

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CRIMINOLOGY
CRIJ 4385
Criminal Justice & Social Diversity
Fall 2017

Professor: Dr. Melinda Tasca
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Class Time: M/W 9:30am – 10:50am
Classroom: CJC A290
Office Hours: M/W 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Teaching Assistant: Ms. Ahram Cho
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Teaching Assistant: Ms. Sarah McGuire
Email: srm065@shsu.edu

COURSE MATERIALS:

Textbook (REQUIRED):

Gabbidon, S.L. & Greene, H.T. (2016). *Race and Crime* (4th Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications (ISBN: 9781483384184).

Top Hat (REQUIRED):

We will be using Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will log your attendance and also submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or via text message (SMS).

You can visit the **Student Orientation page** for the Student Quick Start Guide which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system. An email invitation will also be sent to your email account (if you don't receive this email, you can register by visiting the direct Top Hat course URL (<https://tophat.com>) or download the Top Hat app. The join code is: **942361**. You will need to purchase a subscription for this service (<https://tophat.com/pricing/>) [Note that you will need to have Top Hat starting on Wednesday, 8/23]

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The strong connection between race and crime in the United States is prominent in the media and in the minds of the public. But, how large are racial and ethnic differences in criminal involvement in this country? How do we know that such differences exist? How can we explain racial/ethnic differences in American crime? What implications do both the “facts” and the

media portrayals of the race-crime connection have for how people think and act in this society? And, how does all of this filter through the various components of the criminal justice system? In this course, we will address these and other questions to learn about the state of knowledge on the relationship between race, ethnicity, crime, and criminal justice. We will discuss current research and theoretical approaches regarding the ways in which race and ethnicity are connected with criminal involvement and criminal justice processing. In doing so, we will learn about the complex ways in which the race-criminal justice connection is both a product of societal forces and affects broader social relations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Students *will gain a multicultural understanding* of crime and criminal justice in society based on current theory and research.
2. Students' *critical thinking skills will improve* through reading, discussing, and writing on issues of race/ethnicity, crime, and criminal justice.
3. Through exposure to scholarship, students *will be knowledgeable about key findings in empirical research* on the role of race/ethnicity in crime and criminal justice processing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Course Readings:

You will not be successful in this course without reading all assigned material. While I will lecture on course readings, my lectures alone will not substitute for completing your reading (all reading should be completed prior to the class period in which it is listed on the syllabus). Please keep in mind that class lectures and activities will *supplement* readings and help you to synthesize what you have read. My PowerPoint slides will be made available to you through Blackboard to assist you in your preparation for exams.

Exams:

There will be three exams during this course, which will be **administered through Blackboard**. Specific instructions for taking online exams will be provided to students in advance of each test. Each exam consists of 50 questions that include a combination of true/false and multiple-choice questions. All questions are worth 2 points each (100 points total per exam). Exams will primarily cover the Gabbidon and Greene (2016) text, however, questions from other course material (i.e. films) and class discussion may also appear on exams. In-class review sessions will be held prior to each exam date. *Exams will open in Blackboard at 10:00am and will remain open until 4:00pm. You must begin the exam within this time period (no exceptions). Once you start, you will have 70 minutes to complete the exam. Importantly, if any technological issues arise, I must be notified immediately.*

Film Review:

One film review is required in this course (100 points). This writing assignment requires you to select and watch a movie related to race, crime, and justice (from a pre-selected list provided). Then, you are to address specific questions about the films in your paper, reflecting on and drawing from material learned from course readings. The film review must be written in essay format. Detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment are posted in the BlackBoard shell for this course (including paper formatting requirements). Keep in mind that you will be graded on

both content and formatting. We will discuss the film reviews in greater depth in class. **Note: All film reviews must be submitted as a Word document through the submission link in BlackBoard by the time class begins, the day it is due. Papers written in formats other than in Word, emailed papers, or papers submitted in class will not be accepted.**

Class Activities:

There will be a total of six in-class activities required this semester (20 points each; I will drop your lowest score for a total of 100 activity points available). The date of each required activity is listed in the course schedule of the syllabus. Class activities will consist of working in small groups or individually (i.e. responding to written questions on course-related topics) followed up by broader classroom discussions. The purpose of these activities is to get you to apply what you have learned in practical ways, encourage interaction with peers, and improve critical thinking skills. Class activities require the submission of written responses. Responses should be detailed, clear, and fully answer every question. Superficial responses or those which show minimal effort will not receive full credit.

