

**HTS 3071, Sociology of Crime**  
**T/Th 12.05 – 1.25 PM**  
**Room 304, D.M. Smith Building**

**Dr. Amy D'Unger**

**Office:** 105 Old Civil Engineering Building (221 Bobby Dodd Way)

**Office Hours:** I have office hours daily—schedule an appointment at [www.advising.gatech.edu](http://www.advising.gatech.edu).

**Office Phone:** 404.894.7448

**E-Mail:** [amy.dunger@hts.gatech.edu](mailto:amy.dunger@hts.gatech.edu) (this is the fastest way to reach me)

**IM:** Go to [www.hts.gatech.edu/blog](http://www.hts.gatech.edu/blog) to chat with me live via instant messaging

**Introduction:**

This course is going to focus on the important theories and substantive issues in the study of crime, with an emphasis on *sociological perspectives*. We will be examining such subjects as: how crime and criminals are perceived; methodological and theoretical approaches for studying crime; characteristics of offenders and victims; societal reactions to crime; and special topics such as police discretion and imprisonment.

**Area E Approved Learning Outcome:**

- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.

***Explain how the course satisfies the learning outcome:***

This course will focus on theories and substantive issues in the study of crime, with an emphasis on sociological perspectives. Students will learn how social, political, and economic forces influence social behavior through an examination of such subjects as how crime and criminals are perceived; methodological and theoretical approaches for studying crime; characteristics of offenders and victims; and societal reactions to crime. Students will demonstrate that they have met the Area E learning outcome through completing two written examinations (a midterm and a final), writing an 8-10 page research paper on a topic related to the course material, and participating in a group research project culminating in a 20 minute in-class presentation.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how sociocultural, economic, and political forces shape individual and group criminal behavior.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how sociocultural, economic, and political forces shape the American criminal justice system.
- Students will demonstrate familiarity with major theoretical perspectives and methodological issues in studying crime.
- Students will strengthen their skills in critical thinking and writing.

**Required Reading:**

- Kubrin, Charis E., Thomas D. Stucky, and Marvin D. Krohn. 2009. *Researching Theories of Crime and Deviance*. New York: Oxford.

- Scarpitti, Frank R., Amie L. Nielson, and J. Mitchell Miller. 2009. *Crime and Criminals: Contemporary and Classic Readings in Criminology, Second Edition*. New York: Oxford.

**In addition, there are a few readings throughout the semester that are not in the textbooks. They are indicated with an asterisk and a bibliographic entry for the reading. You can access these readings via the T-Square site for this class. Go to “Resources” and the folder “Course Readings.”**

### **Course Requirements:**

- (1) **Class participation & Attendance:** On the following pages is a schedule of the readings required for the course. **You are expected to have read the assigned material prior to the class.** Lectures will correspond to the material in the book, but will not review it in detail, so both reading and class attendance are important! You are expected to participate in classroom debate and discussion throughout the semester and you will be evaluated on the quality and consistency of your participation.

Class participation in discussions and attendance will cumulatively account for **10%** of your final grade. Each will account for **5%** of your final grade.

- (2) **Examinations:** There will be two examinations—a midterm and a final—during the semester. The midterm will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup> and the final exam will be on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, which is the time slot assigned by the registrar’s office. Both exams will cover the material presented in the readings and the lectures. The exams will be a combination of short answer and essay and neither will be cumulative. They will each account for **15%** of your final grade (**30% total**).
- (3) **Research Paper:** Each student will do a research paper on a topic of his/her choosing (8 – 10 pages typed, double spaced). You will be required to submit a proposal for the paper and to meet with me to have your topic approved. Paper proposals are due February 15<sup>th</sup> and the final paper is due March 31<sup>st</sup>. More details on the research paper will be given in a separate handout. The research paper will account for **30%** of your grade.
- (4) **Group Projects:** Class members will be divided into groups and given broad subjects to research. Groups will be assigned after drop/add so you will have the maximum amount of time to work on your projects. Teams will be responsible for refining their broad subjects into a specific topic, which must be approved by me. A one-page (typed, doubled spaced) project proposal will be due on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Once approved, the team can begin working on the project. The final product is a 20-minute, in-class presentation of the topic. Presentations will be held on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>. This will be a group project with a group grade. Your team will be responsible for dividing the work of writing the project proposal, researching the topic, putting together your presentation, and presenting the material in class. More details on the group project, topics, and how it will be evaluated will be given in a separate handout. The group project will account for **30%** of your grade.

### **Accommodating Disabilities:**

If you have or acquire any sort of condition that may require special accommodation(s), please inform me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (e.g., not the day of an exam) so that we may make the appropriate arrangements. Proper documentation from the ADAPTS Office will be required. Please contact them to get more information on available services and accommodations, as well as documentation requirements. They can be reached via the web at <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>. Please note that there are no retroactive accommodations.

### **Academic Conduct:**

All students are expected to behave in accordance with the policies of the Georgia Tech Honor Code with respect to conduct and academic honesty. Anyone engaging in acts that violate these policies, such as plagiarism or cheating, will be penalized. For more information on the Honor Code, see [www.honor.gatech.edu](http://www.honor.gatech.edu). If you are not familiar with

what constitute plagiarism, ASK! ***Being uninformed of the policies does not absolve you from the responsibility of following them!***

### **Make-Up Policy:**

My permission is needed to make-up assignments. (Having work/exams in another class will NOT get you my permission.) If you are going to miss an assignment, please make every effort to **notify me before the missed class** and to gather appropriate material to justify your absence (e.g., a note from your physician if you are ill). If you are unable to notify me before the class/due date, please try to have a friend, roommate, etc. contact me via e-mail and inform me of your absence. A mutually convenient time will be arranged for you to make up the assignment. Make up assignments will **only** be allowed in a situation of an excused absence (e.g., illness, family emergency, etc.). A note from the Dean will be required to make up the final exam.

