

SOC212H1S
Sociology of Crime and Deviance
University of Toronto
Winter 2025

Thursdays, 9:10-11am

See Acorn for room information

Instructor: Dr. Jan Doering

- Email: jan.doering@utoronto.ca. If you have a question or comment that cannot be addressed in 2-3 sentences, please come talk to me rather than sending me an email.
- Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30pm. 17th floor, 700 University Ave. Please sign up online to avoid lines and let me know you are coming: <https://calendly.com/jandoering>. You can choose to attend in-person or via Zoom.

Teaching Assistant: Yasmin Wallace

- Email: yasmin.wallace@mail.utoronto.ca
- Office hours TBA.

Course Description

Our society is obsessed with crime and deviance, as any visit to a bookstore or an evening spent watching television easily confirms. Conversely, research on crime in particular is one of the most vibrant areas of social science. In this course, we will survey some major aspects of the study of crime and deviance, including causal explanations (the “etiology”) of crime and deviance, patterns of crime (in terms of age, race and ethnicity, gender, etc.), societal contexts of crime and criminalization, and societal responses to crime and deviance (including policing, legislation, and punishment). Research on crime and deviance constitutes an interdisciplinary field that encompasses psychology, sociobiology, anthropology, economics, legal theory, political science, and still more disciplines, but we will place particular emphasis on crime and deviance as sociological phenomena.

Enrollment prerequisites and exclusions

Pre-requisite: SOC100H1. Students without the prerequisite will be removed without notice.

Exclusion: SOC211H5

Recommended preparation: SOC150H1

Learning Goals

After completing this course, you should:

- understand major theories that explain crime and deviance.
- know key trends in crime rates and be able to critically assess reports about trends and patterns of crime and delinquency.
- be able to apply criminological theories to interpret empirical cases.

- be able to critically analyze the political implications of various approaches to crime and criminal behaviour.

Readings and materials

All readings will be made available on Quercus but especially through Perusall, a social annotation platform that enables you to collaboratively discuss reading assignments. Note that using Perusall is a graded course requirement. Contact me as soon as possible to discuss potential alternatives if you face challenges that make using Perusall impossible for you. You must have the readings accessible in class because we will actively work with them. Please bring a laptop computer to class if this is at all possible for you.

Course Requirements and Grading

Assignment	Date/due date	Grade weight
Midterm	February 27	35%
Delinquency self-report	January 30 (as anonymous hard copy in class)	1% ☺
Group report 1 (delinquency)	February 2	4%
Group report 2 (patterns of crime)	February 16	4%
Group report 3 (politics of crime)	March 23	4%
Peer evaluation (online)	April 10	3%
Perusall reading assignments (pass/fail per reading)	Midnight of the day before the session for which the reading has been assigned	9%
Final exam	Date TBA (during the university's final exam period)	40%

Midterm (35%)

The midterm will take place in class on Thursday, February 27 (week 7). It will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. If you have to miss the midterm and provide acceptable documentation (see below), I will shift the midterm's grade weight onto the final exam. Since the final exam is cumulative and tests the entire course material, it is in your interest to take the midterm test if at all possible.

Delinquency self-report (1%)

You will be asked to write an anonymous self-report about a delinquent act you have committed. Details will be announced in class. The report will be due in class as a printed hard copy on Thursday, January 30.

Group reports (4% each)

Over the semester, we will do three group exercises (each worth 4% of your overall course grade). Assignments to groups will be strictly random—with one exception (see below), no reassignments will be made. The division of labour within your group is entirely up to you and your fellow students. If you are forced to miss a group exercise, you should therefore write your group members rather than the instructor. Exercises are designed to take approximately 1.5 hours. You can start them in class when they are introduced, but you will probably have to continue the work remotely and/or outside of class. It is up to you to coordinate this with your group members. For each exercise, your group must submit one written report via Quercus by the end of Sunday of the week during which the exercise was introduced. Late submissions will not be accepted. If you find that one group member does not contribute at all to the group exercises even after repeated appeals, I can remove them from the group if all other group members want this to happen. In that case, the removed student will have to complete the remaining exercises on their own. Please contact me if you want me to do this.

