Course Description

This course introduces students to the sociological study of deviance, and familiarizes them with key concepts and sociological theories. Studying deviance from a sociological perspective means focusing not on the individual aspects of deviance but on the social ones. Deviance, or the breaking of social norms, is thus clearly dependent on what those norms are in a given place and at a given time. Deviant behaviors, beliefs, and conditions all have social origins, are learned and made manifest in social interaction, and produce profound consequences for individuals and society at large.

The theories covered in this course attempt to answer a variety of questions, for example: why do people engage in deviant behavior, how is such behavior learnt, what makes people less likely to be deviant, and what are the consequences of being labeled deviant? The theories covered will be used in the analyses of various forms of deviance, such as criminal behavior, illicit drug use, white-collar crime, sexual deviance, mental disability, obesity, paranormal beliefs, and more.

Course Goals

My goal for the course is to help you develop your critical thinking skills. You do not have to agree with anything we read or learn about, but I want you to be able to critique, analyze, and understand the arguments presented by the authors. More importantly, you should be able to apply basic sociological concepts, theories, and perspectives to the course readings and to the larger world around us.

I will state up front that this course is essentially “the study of that which is taboo.” We will be discussing behaviors, beliefs, and characteristics that many would label wrong, distasteful, heretical, or even immoral. I will do my best to provide “trigger warnings” for sensitive material (such as sexual assault). You may feel uncomfortable at times, you may find yourself laughing...
awkwardly, or you may feel your views have been challenged. Please be open-minded and patient as we examine these issues from a sociological perspective. Learning to see such phenomena from a new perspective is the cornerstone of critical-thinking. And that is what I want you to get out of this course, if nothing else.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand some of the major forms and socially constructed nature of deviance.
- Differentiate between criminological and sociological analyses of deviance.
- Differentiate between positivist and constructionist theories of deviance.
- Understand basic quantitative and qualitative research methods and when to use them.
- Apply sociological concepts and theories to deviant actions, beliefs, and characteristics in the world around you.
- Analyze major media representations of deviance and how they illustrate or conflict with our course material.
- Think critically about social and cultural conflicts over definitions of deviance.

**Grading Rubric and Policies**

**Final Course Grade**

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pop Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Exams</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Papers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Experiment Paper</td>
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<td>Analytical Paper</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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Participation (100 + 150 + 100= 350 pts):

Students are expected to read before attending class and are expected to engage in class discussions. This course will require a quite a bit of reading time, so please set aside a couple hours to prepare for each class. Your participation and attendance will count for 35% of your final grade in the course and will include 4 reading responses to supplementary readings (100 pts), weekly pop quizzes (150 pts), and periodic attendance checks (100 pts).

Attendance (100/350 pts)
I will be taking a minimum of 10 unannounced attendance checks this semester. They may be administered at the beginning, middle, or end of class so do not skip class after signing in or realizing there is not an attendance check that day. Attending class is probably the most important thing you can do as a college student. You (or your parents) are paying a boatload of money for this privilege; do not throw it away. Failure to attend class reflects a lack of respect or effort on your part.

Please come see me ASAP if you are having trouble making it to class for medical and/or personal reasons. Skating by will not be tolerated.

Pop Quizzes (150/350 pts):
There will be at least 10 pop quizzes over course readings and lecture material. I know this is a lot, but there are a lot of readings we need to cover. Pop quizzes will be unannounced and may be administered at the beginning, middle, or end of class on either Tuesdays or Thursdays. Pop quizzes will primarily take the form of 4-5 multiple-choice questions, but may periodically include a short answer question.

Reading Responses (100/350 pts):
Four weeks out of the semester you will be required to turn in a reading response in order to facilitate our discussions over the course material. You will complete a 500 word reading response and submit via Canvas BEFORE 2pm on these four Thursdays (see below for dates). I suggest you write it in MS word and then copy/paste into your browser that way you have a backup copy. If for some reason Canvas is not working, you may email it to me BEFORE 2pm on Thursdays. NO RESPONSES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE START OF THURSDAY’S CLASS ON THESE DUE DATES.

