

George Mason University
CRIM 595/795 - 002
Cyber Crime
Spring 2022

Instructor: Dr. Jin R. Lee

Email: jlee331@gmu.edu

Office Location: Enterprise Hall, Room 303

Class Meetings: Thursdays 4:30PM – 7:10PM

Class Location: Krug Hall 19

In-Person Office Hours: Mondays 11:00AM – 1:00PM

Online Office Hours: Contact via email to arrange virtual office hour meetings

REQUIRED TEXT

Holt, T.J., Bossler, A.M., & Seigfried-Spellar, K.C. (2017). *Cybercrime and Digital Forensics: An Introduction, 2nd Edition*. Routledge Press.

Additional required readings and materials will be posted on Blackboard and/or shared in class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objectives of this course are to critically examine the ways that technology has shaped human behavior and enabled new patterns of offending and victimization over the last three decades. This course will help students understand the complex nature of cybercrime, as well as its significance across a variety of disciplines including the social and information sciences. Discussions will center on the rise of computers, digital technology, and cybercrime, as well as the difficulties in measuring and combating these emerging offenses. A considerable amount of time will also be spent examining different types of cybercrime and online deviance, such as computer hacking, fraud, illicit online markets, and various forms of online interpersonal violence offending and victimization (e.g., cyberbullying, online harassment, revenge porn/nonconsensual pornography). The development of security technologies used to defend against these attacks, as well as the laws and policies used to investigate, prosecute, and deter these behaviors will also be discussed.

A NOTE ON CONTENT

By its nature, criminology and criminal justice requires us to focus on some controversial and mature topics, such as violence, sexuality, victimization, racial tension, etc. While debates are welcome, any and all forms of disrespect and discrimination will not be tolerated. If there are any topics that may cause you any distress, please let me know.

GRADES

Analysis Papers (30% of grade): There will be three (3) analysis paper assignments, each worth 10% of the final grade. Students are required to dissect a peer-reviewed journal article that is either testing a theory or examining an aspect of cybercrime. Students are required to address the

following five questions in their Analysis Papers:

- (1) What are the basic propositions or hypotheses being tested in the study/analysis, and how do they relate to the core theory and/or aspect of cybercrime?
- (2) What is the sample population being used; what are the key dependent and independent variables being tested; and how are they operationalized?
- (3) Do the study's hypotheses find support? If so, how?
- (4) Is the study/analysis a partial or complete test of criminological theory? If so, how?
- (5) How does the study expand our understanding of criminological theory and/or cybercrime as a whole?

The first Analysis Paper is due on Week 5, whereas the second and third Analysis Paper is due on Week 10 and Week 13, respectively. Students may choose course content (e.g., a peer-reviewed journal article) from both the current and previous portion of the course. For example, Analysis Paper 1 (assigned on Week 5) can assess a peer-reviewed journal article introduced in Weeks 1 to 5. To provide another example, Analysis Paper 2 (assigned on Week 10) can draw from course material from Weeks 6 to 10. While there is no strict word-count requirement for these Analysis Papers, you are required to give substantive thought to the question/theory/topic and demonstrate your comprehension of class material. Analysis Papers are due in hardcopy format at the start of class (4:30-4:40PM).

Term Research Paper (40% of grade): There will be one (1) term research paper worth 40% of the final grade. Students are expected to write a 20-to-30-page research paper (inclusive of notes, references, and tables) on a topic of their choosing. Term Research Papers are due in hardcopy format at the start of class (4:30-4:40PM). Papers must be submitted in APA format, 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins throughout.

For Ph.D. students: The Term Research Paper should include an analysis of data (whether qualitative or quantitative) and present findings with implications for research and policy. This can include analyzing primary data generated from online sources such as web forums or blogs, or secondary data sets that examine a particular phenomenon. If you are having difficulty finding an appropriate data source, please come see me as I may have access to topically relevant secondary data sources. Alternatively, you may conduct a comprehensive policy analysis or discussion of theory related to some form of cybercrime. The purpose of this assignment is for students to write a manuscript that can be turned into a peer-reviewed journal article. I encourage those interested in publishing their Term Research Papers (or turning their Term Research Paper into a manuscript suitable for peer-review) to come see me to discuss potential outlets and angles. I am happy to assist students tailor their papers for peer-review and/or collaborate with them to improve their paper once the course is completed.