Peer evaluation (3%)

To encourage everyone's participation in the group-based fieldwork assignments, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your group members' contribution by the end of the course. Each student's peer evaluation grade will be computed as the simple average of the peer evaluations they receive. Do not complain to me about your peer evaluation grade—I will not alter it. It is up to you to establish positive relationships with your fellow students. Please note that submitting your peer evaluation grades is mandatory and late submissions will not be accepted. If you do not submit a complete evaluation for all your group members by the deadline (April 10), you will receive a zero for own participation grade, independent of the grades your group members may have given you.

Perusall reading assignments (9%)

You will be asked to engage the course readings by using Perusall, a browser-based, collaborative reading tool. Perusall enables you to discuss the readings together with other students. Perusall will grade your reading engagement for each individual reading on a pass/fail basis. It considers the quantity and quality of comments and the degree to which your comments stimulate and contribute to student discussion. Your Perusall grade will be the average of your pass/fail credit per assigned reading. To receive credit for a reading assignment, you have to make insightful/useful annotations by midnight of the day before the course session for which the readings have been assigned. Completing a reading assignment late will not result in credit. To access Perusall, go to <https://app.perusall.com/join/doering-7el4h> and enter the course code DOERING-7EL4H.

Final exam (40%)

The final exam will take place during the university's final exam period. The date will be provided by the Faculty of Arts & Science when it becomes available. The final will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The type of accommodation I provide in case of acceptably excused student absences may include a make-up exam, an oral exam, and/or a term paper. It is in your interest to take the final exam if at all possible.

Missed Tests or Assignment Deadlines

Students who miss an assignment deadline or a test will receive a mark of zero unless the reason is a circumstance beyond their control. **Within three days** of missing a deadline or test, students must send the instructor a request for consideration. Students must document their request with **one of the following**:

- Absence declaration via ACORN
- U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form
- College Registrar's letter (e.g., in case of personal/family crisis or emergency)
- Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services. Note, however, that academic accommodations must generally be requested before (rather than after) deadlines or tests.

Late Assignment Submission Policy

Do everything you can to meet assignment deadlines. Late delinquency self-reports, group reports, Perusall reading assignments, or peer evaluations will not be accepted and will not yield credit.

Other Course Policies

- The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights, and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. The University of Toronto does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.
- You are expected to consult the syllabus for relevant information if you have questions about assignments and other course-related matters. If you email me with questions that reading the syllabus would resolve, I reserve the right to ignore your email.
- Kindly note that course lectures will be recorded to make the course more accessible to everyone. In coming to lectures, you agree to be recorded.
- As the instructor for this course, I strive to provide an accessible learning environment. If you have a consideration that may require accommodations, please contact Accessibility Services: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>, 416-978-8060, or accessibility.services@utoronto.ca. Feel free to approach me as well if you believe I can improve your learning experience.
- Accommodations for religious holy days: The University provides reasonable accommodation for students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Please alert

- me as early as possible about religious observances and anticipated absences that may interfere with assignments and other course requirements.
- There is no attendance requirement for coming to lecture. It is up to you to decide whether you want to come to class. However, note that tests and exercises will cover not only the readings but may also include in-class information and materials. If you decide to come to class, make sure to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the course meeting. If you can, please bring a laptop or table to access readings and materials I might share with you.
 - You are required to actively communicate and work together with your group members for preparing, researching, and writing up group reports. If group members repeatedly complain about a group member not attending meetings or failing to support the group's work, I will remove that student from their group. The student will then have to complete the assignments on their own.
 - If you believe an assignment was graded incorrectly or unfairly, you may submit a regrading request. Before contacting me, you must wait until three days have passed since the grade was shared with you. Write a memo in which you describe and justify your grade complaint and email it to me. I will regrade the entire assignment, not just specific parts or issues you may have flagged. Your grade may go up or down as a result.
 - All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. You are expected to inform yourself about academic integrity. For general information, see <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>. If you have additional questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me.
 - The use of generative artificial intelligence tools or apps for assignments in this course, including tools like ChatGPT and other AI writing or coding assistants, is allowed for language editing purposes only.
 - Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service is described on the Turnitin.com web site.
 - Assignments not submitted through *Turnitin* will receive a grade of zero (0 %), unless a student instead provides, along with their position paper, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via *Turnitin*) is in place because, strictly speaking, using *Turnitin* is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.
 - Regardless of circumstances, I never give extra credit, "round up" grades, or change the relative grade weight of assignments. I follow this policy because tailoring grades or grading procedures to individual students is fundamentally unfair to the other students. Please do not ask me to do so.

Schedule

Week 1. Thursday, January 9. Course overview.

