

## CRIM 210: Introduction to Criminology

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CRIM 210  
Section 002  
3.00 credit hours  
Class hours: 9:00 – 10:15 AM, Tue & Thur  
Blueridge Hall 129

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### Course goals:

1. Explore how crime is defined and measured.
2. Critically examine crime patterns and trends.
3. Provide an overview and critical assessment of criminological theories.

#### Course description:

This course provides an introduction to criminology and major theories of crime causation. This course will allow you to review and critically examine criminological theories that help explain crime as a phenomena. This will also allow for a review of empirical research examining the validity of such theories. Criminological theories are the mechanism by which we come to understand the world around us as it relates to crime and victims and the state response to criminal activities. Theories are foundations we rely upon to answer questions about the relationships between people, places, and things and to have informed discussions. In the field of criminology, theories allow us to answer larger existential questions about how, why, and where crime occurs, is increased/reduced, and what impact the justice system has, among other things. In this course, you will learn about a variety of criminological theories and employ critical thinking skills to construct thoughtful, ethical, and well-documented analyses of criminological theories and their application to public policy and practice.

Learning and critical thinking is not passive, but is about application and challenging yourself. It requires a great deal of attention both to small details and the bigger picture. As such, this course will be extremely interactive. It is essential that you complete the assigned readings and attend each class so that you can actively participate as we immerse ourselves in different criminological theories.

#### Class format

This course will include a mix of lectures and in-class activities. The in-class activities may be individual or group. Homework for this course consists of on average 1-2 hours of readings from various sources including the assigned course book, online resources, the suggested text, and other articles. Readings from the suggested text and other articles will be made available on Blackboard. I will frequently ask students to explain, analyze, apply, and evaluate the assigned readings. Through effective participation, each student contributes to the education of others in the class, as well as to his or her own education. Students who will receive a high grade in this course are those who are willing to actively engage in class activities both inside and outside the classroom.

Students are expected to arrive and leave the class at the designated times, unless there are special circumstances. This course will utilize multiple forms of media. Students are encouraged to bring

laptops/tablets to class to facilitate notetaking, but it is expected that this technology will be used for educational purposes only during class time. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g., gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in your participation grade. If you do not have access to a personal computer for out of class assignments, you should plan to utilize the University's computer lab, which is located in the Johnson Center, room 342 (please see the university website for hours of operation: <http://www.gmu.edu/resources/welcome/hours.html>). You can also check out laptops at Fenwick Library: <http://library.gmu.edu/laptops>

#### Classroom Expectations:

- **Respect your fellow students** – their persons, belongings, ideas, work, and opinions. Keep an open mind and be respectful. You don't need to agree with them, but consider what they contribute and its impact on your beliefs (strengthens, challenges, etc.).
- **Embrace technology and use it wisely.** Technology, including cell phones, laptops, tablets, clickers, etc. are allowed and encouraged for use in the classroom to assist students with note-taking, research, and any other course-related activities. We live in a digital age and technology can and should be used to facilitate learning. Students should NOT confuse this welcoming of technology with a free pass to play games or engage in non-class-related uses of technology.
- **Come to class prepared to learn** – from the instructor, fellow students, reading materials and assignments, and current events. In order to be fully prepared, students should have completed all readings and assignments prior to class. Not having access to the materials will not be accepted as an excuse; students should notify the instructor if they have difficulty accessing course materials PRIOR TO when readings/assignments are due.
- **Help foster a safe learning environment** in which all students feel comfortable sharing their ideas and perspectives. This includes being respectful of other students' points of view, as well as their religious, political, and/or sexual orientation. Agreement in class discussion is not required, but mutual respect and consideration are required.
- **Notify the instructor if you need to miss class or an exam PRIOR TO the absence.** Missed assignments can only be made up if the instructor has been notified in advance unless there are extenuating circumstances. The instructor should be notified of any such circumstances immediately, and the student should be prepared to produce documentation of the situation.
- **Be on time for all classes and exams.** Tardiness is not only a sign of disrespect, but it is also a source of distraction to the instructor and fellow students. That being said, at times, it cannot be avoided. Chronic tardiness, however, will likely impact a student's class participation grade. Special Note: Students who are late to an exam may still take it so long as no other students have finished the exam and left. Make up exams will only be offered for students who have previously discussed their need for a different exam date with the instructor.
- **Be critical of sources** – where were they published/reported, based on what evidence, were they peer reviewed? Students are encouraged to seek out quality sources of information as the foundation for class assignments and discussions. Students are also encouraged to consider a wide variety of sources and how those sources might be influenced in various ways (e.g. a republican/democratic news outlet, a research center that also sells an assessment instrument, etc.).
- **Do not copy others' work.** All independent assignments should be just that – independent. But feel free to consult with others on notes and materials, share feedback, look at each other's drafts, and so forth.
- **Honor the work of other authors.** Use citations for all course assignments. **All citations should be in APA format (6<sup>th</sup> edition).** Cite all quotes, paraphrases, pictures, and ideas. This includes the