For M.S. students: The Term Research Paper can take one of three forms: (1) a research manuscript as outlined above, (2) a comprehensive policy analysis or discussion of theory related to some form of cybercrime as outlined above, or (3) a general argumentative research paper. M.S. students wanting to complete the general argumentative research paper will be given several paper topics requiring them to answer a question (or a series of questions) as fully as is possible using supporting arguments from both outside research articles and the required course

texts. This paper will require students to react to a statement or policy, apply theory to a certain cybercrime, or address a current and topical issue in cybercrime and criminal justice. Paper topics will be provided in a separate document on Blackboard.

Term Paper Presentations (10% of grade): There will be one (1) term paper presentation worth 10% of the final grade. Students are required to conduct a 10-15 minute in-class presentation covering the focus of their Term Research Paper. Presentations will follow a traditional research conference style in that you must prepare a PowerPoint presentation and cover all aspects of your paper. The presentations will be held on May 5 (i.e., one-week before Term Research Papers are due). This will give students time to make adjustments to their Term Research Paper should changes be necessary.

Class Participation (see grade distribution below): Class Participation will be divided into three sections for grading: (1) Discussion Board Leader; (2) Discussion Board Participant; and (3) In-Person Class Discussion.

Discussion Board Leader (5% of grade): Students are required to pick one week (i.e., Week 3-14) of the semester to serve as a Discussion Board Leader. Discussion Board Leaders will pose a question reflecting that week's readings/content. These questions should be constructed to generate deeper discussion of the weekly topic(s). Discussion Board Leaders can post as many questions as they want as long as they are relevant to the weekly topic and readings. Questions must not be binary (e.g., "yes or no") in composition. Rather, they should be written to invite deeper discussion and conversation about the topic at hand. These questions can be about the larger phenomenon at hand, a methodological implementation or issue related to a particular study, or a genuine question regarding any aspect of the weekly course content. A general background/preface should be provided before the question is posed. This would allow Discussion Board Participants to have a more comprehensive understanding of the question being asked. Questions need to be posted by **Monday night (11:59 pm)**. The Discussion Board will be open starting Week 3 and end on Week 14. Students will choose their weeks on the first day of class.

Discussion Board Participant (10% of grade): Students are required to respond to the Discussion Board Leader's question each week. Since the module consists of 11 substantive weeks (see Course Schedule below for full distribution), and one week is set aside for students to serve as the Discussion Board Leader, students will be required to respond to Discussion Board questions for 10 weeks. This means every Discussion Board Participant post will be worth 1% of the final grade—grading will be based on completion (0.5%) and substantive value/contribution (0.5%). Discussion Board Participants are only required to answer one question per week. If more than one question is posed by the Discussion Board Leader in any given week, students may choose whichever question they wish to answer. Relatedly, students may respond to other students' posts if the discussion is relevant to the ongoing topic and thread. All responses must demonstrate comprehension of the topic and be informed by course material, as opposed to being based strictly on one's opinion. Responses should be made by **Wednesday night (11:59 pm)**. The Discussion Board will be open starting Week 3 (Feb. 10) and end on Week 14 (Apr. 28).

In-Person Class Discussion (5% of grade): This course will be conducted as a graduate seminar where the majority of our class time will be spent in active discussion (e.g., open dialogue) with one another. Students are required to demonstrate their comprehension of course material by expressing their views and opinions on the topics and issues addressed in the readings. The purpose of this course is to encourage students to both understand the cybercrime literature and critique it. To that end, the readings in this syllabus are oriented toward deepening both students' critical and analytical lenses. Students should strive for productive participation. This means students will be assessed based not on how often you speak, but on: (1) how your contributions shape our collective understanding of the course material; (2) your constructive criticisms of the readings; (3) your respectful engagement with others' views; and (4) your ability to listen actively (attentively and responsively) to your peers' comments. For truly productive discussions, it is important that you think about the readings instead of just completing them. Above all, this graduate seminar is a communal space of knowledge creation—one that I aim to ensure is explicitly inclusive, welcoming, and affirming.