Week 2. Thursday, January 16. Classic foundations of criminology and the sociology of deviance.

- Jeffrey B. Snipes, Thomas J. Bernard, and Alexander L. Gerould. 2019. *Vold's Theoretical Criminology*. Chapter 3 ("Classical Criminology"). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Erikson, Kai T. 1966. *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance*. Chapter 1 ("On the Sociology of Deviance"). New York: Wiley.

Week 3. Thursday, January 23. The explanation of crime and deviance (1): social psychology and rational choice.

- Akers, Ronald L., Christine S. Sellers, Donna M. Bishop, and Barry C. Feld. 2011. "Social Learning Theory." From *The Oxford Handbook of Juvenile Crime and Juvenile Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press. Read pp.1-8. You can skim the rest.
- Hirschi, Travis. 1969. *Causes of Delinquency*. Chapter 2 ("A Control Theory of Delinquency"), pp.16-34. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Feeney, Floyd. 1986. "Robbers as Decision-Makers." Pp. 53-71 in Cornish, Derek and Ronald Clarke (eds.), *The Reasoning Criminal. Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending*. New York: Springer.

Week 4. Thursday, January 30. The explanation of crime and deviance (2): sociodemographic "explanations."

- Gould, Stephen Jay. 1993. *The Mismeasure of Man*. New York, NY: Norton. Chapter 4 ("Measuring Bodies: Two Case Studies on the Apishness of Undesirables"). Read pp.151-175. You can skim the rest.
- Chesney-Lind, Meda. 2015. "Gendered Pathways into Delinquency." Pp. 83-102 in *Sisters in Crime Revisited: Bringing Gender into Criminology, in Honor of Freda Adler*, edited by F. T. Cullen, P. Wilcox, J. L. Lux and C. L. Jonson. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 5. Thursday, February 6. The explanation of crime and deviance (3): power and inequality.

- Agnew, Robert. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." *Criminology* 30(1):47–88. Read 47-61. You can skim the rest.
- Ferrell, Jeff. 1995. "Urban Graffiti: Crime, Control, and Resistance." *Youth & Society* 27(1):73–92.
- Chambliss, William J. 1973. "The Saints and the Roughnecks." *Society* 11(1):24–31.

Week 6. Thursday, February 13. Patterns and perceptions of crime and deviance.

- Sacco, Vincent. 2005. *When Crime Waves*. Chapter 6 ("Being Afraid"). New York, NY: Sage.

Thursday, February 20. Winter break: NO CLASS.

Week 7. Thursday, February 27. **Midterm exam.**

Week 8. Thursday, March 6. Sexuality as deviance.

- Humphreys, Laud. 1970. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Rutgers, NJ: Transaction. Chapters 1 (“Public settings for ‘private’ encounters”) and 7 (“The Breastplate of Righteousness”).
- Seida, Kimberly, and Eran Shor. 2020. *Aggression in Pornography: Myths and Realities*. Chapters 2 (“The modern pornography industry: overview and recent trends”) and 4 (“The effects of pornography on consumers”).

Week 9. Thursday, March 13. Drugs and violence.

- Sampson, Robert J., Jeffrey D. Morenoff, and Stephen Raudenbush. 2005. “Social Anatomy of Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Violence.” *American Journal of Public Health* 95(2):224–32.
- Bourgeois, Philippe. 2003. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. Chapter 3 (“Crackhouse Management”), pp.77-113. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Week 10. Thursday, March 20. Policing and social control.

- Moskos, Peter. 2009. *Cop in the Hood: My Year Policing Baltimore’s Eastern District*. Chapter 5 (“911 Is a Joke”), pp. 89-110. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wortley, Scot, and Akwasi Owusu-Bempah. 2022. “Race, Police Stops, and Perceptions of Anti-Black Police Discrimination in Toronto, Canada over a Quarter Century.” *Policing: An International Journal* 45(4):570–85.

Week 11. Thursday, March 27. Screening of “The Force,” directed by Peter Nicks.

Week 12. Thursday, April 3. Prosecution and punishment.

- Braithwaite, John and Stephen Mugford. 1994. “Conditions of Successful Reintegration Ceremonies: Dealing with Juvenile Offenders.” *British Journal of Criminology* 34(2):139-171.
- Frohmann, Lisa. 1991. “Discrediting Victims’ Allegations of Sexual Assault: Prosecutorial Accounts of Case Rejections.” *Social Problems* 38(2):213–26.