published work of established scholars as well as the unpublished works of peers. Always give credit where credit is due, and do so according to APA formatting.

- **Be an active participant.** Active participation is an important element of this course. It's about quality, not quantity.
- **Do not assume anything.** When in doubt, ask a question. There are no stupid questions, but there are regrets for not asking them.

## II. POLICIES

### Academic integrity:

Peer tutoring and learning is highly encouraged. You may discuss your ideas with others and conference with peers on drafts of work as a part of this class; however, you are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work." More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at <http://oai.gmu.edu>.

### Enrollment

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in their classes, and making sure they're enrolled in the classes they want to be enrolled in, and not enrolled in the classes they don't want to be enrolled in. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the academic calendar at [registrar.gmu.edu](http://registrar.gmu.edu). **The last day to add a class is Monday, January 30 (also the last day to drop with no tuition penalty). The last day to drop a class with 33% tuition loss is Monday, February 13. The last day to drop a class with 67% tuition loss is Friday, February 24. After this date the class can only be dropped by using a selective withdrawal option from Monday, February 27 – Friday, March 31 – but you only have three selective withdrawals during your entire time at Mason, so use them wisely. Any other type of withdrawal requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.**

### Blackboard

I will use GMU's online Blackboard program for posting grades, required readings in addition to those in the bookstore, class announcements, and for you to submit assignments to me. Here's how to access Blackboard:

1. Go to: [mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu)
2. Log on using your email username and password. If your email account is aolagher@gmu.edu, then your username is aolagher
3. Click on the link toward the upper-right part of the screen that says "Courses"
4. Under "Course List," click on "CRIM 210 (Spring 2017)."

If you need assistance with using Blackboard, you can email your questions to [courses@gmu.edu](mailto:courses@gmu.edu), call (703) 993-3141, or go to Johnson Center room 311.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed

### **Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me to discuss your accommodation needs **AND** contact the Office of Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or [ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu) or visit the office in SUB I, Room 4205. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### **Miscellaneous**

If you have not already activated your university email account, you should do so immediately. I will communicate with you using that address. You should check your email daily for messages. If you use another email address, you should arrange to have your GMU email forwarded to that address. Check <http://www.gmu.edu> to see if classes are cancelled for bad weather or other emergencies. You can also register for Mason's emergency alert system at <https://alert.gmu.edu>. If I should have to cancel a class due to a personal emergency, I'll make every attempt to email you ASAP at your GMU email address – a very good reason to stay on top of your GMU email account.

### III. ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES

#### Course grade components

The final course grade will be determined by the following weights:

Class Participation (10%)	<p>Your attendance is a critical aspect of building your own personal understanding of criminological theory. Class time will be spent applying the concepts covered in the readings, not introducing them, so I expect you to introduce yourself to the concepts by reading the assigned materials. I will begin each class with a 10 minute reading period where you will read, summarize, and critique in 1-2 paragraphs a criminal justice current event in relation to assigned readings. Your submissions will be graded ranging from 0 to 2 (0 = did not complete; 1 = partially complete; 2 = complete). If you are not present at the start of each class to submit your paragraphs you will not receive credit. Partial credit (1 point) can be earned if responses are submitted late via email.</p> <p>Students who need to miss class for a legitimate reason should notify me in writing (via email) prior to missing class. In the event of an emergency, I will accept written documentation from a professional that verifies an acceptable reason for missing class. I am the sole judge of what qualifies as written documentation, as a professional source, and as an acceptable reason for missing class.</p>
Quizzes (25%)	<p>There will be a total of three quizzes on class materials throughout the course of the semester. Quiz material is inclusive of all class materials (e.g., readings, lectures) covered up to the point of each quiz.</p> <p>If you are not in class for a quiz, you will not be able to make it up. Additionally, if you are late to class on a day we have a quiz you will only be able to take the quiz so long as no one who has finished has yet left the room. Exceptions may be made only in the event of extenuating circumstances and will be handled on a case by case basis.</p>
Short essays (25%)	<p>There will be a total of three short essays due throughout the course of the semester. These essays should not be more than two pages double-spaced. The purpose of these essays are to stimulate critical thinking and help you write concisely. See the section below for guidance and the grading rubric for these essays.</p>
Final paper (40%)	<p>In lieu of an in-class final exam, you will have a final paper due the day of class final by midnight. The final exam is scheduled for during the official exam period on <b>Monday, May 15, 2017</b>. <b>To reiterate, your final paper will be due on this day by midnight.</b></p> <p>The final paper should be 7 – 10 pages, double spaced, and in APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition format. More detailed instructions for the final paper will be handed out prior to the exam/by the last day of class.</p>