Extra Credit:

You may earn extra credit by attending study and/or writing sessions through the Academic Success Center or through the Sam Center Mentoring Office. You can earn 5 points per session of writing and/or study skills sessions for a maximum of 3 sessions (15 points total extra credit points available in this course). *I must receive proof that you obtained writing assistance from ASC and/or attended Study Skills Sessions from the Sam Center in order for you to receive extra credit points.* Contact information for these resources is listed at the end of this syllabus.

Note: If you obtain writing assistance from the ASC, it must be for the film review in my class (not for a writing assignment in another class). *This means that the last day you may attend writing sessions for extra credit would be 11/7 (the day before the film review is due, which is due on 11/8).* With respect to Study Skills Sessions, you may attend sessions at any time they are offered through the course of the semester. If you are interested in either of these opportunities, be sure to check availability, and sign up early, to ensure you can secure a spot.

Other extra credit opportunities may be made available throughout the course, at my discretion.

GRADING:

The grading breakdown is as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • 3 Exams (100 points each): | 300 points |
| • 1 Film Review: | 100 points |
| • 6 Class Activities (20 points each, drop one): | 100 points |
| TOTAL: | 500 points |

FINAL GRADE CALCULATIONS		
Total Points	Percent	Letter Grade
450 – 500+	90 – 100+	A
400 – 449	80 – 89	B

350 – 399	70 – 79	C
300 – 349	60 – 69	D
299 or below	59 or below	F

LATE/MAKEUP POLICY

Exams:

Unless approved by me in advance for extenuating circumstances, makeup exams will not be permitted. If a request is granted prior to the administering of the test, I will set the date and time in which the makeup exam will be taken. If approved, makeup exams must be taken in person, not online.

Film Review:

Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day for a maximum of three days (30%). After three days, the assignment will no longer be accepted and will be given a grade of zero. Note: a late submission will be graded first and then the penalty will be applied. For example, if you earn an 85% on the film review, but it was turned in two days late, your final score for this assignment would be 65% (e.g., 20 point penalty for submitting two days late on 100 point assignment). I strongly encourage you to not wait until the last minute to work on this paper.

Class Activities:

Unless arrangements have been made with me in advance for extenuating circumstances, if you miss a class activity, you will receive a zero. Just like in the real world, showing up and participating is mandatory. Keep in mind, your lowest activity score will be dropped.

IMPORTANT POLICY INFORMATION:

Contact Policy:

My contact information and office hours are provided at the top of this syllabus. I encourage you to ask questions in class and/or stop by during my office hours should you have questions or concerns. My TAs can also assist you (see contact info on first page of syllabus).

Email Policy:

I will communicate with the class as a whole, and with students individually, by email regularly. This means that *all students must have access to an SHSU email address and check this email account on a regular basis.*

Attendance Policy:

Top Hat will be used to track student attendance. I use attendance records to inform my decisions regarding borderline final grades. That is, at the end of the semester, those of you bordering the next letter grade, I consider your rate of attendance in whether I “round up” your grade. I define a strong attendance record as one in which a student has no more than two absences over the course of the semester. Also, students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay the full duration of the class session. Partial attendance of class sessions will be taken into account when assessing student attendance records. Note: Absences due to medical or other emergency situations *with*

documentation are exceptions. The bottom line is that as college students, to be successful, you must attend class.

