

CRIM 492—HONORS SEMINAR II

Spring 2017

Dr. Charlotte Gill | Department of Criminology, Law and Society, George Mason University
Wednesdays 1:30pm–4:10pm | Innovation Hall 333, Fairfax Campus

✉ cgill19@gmu.edu | ☎ (703) 993-6085 | 🐦 [gill_char](https://twitter.com/gill_char) | 🏠 Research Hall 317 (by appointment)

Course Description

“Bar Crawls and Drunken Brawls: Police-Community Partnerships to Reduce Alcohol-Related Crime

Community policing has recently received national media and policy attention for its potential to improve strained relationships between police and communities. But while there is research to suggest that community policing helps improve citizens’ perceptions of the police, its potential to prevent crime is less clear. Some studies suggest community policing could have a longer term impact on crime when relationship building is combined with targeted problem solving activities that involve both police and communities, but there are still many gaps in the research. Which aspects of police-community partnerships are most effective for preventing crime? Who and what do we mean by “the community?” How can police balance the needs of different communities that exist within the same place?

The Clarendon restaurant and bar district in Arlington County is a fascinating setting to study these issues. Here police are faced with problems of alcohol-related crime and violence that are likely to increase as the area develops and the economy improves. They also have to balance the needs and rights of a number of different communities that share the same small space—business owners who want to make a profit, diners and drinkers who (as long as they are 21!) have the right to enjoy themselves over a few drinks, and residents who deserve to feel safe in their homes. What role should the police play in protecting people who are engaging in legal behavior on private property while also ensuring such behavior does not threaten public safety or violate laws? How should they work with these different groups to preserve police-community relationships while also preventing crime?

In this course we will collaborate with the Arlington County Police Department to develop a police-community partnership to reduce alcohol-related crime and harm in Clarendon. The course will follow a “participatory action research” framework in which theories, research questions, and strategies for assessment are developed in collaboration with the people (police, business owners, and community members) who are being studied. Students will learn how to negotiate relationships with agencies and individuals, develop studies that are relevant to both research and practice, and contribute to the literature on community policing implementation.

Course Activities

CRIM 492 is the second part of the two-semester Honors Seminar, building upon the work students began in CRIM 491. This semester will be dedicated to data collection and analysis to answer the research questions students developed in CRIM 491. Students will prepare final reports tailored to police practitioners and business owners, and will present their research findings to Arlington County Police Department and representatives from Clarendon businesses.

Research and Scholarship-Intensive Course and Honors Program Information

This class is designated as a *Students as Scholars* Research and Scholarship (RS) Intensive Course, which means that you will have the opportunity to work on a real-life research project and present your results beyond the classroom. To learn more about *Students as Scholars*, visit <http://oscar.gmu.edu>.

On completion of this course you should be familiar with the principles of participatory action research and research methods, be able to discuss prior research on community policing, alcohol-related crime, and place-based crime prevention, have learned presentation and report writing skills, and have developed, implemented, and analyzed a research question that contributes to scholarship and supports the work of the Arlington County Police Department in Clarendon.

RS Student Learning Outcomes

In this RS-designated course, students will:

- Create an original scholarly or creative project
- Communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project
- Engage in scholarly inquiry by:
 - Articulating and refining a scholarly question
 - Following ethical principles
 - Gathering evidence appropriate to the question
 - Assessing the validity of key assumptions and evidence

The Criminology, Law and Society Honors Program is open to Criminology, Law and Society majors who show the ability and drive to benefit from intensive study in the honors seminars. There are no formal course or GPA requirements, although the most promising candidates will be students who have taken challenging courses at Mason and who have earned at least a 3.5 overall/cumulative GPA. Students must have permission to participate in this course and are expected to make a one-year commitment to participate in both CRIM 491 and CRIM 492. Students who successfully complete CRIM 491 and 492 with a GPA of 3.5 or above will receive the honors designation in Criminology, Law and Society when they graduate and the letters “RS” will appear on their academic transcripts indicating they have participated in a Research and Scholarship Intensive course. The six credits from these two courses count in the elective category and toward the criminal justice concentration. General information on the Honors program is available at <http://cls.gmu.edu/undergraduate/honors-research>.

