American Society of Criminology
Introduction to Criminology Syllabi Collection

Co-editors: Denise Paquette Boots (University of Texas at Dallas) & William Reese (Augusta State University)

Assorted Assignments/Projects/Papers
1. Wan-Ning Bao, Indiana University

CRIME AND SOCIETY
Service Learning Project

Objectives

Service learning combines what you learn in class with your experience in community service. In our case, you will gain better understanding of sociological/criminological concepts, theories and approaches in crime and criminal behavior by applying and evaluating them in the “real world.” By connecting what you learn in class with what you see in the “real world,” service learning would lead to your active learning, foster your critical thinking, and thus provoke your intellectual development. Through direct service to the organization and working with different people, service learning will enhance your appreciation of diversity, facilitate your cultural and racial understanding, and improve your ability to work with others. When you work with youth in need and help with issues in crime, you would have good understanding of root causes of crime and criminal behavior, and importance of crime control through society. Service learning students will assist youth with their academic work and life issues, establish positive relationships with them, and provide them with role models. Therefore, service learning activities will become a valuable source of support to crime prevention and crime control in the organization. For sociology majors and minors who are interested in doing internships in the future, the service learning sites can be used as possible internship organizations.

Activity

You will participate in the mentoring/tutoring project in Craine House (Community Corrections) or Youth Empowerment Program (Probation Department). You will create a personal, supportive one-on-one relationship for each program participant and provide mentoring or tutoring to them. The ultimate goal is to divert the participant from unsuccessful attitudes and behavior to a more productive, permanent, lawful and responsible lifestyle. You will volunteer about 15 hours of direct service in 9 weeks for the entire course, with about 2 hours per week. Students will work individually with his/her partner.

Assignments

To assess your service learning experiences, you are required to complete three assignments throughout the project. Each of these assignments will be graded separately by the instructor. Student’s grade will be based on the three assignments.

(1) Reflective journal: The purpose of writing journals is for you to express your thoughts and feelings about your service experiences. Your journals are not just logs and events but progression of reflective activities in which you consider your service activities in light of the course material. You should describe your experiences, discuss the relevance of your experiences to the material learned in class (e.g., concepts, theories and approaches), and provide
reflections on what you have learned. The instructor will provide the specific topics for each 
journal. You are expected to write 4 journals (1-2 
pages, typed). Journals will be collected and graded periodically through the semester. Journals 
can also be used as an important source for the final report. (20 points, 5 points each)

(2) Written report: The final outcome of your service-learning project is a written report to be 
submitted to the instructor on November 30. The report should be the summary of your service 
learning experiences. The points to be covered in the report are given below. The report should 
be 5-7 pages, typed, and double-spaced. (20 points)

(3) Oral report presentation: You will give an oral presentation of the final report to share your 
service learning experiences with the class. Presentation will take 10-15 minutes, followed by 
questions and comments from the class. (10 points)

The report MUST address each of the following questions:

1. What was the project and how was it related to the course material (activities involved, 
goals to accomplish)?

2. What were the characteristics of the organization, group or individual you served 
(location, size, socioeconomic status, racial/ethnic characteristics, criminal/delinquent 
behavior, etc.)?

3. What concepts, theories and approaches in crime and criminal behavior were reflected 
or challenged by your service learning experiences?

4. What was the impact of your project on your sociological understanding of crime and 
criminal behavior, your personal development, and crime control/prevention in the 
organization?

5. What else did you learn from this project?

6. What suggestions would you give to improve the program/activity you participated in?
2. Steven Barakan, University of Maine

Extra Credit. Students with no more than two unexcused absences may submit an extra-credit paper that will add up to four points to the final course grade. The paper will apply your knowledge to the course to criminal justice careers. Specifically, you are asked to choose one of the careers included in the Job Description area on the Careers in Criminal Justice cd-rom supplement. For the career you select, you should pretend either that you will be entering that career or that you are writing to someone who will be entering that career. Regardless of what you pretend, your paper should discuss how knowledge gained to our course may enhance someone's ability to perform all aspects of their job responsibilities in the career you select. Your discussion should draw extensively on the cd-rom and on all course materials and indicate what you have learned to our course and your ability to apply it to real-world situations. The paper should be 3-5 pages long (900-1200 words), typed, and double-spaced. This paper is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, December 13.
3. Bill Reese, Augusta State University

Society, Law, and the Criminal
POL$2000$
Outside Reading Assignment

Purposes:

1) Afford the opportunity to investigate in-depth analyses of criminal justice
2) Afford the opportunity to critically read and write about criminal justice
3) Afford the opportunity to examine (and propose) criminal justice reform

Requirements:

1) Write a synopsis of Elliott Currie’s *Crime and Punishment in America*
   a) produce a one page synopsis of the book
      i) limited to ~600 words (or ~750 words if produced on a legal size sheet), use no smaller than 12 pt. type, single-spaced, and with no less than one inch margins
   b) include proper title incl: i) author, title, edition, year, publisher's place, publisher, pages, type of binding, price, ISBN. 
   c) include a focus on reform and legal issues

2) Write a synopsis of one of the attached monographs on criminal justice
   a) produce a one page synopsis of the book
      i) make 37 copies for distribution to the class
      ii) include a focus on legal issues and Georgia, if applicable
   b) present the book to the class orally (~10 min.)
4. Christine Gardiner, Azusa Pacific University

Fieldtrip Report: Students will have the opportunity to tour several correctional facilities. Students MUST attend one of these tours, based on their personal preference or scheduling availability. Students who sign up for a tour and fail to show up at the designated date and time will be penalized 10 points!

For each fieldtrip you will, prior to entering the facility, write about your expectations. For example, what do you think it will be like going into a prison? Then, upon completion of the tour, write about your observations. For example, how did the experience compare with your expectations? What did you learn? What will you take away from this experience?

Reports should be 2-3 pages long and demonstrate sincere thinking regarding your experience as it relates to topics discussed in class. Students who are unable to attend tours due to their criminal history or age will be given an alternative assignment solely based on the instructor's discretion.
5. Christine Gardiner, Azusa Pacific University

Research Paper: There are two parts to this research paper. The first part requires that you identify a topic/issue you are interested in that relates to criminal justice and research the issue in academic journals and/or books. The second part requires that you "get into the field" and interview at least one criminal justice system professional (i.e., police officer, dispatcher, judge, lawyer, deputy sheriff, deputy probation officer, etc.) to ascertain how the issue impacts that practitioner or the system.

In the paper you will need to (1) define the issue, (2) review the research on the issue, (3) describe how the issue impacts the criminal justice system or practitioner, and (4) demonstrate familiarity with the role, processes, and procedures of at least one aspect of the criminal justice system (law enforcement, courts, corrections).

*Topic choice:* The list of potential topics is *almost limitless.* You should choose a topic that interests you. It could be a topic that you have discussed in other classes, or something you have seen on television that has piqued your curiosity. The topic must impact at least one aspect of the criminal justice system and have an associated literature to that subject. Some possible topics: race/ethnicity issues, juvenile offenders, mentally disordered offenders, female offenders, the impact of various crime policies (three strikes, medicinal marijuana, proposition 36, gang injunctions, etc.), the role of religion in prison and rehabilitation, how widespread is the use of forensic evidence, how has technology changed crime, the investigation of crime, or the processing of offenders. These topics are just a few samples I offer as examples to you; actual topics should be more tightly focused.

*Research:* Students are expected to search online databases for articles that relate to their topic and write a review of the research topic. It is expected that 5-7 works (not assigned as course reading) from respected journals or edited volumes in the field will be used (three is the minimum). Books from respected academic authors are also acceptable. Students should ask for help from the instructor early in the semester if they are unable to locate appropriate reference materials. You should be prepared to explain the steps you have taken on your own before seeking the instructor’s help.

*Interview:* The phone book lists contact for law enforcement agencies, jails, prisons, and the courts in the government pages. Most criminal justice professionals are happy to help if you identify yourself as a student. The instructor will help facilitate interviews with criminal justice professionals as necessary and upon request.

*Paper:* A proposed topic and description should be submitted to and approved by the instructor no later than the 4th week. A paper outline and interview plan (including academic sources) should be submitted to and approved by the instructor no later than the 10th week of classes. Final papers are due a couple of weeks prior to the end of the semester. See additional paper guidelines listed in my syllabus.
6. Christine Gardiner, Azusa Pacific University

Discussion Leader Assignment: Each student will serve as a discussion leader for part of one class session. This activity will involve
(1) creating a reading guide for one or-more of the readings assigned for that class meeting
(2) facilitating a student-led discussion of the readings and
(3) writing 2-3 quiz questions per reading.

Each student will meet with the instructor one week prior to their assigned date to review the reading guide created by the student and coordinate efforts.