Academic Honesty:

The academic community operates on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. Occasionally, this trust is violated when academic dishonesty occurs, either inadvertently or deliberately. Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated and is regarded as a VERY serious matter. You assume full responsibility for the content and integrity of the academic work you submit. The guiding principle of academic integrity shall be that your submitted work, examinations, reports, and projects must be your own work. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized material, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying or allowing someone to copy any portion of a required assignment; turning in work previously completed for another course
- Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise
- Plagiarism: knowingly copying any portion of another's work without proper citation (this includes paraphrasing or summarizing others' work without citing them)
- Interference: changing, stealing, impeding, or destroying another student's work
- Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the academic code

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Disability Accommodation:

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with SHSU Counseling and Disability Services and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. *NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with Counseling and Disability Services.*

SSD Office Location: Lee Drain Annex

Telephone: 936-294-3512

TDD: 936-294-3786

E-mail: disability@shsu.edu

Web Address: http://www.shsu.edu/services/counseling_disability_services.html

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

Cellphone and Electronic Device Policy:

The use by students of electronic devices aside from class purposes (i.e. Top Hat, note taking) is prohibited. Arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at my discretion. Failure to comply with this policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with multiple offenses, failure of the course.

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES:

Academic Success Center (writing):	936-294-3680; asc@shsu.edu
The Sam Center (tutoring, study skills):	936-294-4367; mentoring@shsu.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: 8/23	<u>COURSE OVERVIEW</u> Wednesday: Introduction to course; Review of syllabus
Week 2: 8/28 & 8/30	<u>OVERVIEW OF RACE AND CRIME</u> Monday: Chapter 1 Wednesday: Chapter 1; Class Activity 1
Week 3: 9/4 & 9/6	<u>EXTENT OF CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION</u> Monday: LABOR DAY (NO CLASS) Wednesday: Chapter 2
Week 4: 9/11 & 9/13	<u>EXTENT OF CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION</u> Monday: Chapter 2 Wednesday: Class Activity 2
Week 5: 9/18 & 9/20	<u>THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RACE AND CRIME</u> Monday: Chapter 3 Wednesday: Chapter 3
Week 6: 9/25 & 9/27	<u>STUDY PREP AND EXAM</u> Monday: Exam 1 Prep Wednesday: Exam 1 (Online, no class)
Week 7: 10/2 & 10/4	<u>POLICING</u> Monday: Chapter 4 Wednesday: Chapter 4
Week 8: 10/9 & 10/11	<u>COURTS</u> Monday: Chapter 5; Class Activity 3 Wednesday: Chapter 5
Week 9: 10/16 & 10/18	<u>SENTENCING</u> Monday: Chapter 6 Wednesday: Chapter 6; Discuss Film Review (Due 11/8)

Week 10: 10/23 & 10/25	<u>CJ POLICY</u> Monday: Film Wednesday: Film
Week 11: 10/30 & 11/1	<u>CJ POLICY/STUDY PREPARATION AND EXAM</u> Monday: Exam 2 Prep; Class Activity 4 Wednesday: Exam 2 (Online, no class)
Week 12: 11/6 & 11/8	<u>CORRECTIONS/THE DEATH PENALTY</u> Monday: Chapter 8 Wednesday: Chapter 7; Film Reviews Due
Week 13: 11/13 & 11/15	<u>THE DEATH PENALTY</u> Monday: Chapter 7; Class Activity 5 Wednesday: ASC CONFERENCE (NO CLASS)
Week 14: 11/20 & 11/22	<u>JUVENILE JUSTICE</u> Monday: Chapter 9 Wednesday: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
Week 15: 11/27 & 11/29	<u>STUDY PREPARATION AND EXAM</u> Monday: Exam 3 Prep; Class Activity 6 Wednesday: Exam 3 (Online, no class)
Week 16: 12/4 & 12/6	<u>FINAL EXAM WEEK</u> <i>Note: There is no final exam in this course</i>