*The use of cell phones and laptop computers is not permitted in this class. Please turn **OFF** your phones and laptops before entering the classroom. If you have a documented need to use a laptop during class, please come to speak to me. **Those who violate this policy will be asked to leave the class that day.***

### **So, How Can I Succeed in This Course?**

(1) Attend class and be on time—there is nothing more disruptive to your learning than missing class and there is nothing more disruptive to other students than individuals who come in late and interrupt the lecture and class discussion.

(2) Do the reading!!! It will help you to participate in class as well as succeed on the exams.

(3) Notes, notes, notes. Take notes on each of the readings. What is the main point of the article/chapter? What is the theory trying to explain? How can this be integrated with other material discussed in class and the texts? etc. etc. *These notes will be valuable study tools for the exams.* Also, study in groups—other may pick up on material that you overlooked, and vice-versa.

(4) The reading load varies for each class. Anticipate days with heavy reading and **START EARLY.**

### **COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS (SUBJECT TO REVISIONS/ADDITIONS)**

*\*\*In addition, there is a possibility for guest speakers, a field trip, and/or films during the semester.*

**KSK = Kubrin, Stucky, & Krohn (*Researching Theories of Crime and Deviance*)**

**SNM = Scarpitti, Nielsen, and Miller (*Crime and Criminals*)**

**ONLINE = T-Square > “Resources” > “Course Readings”**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT DUE</u></b>	<b><u>READINGS</u></b>
January 13	Introduction What is Criminology?	SNM pp. 1-12
January 18	Thinking About Crime Historically: “The Devil Made Me Do It”	SNM pp. 13-23
January 20	Wait, That’s Illegal?!	SNM pp. 24-37
January 25	How is Crime Measured? Official vs. Self-Reports	SNM pp. 39-78

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
January 27	How is Crime Measured? "A Snowball's Chance in Hell"	SNM pp. 79-103 SNM pp. 397-408
February 1	Who Are the Criminals?: Families, Age, and IQs	SNM pp. 125-132 SNM pp. 139-154
February 3	Who Are the Criminals?: Gender	SNM pp. 133-138 *ONLINE
*Steffensmeier, Darrell and Emilie Allan. 1996. "Gender and Crime: Toward a Gendered Theory of Female Offending." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> , vol. 22, pp. 459-487.		
February 8	Who Are the Criminals?: Race and Social Class	SNM pp. 114-124 SNM pp. 155-176
February 10	What is a Theory?	KSK pp. 1-20 SNM pp. 177-187
February 15 <i>**Term Paper Proposal Due</i>	The Choice to Commit Crime	KSK pp. 21-48 SNM pp. 188-192
February 17	Crime As Learned Behavior	KSK pp. 137-166 SNM pp. 211-225
February 22	Is It the People or the Place?	KSK pp. 82-106 SNM pp. 226-237
February 24	Is It the People or the Place? (cont.)	SNM pp. 238-271
March 1	<i>Midterm Examination</i>	
March 3	Social Control and Crime	KSK pp. 167-186 SNM pp. 272- 277
March 8	Self Control and Crime	KSK pp. 186-197 SNM pp. 203-210 SNM pp. 278-288
March 10 <i>**Group Project Paper Proposal Due</i>	Crime and the American Dream	KSK pp. 107-136
March 15	Crime and the American Dream (cont.)	SNM pp. 289-314
March 17	Crime, Power, and Conflict	KSK pp. 219-246
March 22 & 24	<i>Spring Break, No Classes</i>	
March 29	Crime, Power, and Conflict (cont.)	KSK pp. 198-218 SNM pp. 315-326

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
March 31 <i>**Term Paper Due</i>	Types of Crime	SNM pp. 327-337
April 5	Violence in America	SNM pp. 338-349 SNM pp. 387-396
April 7	Property Crime in America	SNM pp. 350-358
April 12	Organized and White Collar Crime	SNM pp. 359-368 SNM pp. 378-386
April 14 <i>**Groups 1 – 3 Present</i>	Police, Prosecutors, and Discretion	SNM pp. 409-427 SNM pp. 441-449
April 19 <i>**Groups 4 – 6 Present</i>	Racial Profiling	SNM pp. 428-440
April 21 <i>**Groups 7 &amp; 8 Present</i>	Prison: Does it Work?	SNM pp. 464-474
April 26	If Not Prison, Then What Do We Do?	SNM pp. 450-463 SNM pp. 475-478
April 28	Wrap Up and Review	
May 3	<i>Final Examination***</i>	

**\*\*\*The final exam will be held on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> from 11:30 AM - 2:20 PM. This is the time slot assigned by the Registrar's Office. Please notify me as soon as possible if you have any conflicts.**

**How the Final Grade Will be Determined:**

Attendance	5%
In-Class Participation & Discussion	5%
Midterm Examination	15%
Final Examination	15%
Research Paper	30%
Group Project	+ 30%
	<b>100%</b>

**Grading Scale:**

<b>A</b>	93-100
<b>B</b>	83-92
<b>C</b>	73-82
<b>D</b>	63-72
<b>F</b>	0-62