Grading will be based on
(1) demonstrated familiarity with the readings as evidenced by the reading guide questions and through your role as facilitator (you are NOT expected to be an expert, but you are expected to have identified and considered the author's main points),
(2) the quality of reading guide produced, and
(3) submission of the appropriate number of quiz questions.

Reading guides are essentially a set of thought-provoking questions which are intended to clarify concepts or terms, illuminate the importance of a concept or-argument made by the author, or apply the concept/argument to another course-relevant topic.
7. Josh Klein, Iona College

Writing Assignment: A five-page typed (double-spaced) term paper (25%). Your paper should be an examination of a social topic or issue that interests you. What have you learned about it from the course reading and other sources, and what do you think? Your paper should include at least two sociological concepts that helped you and at least three pieces of evidence. Your paper must cite at least three references, listed right after the last paragraph, two of them found through the CommonDreams.org website or a library source. Papers must be stapled, with no covers or title pages. Your paper will go through the following steps:

a. You will hand in a one-sentence thesis statement proposal, either an argument or a “how” or “why” question. An argument would be a claim about how one social fact affects another. For example: “elites and authorities try to control us by socializing us to be robots, through cultural messages produced by family, school, and the media.” Or: “Multinational corporations play a key role in neocolonialism, keeping wealth flowing to tiny elites, and keeping workers in both rich and poor countries underpaid.” A “how” question might be: “How does religion provide a social glue that keeps people together?” A “why” question might be: “Why do bureaucracies so often seem inefficient?”

b. You will bring in an initial draft of about two pages to be exchanged with another student during class. You will read and write comments on theirs, and use their comments to revise your paper. I will collect these to return to you with my suggestions. A good way to do make suggestions is to say “you might also look at…”, rather than “your mistake is…”. Ask yourself if the writer…
   i) Uses simple direct sentences?
   ii) Keeps to the same topic? Ever changes topics without warning?
   iii) Is clear when she/he is describing something versus telling you his/her opinion?
   iv) Uses active sentences (e.g., “the organization made people go along”) rather than passive ones (e.g., people were made to go along by the organization”).
   v) Leaves out anything you think might be important?

c. You will hand the completed term paper in to me.
8. Travis Pratt, Washington State

Thinking About Crime Paper: The "thinking about crime" paper will be a brief (2-3 page) essay where you will discuss your own views on crime causation. In particular, you will be asked to describe (1) your general thoughts on why people break the law, and (2) the events and processes in your life that have shaped these views. In other words, I want you to provide an explanation as to why your thoughts on crime causation are the way they are (i.e., why do you feel the way you do about the cause(s) of crime?).
9. Susan Smith-Cunnien, St. Thomas

Costs of Crime Assignment
SOCl320 Criminology

Objective: The goal of this assignment is to discover the total cost of crime for the 7 -county metropolitan area of the Twin Cites (actually we have a smaller class, so we'll do it for 5 of them (8)). We always hear how expensive it is to run a criminal justice system. Just how expensive is it? In searching for this answer, you will hopefully also learn a great deal about county bureaucracies and where criminal justice agencies fall within these bureaucracies.

Overview:
Each group will estimate the costs of crime for a particular county and we will add all our estimates together for a metropolitan total. Costs will include both direct costs to counties and estimates of other costs to citizens and the community (the later based on how much crime there is in the county). Groups will also note income generated by persons who are convicted/adjudicated (restitution, fines, jail costs, etc.). The attached tables (Exhibits, 1 2, and 3 from Mark A. Cohen's articles on "Measuring the Costs and Benefits of Crime and Justice") give you a broad overview of the costs of crime. We will be looking at a subset of these.

You will no doubt need to invoke all your problem-solving skills as you attempt to find and calculate the data you need. Each county records its finances differently and you must read the budget documents carefully to make sure you are looking at expenditures or revenues as needed. Also, most counties do not separate their criminal court from other court expenses or their income from criminal fines from other fines, so you must come up with a reasonable plan for separating these. I expect each group to work hard and put your heads together to devise the strategies for completing the assignment if the answers are not immediately obvious. But please ask for help before you get to the point that you want to tear your hair out - I will be happy to brainstorm with you.

Need a Calculator? There is a calculator on your desktop. Press "start," and go to "all programs," then "accessories," and click on "calculator."

Group Membership (F=facilitator) and County Website:
The facilitator's job is to get the division of labor going and coordinate completing the worksheet you, facilitators!

