to better understand the course material and focus your discussion postings topics to the relevant areas that we have been covering.