The due dates for your responses are as follows:

1) September 18th  2) October 9th  3) November 6th  4) December 4th

You will choose one or more readings due that week or OPTIONAL readings from the syllabus that have NOT been discussed in class from the weeks leading up to the due date. Write a response that very briefly (i.e., 100 words or less) summarizes all or part of an author’s argument that you find particularly interesting/surprising/thought-provoking/spot-on/dubious/infuriating/etc. You will spend the rest of those 500 words explaining your critical
thinking about that argument, telling me what your reaction is and why, and connecting the argument to course material (concepts, theories, etc.)

In the response, you are welcome and encouraged to discuss more than one of the week’s readings (e.g., comparing one author’s argument to another, and saying which one you agree with and why, outlining points of similarity and difference in our readings), as long as you keep the response 500 words or less. This is to be an exercise in critical thinking (not simply summary); avoid blabber and keep your argument clear and direct. **Be sure to craft analytical arguments rather than simply making moral claims or observations.**

When writing your response, please select an article FROM THAT WEEK or OPTIONAL articles not covered in class in SINCE THE LAST READING RESPONSE WAS DUE (although you may reflect on or draw connections to earlier readings in subsequent responses). Do not write on upcoming articles. For example, after turning in Reading Response #1, you may NOT write on required readings from before this date; your subsequent responses must draw from optional supplementary readings SINCE THE LAST DUE DATE or those required readings for the due date.

**Exams (150 + 250 = 400 pts)**

There will be two exams: the midterm counts as 15% and the final counts as 25% of your final course grade. Each will require you think comprehensively about basic course material: major theories, concepts, etc. from the textbook, lectures and supplementary readings. Exams are not cumulative, however, subsequent chapters often refer to earlier material. Bear in mind, the midterm covers less material than the final exam, so be prepared for more intense study at the end of the semester over more substantive topics.

**Papers (100 +150 = 250 pts):**

**Social Experiment: Breaking Norms in Everyday Life Paper (100 pts)**

For this assignment, you will break a folkway or social norm in front of 3 different groups of people (they can be family, friends, and/or strangers). It is important that you perform this norm-breaking exercise at **3 different times** and/or in front of **3 different groups of people**.

Take notes of how others respond to your behavior (you can just take mental notes or write them down on a pad of paper). The goal is to examine the different responses you get from different audiences in different social contexts. The more different the audience or the locale, the more varied the responses. Plan your experiment with an eye towards assessing the impact of different social contexts and different social audiences in the responses you observe to your deviance. **Do not engage in any act which is widely seen as immoral, illegal, or could potentially get you arrested!**
You will then write-up your findings in a short essay. **Your essay should be in 3 parts:**

1) Explanation of your behavior, the norm broken, and social context where you broke the norm/folkway,
2) Recollection of how others responded to your behavior,
3) Significance for the study of deviance and connections to course material.

Your paper should be **3-5 pages, double-spaced (1500-2500 words)** and should include **at least 3 citations.** You may reference the textbook (counts as 1 source), lectures (each counts as 1 source) and supplementary readings, in addition to any other academic articles you locate on your own.

Here are some suggestions: order dessert first at a restaurant, bring your own food to a restaurant, treat casual acquaintances like intimates (or vica versa), wear inappropriate clothing, initiate conversations with strangers, sit next to strangers when there are other seats available, or ask someone if they would like to join a cult you’ve created. You don’t have to be super creative. If you are still having trouble coming up with some ideas please come speak with me.

**Analytical Paper on a Film or TV Show (150 pts)**
For this class you are expected to analyze a film or television series as it relates to material from the course. The paper should be in 3 parts:

1) **Brief summary** of the film/TV series (major plot, relevant characters, instances of deviance),
2) Definition and application of 5 concepts, theories, and/or sociological perspectives from the course (paying special attention to how the film or TV show illustrates these sociological concepts), and
3) Discussion/Conclusion (why we should study media texts like this, while acknowledging the subjective nature of such representations).

The majority of your paper should focus on Part 2: application of sociological material. The class paper may be on **any** film or TV show, so long as the film adequately addresses the phenomena of deviance. It should be **6-8 pages double spaced (3000-4000 words)**, including a minimum of **5 references (see below).** All citations must be in **proper ASA, MLA, or APA standards (see below).** However, you MUST use internal citations in the form of (Author, Year).