Group 1. Hennepin County- Tyrone Barze (F), Karla Bridgeman, Chris Cook http://www.hennepin.us

Group 2. Ramsey County - Rachel Corral (F), Michele Curran, Jordan Fillipi http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us

Group 3. Anoka County - Bridget Fitzgerald (F), Lisa Guldberg, Anna Larson, Dave Lundgren www.co.anoka.mn.us

Group 4. Carver County Dan Nelson (F), Lindsey P-inska, Brian Reider, Katie

Dakota County -Azzahya Williams (F), Adam Hammad, Deven Kashman, Sodara Lam www.co.dakota.mn.us
The Task: A Cooperative Endeavor!
Each group will need to complete the attached worksheet (one worksheet per group). The worksheet is due in class today. The worksheet is divided into three areas and you might want to have one person in your group focus on each of these areas, but you will need to help each other out. You will need to touch base with each other to make sure you are in agreement on completing the worksheet. If a person finishes one task, they should work with other group members on the other areas.

Instructions for Completing the Components of the Worksheet (see next page):

1. Costs of Crime
   Crime data for the suburban counties is available in the 2005 Uniform Crime Reports (Offenses Known to Police-Index Offenses) at Table 10
   [http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table10mn.html](http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table10mn.html).
   However, this data does not include data for the cities that are in the counties, so you will also have to get the crime data for some of the bigger communities in the county and add that in to your totals.
   [FYI: Minnesota cities' data and Mpls.-St Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area data can be found elsewhere in the Crime in America report: see Table 8 for cities over 10,000:
   [http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table08mn.html](http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table08mn.html)
   and at Table 6 for metropolitan areas at [http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table06.html](http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table06.html)]
   
   The attached "Losses per Criminal Victimization (Including Attempts)" provides estimates of costs per victimization for the Index Offenses. Please use the estimates for tangible costs.
   
   An "extra": If you have time, you can look for a few non-index offenses occur in your county (or the major city in your county) by looking at local police or sheriff web sites and then try to calculate costs for those (e.g., drunk driving and simple assault are two that have loss values provided on the "Losses per Criminal Victimization" attachment).

2. Costs of Society's Response to Crime
   The attached "Comprehensive List of Costs and Consequences of Crime" lists the costs of society's responses to crime. For this assignment; focus on the criminal justice system costs. Go to the county website to find the budget for 2006, if it is available in enough detail (otherwise you may need to use 2005 or even 2004). To find the county budget, you will need to look under "finances" or "administration" or, sometimes, "reports and documents." Some web sites have their own search engine. The budgets vary in their level of detail - provide as much detail as you can. If a budget lumps "public safety" together in one area, be sure to look elsewhere for more detailed breakdown (such as another budget link or the specific web sites of different components of the criminal justice system).
3. **Revenue from offenders**

This may be more difficult to locate. In each county, offenders must often pay the county in the form of restitution (which usually ends up with the victim, although this is not a direct process), a fine, or the payment for the costs of their own incarceration. Offenders often are required to forfeit their assets (if these assets were secured as the proceeds of crime). These are often listed in budgets under "revenue." If there is a just one category for "fines" some of these may not be for criminal offenses. Likewise, a category of "forfeitures" may include non-criminal forfeitures. Just note how you make your estimate (e.g. estimate 50% are crime-related). As with Task 2 above, if you cannot find much detail on the general budget, try looking at specific departmental web sites.

**Costs of Crime Worksheet**

County ___________________ Group Members ____________________________

1. **Costs of Crime**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Number of offenses</th>
<th>Tangible cost per offense</th>
<th>Total tangible costs</th>
<th>Notes/Comments; different source; year of data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agg. Assault</td>
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<td>Rape</td>
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<td>Robbery</td>
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<td>Larceny-theft</td>
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<td>Burglary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motor veh. theft</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Total costs:</td>
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</table>

2. **Costs of Society’s Response to Crime**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency/unit/function (specify)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>$ Cost</th>
<th>Sources, how estimated, notes/comments:</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. **Revenue from Offenders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Revenue (specify)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>$ Amount</th>
<th>Source of info, how estimate, Notes/Comments:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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**Final Calculations:**

1. Total Costs of Crime
   
   
2. Total Costs of Society's Response to Crime
   
   
3. Revenue from Offenders
   
   
**Grand Total** (Total costs Minus 3 above)

**Comments on the project:**
10. Anonymous Submission

Criminology Term Paper:

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:
1. Apply the "sociological perspective" to crime
2. Apply theoretical models to actual social reality
3. Examine a type of crime or crime issue from several perspectives
4. Critically read and write about crime
5. Learn about our social condition as social actors from crime

Open-ended list of crimes/criminal justice issues:

Index Crimes
Homicide
Rape
Robbery
Aggravated Assault
Burglary
Larceny-theft
Auto-theft
Arson
Unconventional Crime
White-collar
Corporate
Victimless
Organized
Non-Index Crimes
Vandalism
Stolen Property
Narcotics
Disorderly conduct
Sex Offenses
Assault
Vagrancy
Terrorism
General
Personal
Property

Criminal Justice Responses
Jury Reform
Penal Reform
Mandatory Sentences
Indeterminate Sentences
Capital Punishment
Electronic Surveillance
Privatization of Prisons
Civil vs. Criminal law
Criminal Justice Philosophies
Deterrence
Incapacitation
Retribution
Rehabilitation
Specific CJ Issues
Victim Rights
Civil Liberties
Search & Seizure
Capital Punishment
Plea Bargaining
Media & crime
MADD
Battered Woman Syndrome
Institutional Corrections
Community Corrections
Adversarial System

Any other relevant crime topic (e.g., schools and crime, broken homes and crime, poverty and crime, drugs and crime, gender and crime, minority crime, female crime, white collar crime, corporate crime, governmental crime, victimology, etc.)—Use syllabus for suggestions here.
11. Jon Shane, Rutgers University-Newark

Paper assignments:

Assignment #1 Locate a newspaper article on a criminal event from one of the following sources only: the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Star Ledger or the Washington Post. The article must not be older than four weeks of the due date. Make certain the article is about a criminal event and not a summary of previous criminal event. You may use the web sites of the aforementioned sources or hard copy and you must attach the article to your assignment. Write a two-page paper explaining the crime from the classical school and the positivist school perspectives (do not exceed 1 page each). Be sure to include the principle tenets of each school of thought as they relate to the criminal event.

Assignment #2 Select a criminological theory of your choice. Locate one journal article that supports your theory and one that does not support your theory. You must use only a peer-reviewed journal such as Criminology, Criminology and Public Policy, Justice Quarterly, or Police Quarterly within the last five years. You are not limited to these journals, but are specifically restricted from using Wikipedia or similar encyclopedic sources. You may use the Internet for research and you must attach the articles to your assignment. Write a three-page paper describing the theory and the article’s findings. Be sure to outline the principle tenets that were supported and those that were not. After analyzing the theory, state concluding thoughts: Should this theory be accepted or rejected when creating crime control policies? Why? Recommendation: Use the Don Gottfredson Criminal Justice Library at the School of Criminal Justice and ask librarian Phyllis Schultze for help. Mrs. Schultzze is co-author of Criminal Justice Information, How to Find it, How to Use it. She is remarkable and will help as best she can to get you what you need!

All writing assignments shall be written in MS Word and submitted via email.

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1 Peer review (known as refereeing in some academic fields) is a scholarly process used in the publication of manuscripts. Peer review is the process by which research articles are reviewed and critiqued by experts in that field before publication.
12. Marian Mosser, Upper Iowa University

Weekly Reflective Summaries (online course):
Each week you are required to submit a weekly reflective summary of what you have learned during that week. The summary must be in paragraph format and should be approximately 150 words. Post the summary in the designated thread in the Main newsgroup. Please be sure to read and respond to the summaries posted by your fellow learners. Evaluative criteria are located in the section on Grading Criteria.

Each summary should focus on three primary areas. Please use the following headings to organize your summary:

- **Summary of Learning.** This includes the major areas of content found in the lectures and reading materials for the week.
- **Personal Learning.** This should cover items that have personally impacted your thinking and practice.
- **Application to Career and Professional Goals.** This should include information pertinent to your current and future career.

Note that the summary should:
- Not be a repeat of your discussion question posting
- Remind you of the key ideas discussed in class
- Meet the applicable **Writing Standards** (see below)

**Writing Standards**

Proper American Standard English is required for all assignments. Correct grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling are also mandatory. Please note that UIU requires the use of the APA publication manual for all assignments (5th ed.). Please review the following material for further direction in this area:


Tips on electronic reference formats recommended by the American Psychological Association can be viewed at [http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html](http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html)

Government documents are more difficult to cite than books and journal articles. Be sure to visit and bookmark the following website [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/usgd/citation.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/usgd/citation.html)

Spelling, grammar, and word choice are all indicators of quality writing. Please use proper citation and attribution of source material in all written assignments. You must also give proper credit to sources used in posted messages in any of the newsgroups. Be sure to use proper APA format for citing any source in the text of your message and include a reference section at the end of your posting.