

Syllabus

Introduction to Criminology

Course Overview

This one-semester course is intended as a guide to the field and theories of criminology. It's structured into lessons and Course Activities as follows:

- The first lesson discusses criminology as a field of study.
- The next two lessons discuss theories, which suggest that people engage in crime to satisfy self-interests and individual traits influence criminal behavior.
- The next lesson discusses the theory that motivated offenders are most likely to commit crimes when they are influenced by routine activities of potential victims.
- The next three lessons describe theories that suggest that people engage in crimes when social institutions fail to have a positive influence on them, they are labeled as criminals, and they associate with peers with criminal backgrounds.
- The next lesson familiarizes you with the theory that people engage in or refrain from criminal activities based on how they respond to certain events (*turning points*) in their lives.
- The next three lessons describe theories that influence of political and social powers, inability to achieve societal goals, and breakdown of social order contribute to criminal behavior.
- The next two lessons discuss theories that crimes and criminal behavior can be reduced by advocating peace and justice, reducing physical opportunities, and increasing the risks of being caught.
- The last lesson familiarizes you with the theory that focuses on preventing the escalation of serious crimes in a community.

You will grade your work in the Lesson Activities by comparing them with sample responses and submit the Course Activity documents to your teacher. Each lesson also has a multiple-choice mastery test. A multiple-choice end-of-semester test completes the course.

The Course Activities (submitted to the teacher) and the Lesson Activities (self-checked) are major components of this course. They will guide your learning as you work through this course.

Course Goals

This course will help you meet the following goals:

- Learn about criminology as a field of study.
- Familiarize yourself with the classical theory of criminology.
- Explore the theory that individual traits influence interactions with the social environment.
- Learn about situational components that may lead to opportunities for crime.
- Familiarize yourself with the factors that may cause people to deviate from social norms with regard to their criminal behavior.
- Explore the viewpoint that people become criminals when society labels them as such.
- Learn the theory that people engage in crime due to their association with others.
- Familiarize yourself with the theory that focuses on the desistance from criminal activity and why some offenders do not desist from a life of crime.
- Explore how political and social powers may contribute to criminal behavior.
- Learn the theory that individuals may turn to crime when they are unable to achieve societal goals.
- Explore the theory that crimes result from a breakdown of social order because of a loss of standards and values.
- Learn the role of peacemaking criminology in attempting to reduce criminal behavior in society.
- Explore how situational crime prevention measures may be used to prevent crimes from occurring.
- Familiarize yourself with the broken windows theory, which proposes to stop the escalation of serious crimes in cities and neighborhoods.

Prerequisite Skills

Introduction to Criminology has the following prerequisites:

- basic computer skills
- ability to structure and process information
- general familiarity with the writing process and following guidelines

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Perform basic operations on a computer.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Work with basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word.
- Work with presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Introduction to Criminology is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Power Point or equivalent

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you stay on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Day	Activity / Plato Objective	Type
1 day:	Course Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	
4 days: 2-5	What is Criminology? <i>Discuss criminology as a field of study.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 6-9	Classical Theory <i>Explain the classical theory of criminology.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 10-13	Positivist Theory <i>Discuss the theory that individual traits influence interactions with the social environment.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 14	Punishing Offenders	Course Discussion
1 day: 15	Para Jumble	Activity
4 days: 16-19	Comparing Classical and Positivist Theories	Course Activity
4 days: 20-23	Routine Activity Theory <i>Discuss the view that situational components may lead to opportunities for crimes.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 24-27	Social Disorganization Theory <i>Discuss the factors that may cause people to deviate from social norms with regard to their criminal behavior.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 28-31	Labeling Theory <i>Explain the view that people become criminals when society labels them as such.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 32	Labeling Law-Abiding Citizens of Disorganized Communities	Course Discussion
1 day: 33	Space Jumble	Activity

Day	Activity / Plato Objective	Type
4 days: 34-37	Applying Social Disorganization and Labeling Theories	Course Activity
4 days: 38-41	Social Learning Theory <i>Discuss the theory that people engage in crime due to their association with others.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 42-45	Life Course Theory <i>Explain the theory that focuses on the desistence from criminal activity and why some offenders do not desist from a life of crime.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 46-49	Conflict Theory <i>Discuss how political and social powers may contribute to criminal behavior.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 50	Is the Criminal Justice System Really Favoring the Rich?	Course Discussion
1 day: 51	Para Jumble	Activity
5 days: 52-56	Desisting Criminal Behavior	Course Activity
4 days: 57-60	General Strain Theory <i>Discuss the theory that individuals may turn to crime when they are unable to achieve goals of society.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 61-64	Institutional Anomie Theory <i>Discuss the theory that crimes result from a breakdown of social order because of a loss of standards and values.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 65-68	Peacemaking Criminology <i>Discuss the role of peacemaking criminology in attempting to reduce criminal behavior in the society.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 69	Eliminating Injustice with Peace	Course Discussion
1 day: 70	Space Jumble	Activity
4 days: 71-74	Role of American Society and Institutions in Deterring Criminal Activity	Course Activity

Day	Activity / Plato Objective	Type
4 days: 75-78	Situational Crime Prevention <i>Explain how situational crime prevention measures may be used to prevent crime from occurring.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 79-82	Broken Windows Theory <i>Explain the broken windows theory, which proposes to stop the escalation of serious crimes in cities and neighborhoods.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 83	Is There a “One-Fits-All” Explanation for Crime?	Course Discussion
1 day: 84	Para Jumble	Activity
4 days: 85-88	Analyzing the Behavior of Perpetrators of a Crime	Course Activity
1 day: 89	Course Review	
1 day: 90	End of Course	Assessment