Course Website and Communications

- The syllabus, course schedule, certain readings, and additional information and announcements will be posted on Blackboard (<http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>). Announcements will also be sent to your Mason email address. Please be sure to check your Mason email regularly or ensure that you have set up email forwarding correctly. For privacy reasons you should use your Mason email address to correspond with me.
- My contact information is at the beginning of this document. Email is the best way to reach me. I will reply to emails and voicemails within 24 hours during the week and by Monday morning if messages are sent on Fridays or over the weekend. Please include “CRIM 492” in the subject line of emails and

your full name in the message. Leave your full name and a callback number or email address in voice messages.

- Office hours for this class will be held by appointment only. Please contact me by email or speak to me during class to set up a face-to-face appointment at a mutually convenient time. There will also be opportunities to discuss your work one-on-one during class time.

Course Format and Guidelines

Most classes this semester will involve independent or small group work on your research projects. You are not expected to attend every class session (unless specified), but I expect you to be working on your project for at least three hours per week. For example, you may choose to spend time collecting data at ACPD on a Wednesday afternoon instead of coming to class, or if you have stayed out late on a Friday night collecting data you may choose to skip the next class session to make up for it. The computers and other classroom resources are available for your use during the scheduled class time and I will be present in the classroom during most class sessions to answer questions and provide support. Please check the [Tentative Course Schedule and Reading Assignments](#) starting on page 5 for class sessions that you are expected to attend.

Teamwork and mutual respect are key to success in this class. Students who are working on similar topics may be expected to work together in groups to develop interview/survey questions, conduct interviews, and analyze data. Please be considerate of others' viewpoints and make sure to credit other students' ideas where appropriate.

Course Requirements and Student Evaluation

1. Weekly Research Journal (20 points)

You will keep a research journal that documents the number of hours you spent working on your project (both inside and outside of class), what you were doing, what you accomplished, and any questions and ideas you have while you are working. **Please note: this assignment is slightly different from the journal assignment last semester.** This time, you will submit your journal **every week**, no later than the beginning of each class session (1:30pm on Wednesdays—please check the [Tentative Course Schedule and Reading Assignments](#) starting on page 5 for any changes to this schedule). The journal may be typed in Microsoft Word or equivalent and uploaded to Blackboard, or if you keep handwritten notes you may either upload photos of your notes to Blackboard or hand your notebook to me at the beginning of class for a quick review. Unlike last semester, there is no requirement to turn in your full journal at the end of the semester.

2. Research Presentations (20 points)

Two formal presentations are required in this class: one to the command staff of ACPD (which will take place at the Police Department on **April 26**) and one to other Clarendon stakeholders, such as bar owners and managers (on **May 3**). You will receive up to 10 points for each presentation. Further instructions will be given later in the semester; however, these will be very short, concise presentations of no more than 5 minutes each! Training on how to give short presentations will be provided during one of our class sessions.

3. Final Report (60 points)

The final report will build upon the research proposal you completed last semester. It will include your finalized Methodology section, your Findings, and your Discussion and Conclusion as well as

the literature review and research question you wrote up for CRIM 491. Further instructions will be provided later in the semester; however, the final paper should be around 20-25 pages long (including the 10 pages you already wrote for CRIM 491) and will also include a one-page summary and three-page executive summary (not part of the 20-25 pages). The final report will be due on Blackboard no later than **May 10**. There will also be opportunities to turn in draft sections of the report throughout the semester for an ungraded review.

Letter grades for this course will be based on the following points breakdown:

A+	97–100	A	93–96.9	A-	90–92.9
B+	87–89.9	B	83–86.9	B-	80–82.9
C+	77–79.9	C	73–76.9	C-	70–72.9
		D	60–69.9		
		F	59.9 or less		

Course Policies and Information

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who needs academic accommodations, please contact Disability Services (<http://ods.gmu.edu>) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. If you have already contacted ODS and you are waiting to hear from a counselor, please let me know.