**References and Citations**
All references should be cited in accordance with the American Sociological Society, MLA, or APA standards, available online at: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/01/].

Again, Wikipedia, online summaries, and other encyclopedia like webpages are not legitimate references (see me if unsure). Please rely on **published work** (e.g. textbook, articles from class, articles located on Google.com/scholar or at the library, or, when applicable, reputable press
and journalism.) If you need help locating sources, please let me know and I can walk you through some ways to acquire relevant academic material. You may cite other pieces (perhaps a very articulate op-ed from an online blog or newspaper), but these will not count towards your required number of sources.

**On blogs:** Many academics now maintain academic blogs oriented towards their research interests. This allows them to get their ideas out quicker, but it circumvents the peer review process. **You may only cite blogs maintained by scholars and universities.** For example, ASA has a series of blogs that may be of help: [http://thesocietypages.org](http://thesocietypages.org)

**Make-ups and Extra Credit**

I recognize that many students have other commitments and may miss class occasionally. You will not be penalized for missing class; however, it is your responsibility to contact classmates for notes/make-up materials. **Student athletes** who will be missing class regularly will need to contact me at the *beginning* of the semester to work out an alternative form of participation/attendance.

In my classes, there are only 3 ways to get permission for a make-up pop quiz, attendance check, etc.:

1. Death in the family
2. Religious observance/holiday
3. Illness with doctor’s note

**Please bring me a doctor’s note or a note from a family member (funeral, holiday) for ALL excused absences.**

There will be no extra credit offered for this course. You are expected to turn in a hard copy of your two term papers and post your weekly reading responses the days they are due; **no term papers will be accepted via email** (there are printers located throughout campus, including two in the Art-Sociology building at your disposal). Papers will be docked 10% for every class day they are late, capping off at 30% points docked. However, no late term papers will be accepted after four (4) class days (two weeks after due date).

**Academic Honor Code**

As a student you are responsible for upholding the standards of the Code of Academic Integrity. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit [http://www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu).

**Disability Support Services**

If you have a documented disability, please register with the Office of Disability Support Services (0126 Shoemaker Hall) and obtain the accommodation request form and deliver it to
me. The rules for eligibility and the types of accommodations you may request are available online at www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html

Learning Assistance Service
If you are having difficulty keeping up with the academic demands of this course (or any of your courses), contact the Learning Assistance Service (2201 Shoemaker Hall, 314-7693). Their educational counselors can help you with time management, reading, note-taking, and exam preparation skills. There is more information about the Learning Assistance Service online at www.inform.umd.edu/lasrv

Religious Observance
If you will need to be absent from class to participate in a religious observance, please provide the dates and you will have an opportunity to make up any assignment. Please try to give me notice at least one week in advance of your absence. You will not be penalized for observing religious holidays. University policy regarding religious observance is available online at www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/religious.html

Course textbook

Additional readings:
All additional readings are posted on CANVAS for your convenience. If you cannot access them on CANVAS, please try another web browser before contacting me.

Films and Videos
I firmly believe that media provide a powerful venue to learn about and experience the social world. In contemporary society media is a pedagogical tool, regardless of intent. We learn about and understand our world largely through the media we consume, be it cable TV, international film, or social media. Even more importantly, I will emphasize the importance of remaining critical of media representations of deviance. You will employ such critical thinking in your analytical paper on a media text.

I will attempt to incorporate film clips and videos whenever possible. Please feel free to send me suggestions if you come across a film or video clip that illustrates material from the course.
Schedule of Course Content

Tuesdays = Lecture
Thursdays = Discussion

(opt.) = optional (for reading responses)

Week 1: Introduction
Sept. 2: Overview of Syllabus
Sept. 4: What is deviance?

Goode, pp. 1-18
(opt.) “The Good, the Bad, the Social”
(opt.) “Why do People get Tattoos?”