## Grading scale

%	Grade	Value	%	Grade	Value
97-100	A+	4.0	77-79	C+	2.33
93-96	A	<b>4.0</b>	73-76	C	<b>2.0</b>
90-92	A-	3.67	70-72	C-	1.67
87-89	B+	3.33	60-69	D	1.0
83-86	B	<b>3.0</b>	0-59	F	<b>0</b>
80-82	B-	2.67			

## Short Essay Assignment & Grading Rubric

For this class, three short essays will be due throughout the semester. These essays should not be more than 2 pages double-spaced. The purpose of these essays are to stimulate critical thinking and help you write concisely about various criminological theories, their validity, and their application to policy, practice, and explaining criminological phenomena.

Essays should answer 1 of the following questions:

- Develop a public policy using criminological theory (integrating theories is encouraged). Be sure to define and outline the crime(s) and/or criminological issues your policy and theory you rely upon is meant to address.
- Compare/contrast two or more criminological theories. Discuss the strengths and limitations of each in explaining current criminal justice issues. Note: feel encouraged to challenge theoretical propositions.
- Identify a recent criminal justice current event or issue and identify a criminology theory to explain the event or issue. Discuss how well you think the theory does or does not explain the event or issue in light of empirical evidence and other criminology theories.

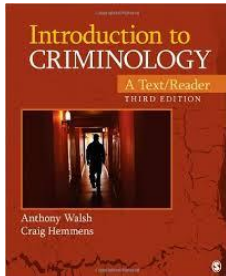
## Essays will be graded on a 10 point scale using the following rubric:

Criteria	Explanation	Points
Thesis	Did you include a thesis statement in your paper? This is a statement of your position, opinion, or what your essay will argue.	2
Use of evidence	How well did you tie your essay back to the class material? Did you adequately support your statements?	2
Proper citation	Did you properly cite direct quotes and paraphrasing using APA format, 6 <sup>th</sup> edition?	2
Punctuation, grammar, spelling	Was your essay readable and understandable? Did you use proper punctuation and grammar? Did you incorporate transitional sentences to ensure that the flow of the paper was logical? Did you consider your audience when writing your essay?	2
Critical thinking	Were your answers thoughtful and deliberate? While this is an opinion essay, remember that your arguments still have to be rational and justifiable. If you are unsure if your essay meets these standards, consider the "so-what" factor. "So-what" as in -- why does it matter? Who does it matter to? How might this matter to you or to others? "So-what" is answered in the affirmative when after reading the essay, the reader walks away with something more than when they began.	2

Essays should be submitted via Blackboard **on the due date by 9 AM.**

#### IV. CLASS READINGS

##### Required text:



Walsh, A. & Hemmens, C. (2014). *Introduction to criminology: A text/reader. Third edition*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, California.

##### Other Readings (via Blackboard):

Additional readings will be provided through Blackboard and should be completed by the date listed on the syllabus. Inability to access a reading will not be an acceptable excuse for not having read it prior to class. If you are not able to access a particular reading please notify me immediately so that I can make it available.