GENERAL TIPS ON WRITING

Before you submit your written assignments, please take the following four (4) steps to ensure you get as many points as possible:

1. Re-read your paper multiple times before submission. Since your writing is a reflection of your thoughts, it is vital that you take the time to read through your paper and check that the ideas make sense and flow properly together.
2. Make sure you spell check your paper using both Microsoft Word and by hand. Spell check does not identify when you have put in a common misspelling like “too” when you mean “two.” Also, do not use contractions as they do not belong in a professional document.
3. Always write and format your paper using APA conventions/standards: See website below for general instructions and guidelines on APA formatting.
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
4. Ensure that all your references are cited properly. Please quote an author if you feel their comments support or refute an idea. However, quote only when absolutely necessary, since it will make more sense if you put the ideas into your own words. If you put an author's ideas in your own words, make sure you reference the author at the end of the sentence. If you have any questions on citations, please contact me immediately. Plagiarism is a serious offense and one the University does not take lightly. There is only so much I can do to alleviate the consequences if you engage in plagiarism. You will not get any credit for the assignment if you plagiarize and will be sent to the Dean to discuss consequences.

GRADING SCALE

93 or above	= A (4.00 Points)
90-92.99	= A- (3.67 Points)
87-89.99	= B+ (3.33 Points)
83-86.99	= B (3.00 Points)

80-82.99	= B- (2.67 Points)
77-79.99	= C+ (2.33 Points)
73-76.99	= C (2.00 Points)
70-72.99	= C- (1.67 Points)
65-69.99	= D (1.00 Points)
64.99 or less	= F (0 Points)

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance

Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.

Class Participation

You are expected to complete the assigned readings and participate in class discussions throughout the course. Students are encouraged to express their opinions and views on the topics and issues discussed in this course. If you do not understand something, feel free to ask questions. This is the easiest way to do well in the course.

Office Hours

Office hours will be held both in-person and online by appointment using either Zoom, Skype, or email—whichever works best for both the instructor and the student. Online appointments should be made at least 48 hours in advance for scheduling purposes (i.e., same-day appointment will not be accepted). In-person and online appointments should be requested by emailing the instructor (jlee331@gmu.edu). Make sure to include your name, the course code, and a few days/times that work best for you. The instructor will then coordinate a day/time that fits both schedules.

Missed Exams/Assignments/Deadlines

Make-up evaluations (e.g., reflection papers, analysis papers, and term papers) *will not* be given except in cases of extreme circumstance. Accompanying written documentation is required as per University policy. Documentation does not guarantee that a make-up evaluation or extension will be given. As the professor in this course, I have the discretion to determine what cases warrant a make-up and what cases do not. Finally, you must notify me *before* the day of the evaluation's deadline to explain your absence. If you do not adhere by any of the aforementioned rules, you will not be given the opportunity to complete the make-up. Reasons pertaining to personal, technical, or negligence issues (e.g., laptop/computer not working; Internet connection was bad/faulty on the day the assignment/quiz was due; mismanaged my time; other course assignments overlap with this one, etc.) will not be considered excusable circumstances. If other issues that hinder students' performance and class progress arise, students should contact the professor in advance to discuss alternative action plans.

Emailing Etiquette

Please read the following article for a useful guide on email etiquette:<https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-being->

[annoying-af-cf64ae0e4087](#).

While I will be checking Blackboard email, please email me at jlee331@gmu.edu using your GMU emails on the [Outlook platform](#) for faster responses. In addition, please put the course number in the subject line and sign your email with your name. I will usually answer emails within 24-48 hours. However, if you have not received a response from me within 48 hours, feel free to email again just in case I did not receive it.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Any form of disruption or disrespect towards your fellow classmates or me will not be tolerated—even if you think you are joking. Students guilty of such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Honesty

George Mason University's Honor Code requires all members of this community maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by the Mason Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, stealing, and plagiarizing (<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>). Ignorance of the rules is not a valid defense. Familiarize yourself with this policy and remember your legal fundamentals.

Note: All graded work for this class (including reflection papers, quizzes, and term papers) must be completed independently. Please ensure that the work you submit in this class is your own and that you provide proper citations when referencing another person's words or ideas. Instructors are required to report all violations of the Honor Code to the Mason Honor Committee. Violations of the Honor Code may result in a failing grade for the assignment or exam, a failing grade for the course, or any additional penalties determined by the committee, including dismissal from the University.