Academic Integrity and the GMU Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, stealing, and plagiarizing. Please see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/> for a full description of the Code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. Instructors are required to report all violations of the Honor Code to the GMU Honor Committee. Violations will likely result in a failing grade for the assignment and may result in a failing grade for the course, plus any additional penalties determined by the Committee, which could include dismissal from the university. In this course, academic integrity means that you will properly cite the words, work, and ideas of others, including your classmates, in all your work and work independently where required. If you have any doubt as to whether you are in compliance with the Honor Code, always ask me.

Enrollment Statement

You are responsible for verifying your enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published each year in the Schedule of Classes, available from the Registrar's website (<http://registrar.gmu.edu>).

Last day to add: January 30

Last day to drop: January 30 (no tuition penalty); February 13 (33% tuition penalty); February 24 (67% tuition penalty)

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the Dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

Resources

Blackboard

Visit <http://courssupport.gmu.edu> if you need help using Blackboard. Walk-in assistance is available at the Collaborative Learning Hub, 311 Johnson Center.

The Writing Center and Mason Library

The Writing Center at Mason (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>) is a fantastic and free resource providing information and one-on-one tutoring for all your writing needs. While I am always willing to review drafts of your writing and provide feedback, consider the Writing Center if you need more intensive assistance with any part of the writing process, from planning and organizing your paper to proof-reading and revising. Their website also has guides on best practices for reading, note-taking, and citing sources. Mason Library also has excellent tutorials on writing, reading, note-taking, giving presentations, time management, and academic integrity. See <http://library.gmu.edu/tutorials> for a full list.

Personal and Academic Resources

If you are struggling, in crisis, or just need information and resources, the Offices of University Life provide support and assistance for many areas of your personal and academic life, including academic integrity, counseling and psychological services, disability services, diversity and inclusion, health and wellness, LGBTQ resources, and advice for international students. See <http://ulife.gmu.edu/home/offices-of-university-life/> for a full listing of service areas and contact information.

Tentative Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard. Please do any assigned reading and homework before the class for which it is listed. Readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Please note: You are required to attend all class sessions listed in **bold**. Non-bold classes are optional (you do not have to attend the class session if you are working on your project elsewhere). You may also move on to Analysis and Writing before Spring Break if you complete your data collection—please refer to your individual Action Plan, which will be sent to you by email just before the start of the semester and discussed in the first class session.

Last updated: December 27, 2016

Week	Date	Class Activity	Homework due
1	Jan-25	Class Introduction, Planning, Finalizing Research Instruments	<i>Optional: research journal from winter break (if you kept one)</i>
2	Feb-1	Introduction to Data Management and Analysis See Blackboard (Course Content) for readings	Weekly research journal
3	Feb-8	Data collection	Weekly research journal
4	Feb-15	Data collection	Weekly research journal
5	Feb-22	Data collection	Weekly research journal
6	Mar-1	Data collection	Weekly research journal

Week	Date	Class Activity	Homework due
7	Mar-8	Data collection	Weekly research journal <i>Optional: review of draft Methods section</i>
8	Mar-15	NO CLASS Spring Break	<i>None</i>
9	Mar-22	Presentations and Report Writing Guest speaker: Claudia Gross Shader, City of Seattle Office of City Auditor See Blackboard (Course Content) for YouTube content—please watch before class	Weekly research journal for last 2 weeks
10	Mar-29	Data analysis and writing Note: Instructor will not be in class today	Weekly research journal
11	Apr-5	Data analysis and writing	Weekly research journal
12	Apr-12	Data analysis and writing Optional: presentation practice	Weekly research journal
13	Apr-19	Data analysis and writing Optional: presentation practice	Weekly research journal <i>Optional: review of draft Findings section</i>
14	Apr-26	Presentations to ACPD Command Staff Class will be held at ACPD HQ	<i>None</i>
15	May-3	Presentations to ACPD and Project Stakeholders Class will be held in normal classroom	<i>Optional: review of draft Discussion/Conclusion section</i>
	May-10	FINAL REPORT DUE ON BLACKBOARD BY 11:59PM	