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##### Useful resource:

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##### APA style guide



- Purchase/borrow online
- Use at Fenwick library
- [Purdue OWL: APA Formatting and Style Guide](#) from Purdue's Online Writing Lab

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Date:	Topic:	Readings/Assignments Due:
January 24	Introduction	No assignments due
January 26	Overview	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 1-32</li><li>2. Brittain (2012)</li></ol> <b>Assignments due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Baseline survey</li></ol>
January 31	Defining and measuring crime	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 33-48; 49-64</li></ol>
February 2	Crime patterns and trends: Violent crimes, multiple murders, terrorism	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 373-398; 411-426</li></ol>
February 7	Crime patterns and trends: Property crime, public order, white collar crime	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 447-462; 483-497; 513-530</li></ol>
February 9	Theories of violence and victimization & quiz review	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 73-94</li><li>2. Widom (1989)</li><li>3. Singer (1986)</li></ol>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Dodge et al. (1990)</li> <li>5. Macmillan (2001)</li> <li>6. Wright &amp; Fagan (2013)</li> <li>7. Widom &amp; Wilson (2015)</li> <li>8. Victims of personal crime : an empirical foundation for a theory of personal victimization, Michael J. Hindelang Michael R Gottfredson; James Garofalo 1978</li> </ol>
February 14	<b>Quiz #1</b>	
February 16	Classical criminology & positivism: Beccaria, Bentham, Cartographic criminology	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 115-121; 131-133</li> <li>2. Garland (1985)</li> </ol>
February 21	Rational choice theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 121-122; 134-140</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 23-29</li> <li>3. Cornish &amp; Clarke (1986)</li> <li>4. Sanchez (1997)</li> </ol> <b>Assignments due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Short essay #1</b></li> </ol>
February 23	Routine activities theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 122-124</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 30-37</li> <li>3. Cohen &amp; Felson (1979)</li> <li>4. Eck (1995)</li> <li>5. Clarke (2016): pp. 1-7</li> </ol>
February 28	Deterrence theory & quiz review	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 124-129</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 14-22</li> </ol>
March 2	<b>Quiz #2</b>	
March 7	Social ecology/Social disorganization theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 141-146; 161-167</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 160-171</li> </ol>
March 9	Anomie/Strain theory, Focal concerns theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 146-158; 168-174</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 173-195</li> </ol> <b>Assignments due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Short essay #2</b></li> </ol>
March 14 – 16	<b>Spring Break – No class this week</b>	
March 21	Differential association theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 185-188</li> <li>2. Moffitt (1993)</li> </ol>
March 23	Social learning theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 189-191</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 78-99</li> </ol>
March 28	Low self-control theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 194-198</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 116-121</li> </ol>



March 30	Social control theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 192-193</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 122-134</li> </ol>
April 4	Labeling theory, reintegrative shaming theory & quiz review	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 198-204</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 137-157</li> </ol>
April 6	<b>Quiz #3</b>	
April 11	Marxist criminology, Conflict theory	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 223-230</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 199-249</li> </ol>
April 13	Feminist criminology	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 231-239</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 250-270</li> <li>3. Green (2016)</li> </ol> <b>Assignments due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Short essay #3</b></li> </ol>
April 18	Theories of policing	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Klockars (1985): pp. 7-18</li> <li>2. Muir (1977): pp. 3-36;</li> <li>3. National Research Council (2004): pp. 47-108</li> </ol>
April 20	Psychosocial theories: intelligence, temperament, personality	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 259-267; 276-283</li> <li>2. Andrews &amp; Bonta (1994): Chapter 1</li> <li>3. Andrews &amp; Bonta (1994): pp. 313-324</li> </ol>
April 25	Psychosocial theories: lifestyle, personalities	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 268-275; 284-294</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 63-77</li> <li>3. Andrews &amp; Bonta (2010)</li> </ol>
April 27	Biosocial theories: genetics, psychology	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 295-302; 322-329</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 41-47</li> <li>3. Walsh et al. (2012)</li> </ol>
May 2	Biosocial theories: neuroscience	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 303-310; 313-321</li> <li>2. Akers &amp; Sellers (2013): pp. 48-60</li> </ol>
May 4	Lifecourse criminology & course evaluations	<b>Readings due:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Walsh &amp; Hemmens (2014): pp. 335-352; 354-372</li> </ol>

#### Schedule of assignments

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May
Baseline survey	26-Jan				
Quiz #1		14-Feb			
Quiz #2			2-Mar		

Quiz #3			6-Apr	
Short essay #1	21-Feb			
Short essay #2		9-Mar		
Short essay #3			13-Apr	
Final exam essay				15-May

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