

## Department of Sociology

SOCI 3630: Drugs, Crime and Society

Monday/Wednesday 2:00-3:20 pm

Life Sciences Building Rm a106

Instructor: Kevin McCaffree, PhD

**Office**: 288b Sycamore Hall

**Office Hours**: Monday 1-2 pm/Wednesday 4-5:30pm

**Teaching Assistant:** Syed Marjan

**Email**: [SyedMahfujulHaqueMarjan@my.unt.edu](mailto:SyedMahfujulHaqueMarjan@my.unt.edu)

\*Contact the TA initially with your questions. If he cannot answer your questions, he will forward your emails to me.

In this course you will learn about the leading theories for the causes and prevalence of criminal behavior. We will also discuss cutting edge and controversial issues within the field, with a special focus on the issues of drugs use, drug-related crime and incarceration. More specifically, the objectives of this course are to introduce you to:

* the criminological theories most widely used by researchers.
* current national data trends around drug use
* controversies and debates about drug classification, drug use, drug-related crime and drug policy.
* real-world application of theory

**Textbooks:**

1. Ronald Akers, Christine Sellers and Wesley Jennings. (any addition 2016 or after) Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application.

- REMEMBER: because you may have a different edition of the textbook, make sure assigned chapter titles line up with chapter numbers… adhere to the title/ subject of the chapter!

2) Michael L. Birzer and Paul Cromwell. 2016. In Their Own Words: Criminals on Crime. Oxford University Press.

3) Carl Hart. 2021. Drug Use for Grownups. Penguin press.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade in this course will be determined primarily by two exams and two essays, with slight final grade increases or decreases determined by attendance and participation.

All testing will be done (and all grades will be posted) on the CANVAS site for this course: <https://unt.instructure.com>

Attendance and Participation:

A significant portion of exam questions will be drawn from lecture material. It is therefore in your interest to attend class regularly.

Attendance is not required, because I don’t want you to come if you don’t want to come. But I’ll know who shows and who doesn’t, and I’ll know who participates and who doesn’t. All of this can influence the final grade you receive at the end of the semester.

Essay Exams:

The first and last exams will be essays, which will require you to reflect on and synthesize material from class lecture and assigned readings.

These exams are open-book.

These essay exams will be administered onlinevia the CANVAS course site (visit [https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)), during the date and time we would normally meet for class (see course calendar below for specific dates of exams).

Each essay exam is worth 100 points for a total of 200 points possible.

Multiple Choice/Short Answer Exams:

The second and third exams will be multiple choice with some short-answer questions, which will require you to recall and describe class lecture and assigned readings.

These exams are open-book

These multiple choice/short answer exams will be administered onlinevia the CANVAS course site (visit [https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)), during the date and time we would normally meet for class (see course calendar below for specific dates of exams).

Each essay exam is worth 100 points for a total of 200 points possible.

No makeup exams will be available without verifiable evidence of a documented medical emergency.

Grading Scale:

A = 90 to 100% of 400 possible points (+ possible extra credit for attendance and participation)

B = 80 to 89%

C = 70 to 79%

D = 60 to 69%

F = Below 60%

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with UNT’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism, copying, cheating, or giving assistance to other students during examinations is a violation of academic integrity. Cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. Note that any and all work submitted in order to meet the requirements of this course must be originally created for this course. In other words, you may not turn in anything submitted for another course and/or section of this course you have previously taken.

University Policy 06.003 states, “UNT promotes the integrity of learning processed and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the university. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the university’s actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.”

For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, as well as tips on citing your resources, visit [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org/). If you require clarification on what counts as academic dishonesty, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor of the course.

Academic Accommodations:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu/).

Course Schedule\*:

**Week 1:** 8/29, 8/31 **Topic:** Introduction and Overview

* Introduction
* Overview of the course, Q & A
* General Discussion: crime, incarceration and drug use
* General Crime Trends + (if there is time) Sociopathy and Drug Use

**Week 2:** 9/7 **Topic:** “Bonding/Control” Theories of Crime

* No Class Monday (Labor Day)
* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapter 6

**Week 3:** 9/12, 9/14 **Topic:** “Social Disorganization”/ “Strain” Theories of Crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapters 8 and 9

**Week 4:** 9/19, 9/21 **Topic:** “Deterrence”/ “Social Learning” Theories of Crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapters, 2 and 5

**Week 5:** 9/26, 9/28 **Topic:** “Labeling” Theories of crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapter 7
* Birzer and Cromwell, Chapter 7
* Essay test on Canvas, 9/28

**Week 6:** 10/3, 10/5 **Topic:** The Social Psychology of Identity and Addiction

* Birzer and Cromwell, Chapter 22, Chapter 23

**Week 7:** 10/10, 10/12 **Topic:** Selling Drugs as a Business

* Birzer and Cromwell Chapter 14-15, Chapter 17, Chapter 21

**Week 8:** 10/17, 10/19 **Topic:** Selling Drugs as a Business

* Birzer and Cromwell Chapter 11, Chapter 13, Chapter 20
* Multiple choice/short answer test on Canvas, 10/19

**Week 9:** 10/24, 10/26 **Topic:** The “War” on Drugs

* Hart, Chapters 3 and 4

**Week 10:** 10/31, 11/2 **Topic:** The “War” on Drugs

* Hart, Chapters 5 and 6

**Week 11:** 11/7, 11/9 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic

* Hart, Chapters 7 and 8

**Week 12:** 11/14, 11/16 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic

* Hart, Chapters 9 and 10
* Multiple Choice/ short answer test on Canvas, 11/16

**Week 13:** 11/21, 11/23 **Topic:** THANKSGIVING BREAK—Classes Canceled

**Week 14:** 11/28, 11/30 **Topic:** Integration and Application: Reopening a Cold Case

* News Coverage, Review of the Evidence

**Week 15:** 12/5, 12/7 **Topic:** Integration and Application: Reopening a Cold Case

* Review of the evidence
* Guest analyst: John Lordan

**Week 16:** Finals Week

* Essay Final on CANVAS on Tuesday 12/12, between 1:30-3:30pm.

\*This syllabus, with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications posted on the CANVAS site ([https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)) for this course.