Week 2: Positivist Theories
Sept. 9 & Sept. 11

Goode, pp. 23-44
“Academic Strain and Prescription Stimulant Misuse among College Students”
“Deviance as Situated: Interpretations of Alcohol and Marijuana Use”
(opt.) “The Mark of a Criminal Record”

Week 3: Constructionist Theories
Sept. 16 & Sept. 18
Sept. 18: Reading Response #1 Due

Goode, pp. 49-69
“The Saints and the Roughnecks”
“Tattoos are like potato chips...”
(opt.) “Control Agents and the Creation of Deviant Types”
(opt.) “How Women Experience Battery”

Week 4: Poverty & Disrepute
Sept. 23 & Sept. 25

Goode, pp. 74-93
“Another Night at the Shooting Gallery”
“Getting into Gangs”
“Health and Wealth”
(opt.) “Children from Good Homes”
(opt.) “Working at Bazooms”
(opt.) “Fitting In and Fighting Back: Homeless Kids’ Stigma Management Techniques”

Week 5: Crime & Criminalization
Sept. 30 & Oct. 2

Goode, pp. 97-126
“Juvenile Superpredator Myth”
“Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture”
“The Color of Justice”
“Policing the National Body”
(opt.) “Moral Panic over Youth Violence”
Week 6: White Collar Crime

Oct. 7 & Oct. 9

Oct. 9: Reading Response #2 Due

Goode, pp. 129-149

“Clergy Misconduct as Elite Deviance”

“Corporate Crime and ‘Higher Immorality’”

(opt.) “War Profiteering: Iraq and Halliburton”

(opt.) “Corporate Violence and the Banality of Evil”

Week 7: Drug Use & Abuse

Oct. 14 & 16

Oct. 16: Norm Breaking Paper Due

Goode, pp. 154-181 & 184-198

“Drug Use and Disordered Eating Among College Women”

“Drifting into Dealing: Becoming a Cocaine Dealer”

(opt.) “Becoming a Marihuana User”

(opt.) “Trading Sex for Crack”

Week 8: Review & Midterm

Oct. 21: Review Day

Oct. 23: Midterm Exam

No readings this week!

Week 9: Sexual Deviance

Oct. 28 & Oct. 30

Goode, pp. 200-220

“Bughunting: Bareback Sex and the Gift of Death”

“Furries and their Communities”

“Doing Porn”

(opt.) “Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places”

(opt.) “Sojourn of the Stripper”

(opt.) “Modes of Suburban Gay Identity”

Week 10: Cognitive Deviance

Nov. 4 & Nov. 6

Nov. 6: Reading Response #3 Due

Goode pp. 225-245

“Alien Abductions as Mythmaking”

“White Supremacy as Extreme Deviance”

(opt.) “The Devil Goes to Daycare”

(opt.) “Paranormal Beliefs as Deviance”

Week 11: Mental Disorder

Nov. 11 & Nov. 13

Goode pp. 251-272

“Medicalizing and Demedicalizing Hermaphroditism”

“Obstacles to Exiting Emotional Disorder Identities”

(opt.) “On Being Sane in Insane Places”

(opt.) “Moral Career of the Mental Patient”
Week 12: Deviant Physical Characteristics & Neutralization Techniques  
Nov. 18 & Nov. 20  
Goode pp. 276-299  
“Saints and Sinners: Elite Tattoo Collectors as Positive and Negative Deviants”  
“Skull Face and the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy”  
“Tattoos without Stigma”  
(opt.) “Homosexual Escort Agency: Deviance Disavowel”  
(opt.) “Convicted Rapists’ Vocab. of Motive”  
(opt.) “The Stigma of Obesity”

Week 13: Thanksgiving Break  
Nov. 25 (No class Nov. 27)  
Catch up on readings not discussed from previous weeks

Week 14: Tribal Stigma: Race & Ethnicity  
Dec. 2 & Dec. 4  
Dec. 4: Reading Response #4 Due  
Goode, pp. 304-328  
“The Police and the Black Male”  
“White Flight in Networked Publics?”  
“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”  
“Color-Blind Privilege”  
(opt.) “Bad Girls and Fallen Women: STDs and Tribal Stigma”  
(opt.) “Mock Ebonics: Internet Racism”

Week 15: Final Exam Review  
Dec. 9 & Dec. 11  
Dec. 11: Analytical Paper Due  
No readings this week!

FINAL EXAM:  
Thursday, Dec. 18th  
10:30am – 12:30pm ASY 1213