Limits to Confidentiality

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is January 31, 2022. The last day to drop this course without tuition penalty (e.g., 100% tuition refund) is February 7, 2022. The last day to drop this course with tuition penalty (e.g., 50% tuition refund) is February 14, 2022. The last day to drop this course with full tuition penalty (e.g., 100% tuition liability) is March 1, 2022.

Commercialized Lecture Notes

Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is not permitted in this course.

UPDATED POLICIES FOR COURSES IN A CONTINUING PANDEMIC

Safe Return to Campus

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, or Red email response. Only students who receive a "green" notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

Students are required to follow Mason's current policy about facemask-wearing. As of August 11, 2021, all community members are required to wear a facemask in all indoor settings, including classrooms. An *appropriate facemask* must cover your nose and mouth at all times in our classroom. If this policy changes, you will be informed; however, students who prefer to wear masks either temporarily or consistently will always be welcome in the classroom.

Campus Closure or Emergency Class Cancellation/Adjustment

If the campus closes, or if a class meeting needs to be canceled or adjusted due to weather or other concern, students should check Blackboard [or other instruction as appropriate] for updates on how to continue learning and for information about any changes to events or assignments.

Course Materials and Student Privacy

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private to this class; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

Video recordings—whether made by instructors or students—of class meetings that include audio, visual, or textual information from other students are private and must not be shared outside the class.

Live video conference meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio, textual, or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household or recorded and shared outside the class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to change; all changes will be announced)

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings	Due
1	Jan. 27	Course Introduction Introduction to Computers and the Internet	Course Syllabus Chapter 1 Grabosky, 2001	
2	Feb. 3	No Class – Western Society of Criminology Conference		
3	Feb. 10	Cybercrime and Criminological Theory	Chapter 11 Holt & Bossler, 2014 Holt, Bossler, & May, 2012	
4	Feb. 17	Computer Hackers and Hacking	Chapter 3 Marcum et al., 2014 Steinmetz, 2015 Wilson et al., 2015	
5	Feb. 24	Malware and Computer Viruses	Chapter 4 Custers et al., 2018 Holt & Bossler, 2013 Holt, Burruss, & Bossler, 2018	Analysis Paper 1
6	Mar. 3	Computer-Based Fraud and Economic-Crimes	Chapter 6 Holt & Lampke, 2010 Pratt, Holtfreter, & Reisig, 2010 Williams, 2016	

7	Mar. 10	Digital Piracy	Chapter 5 Burruss, Bossler, & Holt, 2013 Steinmetz & Tunnell, 2013 Van Rooij et al., 2017	
8	Mar. 17	No Class – Spring Break		
9	Mar. 24	Pornography, Prostitution, and Sex Crimes	Chapter 7 Buzzell, Foss, & Middleton, 2006 Horswill & Weitzer, 2018 Jones, 2016	
10	Mar. 31	Child Sexual Abuse Materials (CSAM), and Criminalized Online Sexual Activity	Chapter 8 Clevenger, Navarro, & Jasinski, 2016 Holt et al., 2020 Lee & Darcy, 2021	Analysis Paper 2
11	Apr. 7	Cyberstalking, Cyberbullying, and Online Harassment	Chapter 9 Fissel, 2021 Jones, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2013 Sabella, Patchin, & Hinduja, 2013	
12	Apr. 14	Cyber-Terror and Cyberwarfare	Chapter 10 Holt et al., 2017 Jarvis & Macdonald, 2015	

			Pauwels & Schils, 2016	
13	Apr. 21	Online Illicit Market Operations	Decary-Hetu & Leppanen, 2016 Holt & Lee, 2020 Hutchings & Clayton, 2016	Analysis Paper 3
14	Apr. 28	Law Enforcement and Cybercrime Prevention	Chapters 2, 12, & 14 Koziarski & Lee, 2020 Whelan & Harkin, 2021 Willits & Nowacki, 2016	
15	May 5	Term Paper Presentations		Term Paper Presentations
16	May 12	Final Exam Period		Term Research Papers