

SocA 444: Neighborhoods and Crime

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CRN #86792
Fall 2006
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TR 10:00-11:15
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*"One's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."
---Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Note: SOCA 101 is a prerequisite for this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Lyon, Larry. 1999. *The Community in Urban Society*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
2. Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1999. *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
3. Anderson, Elijah. 2000. *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Students may enhance the content, discussion, and understanding of the course by becoming/staying aware of current political and social issues through reading newspapers such as *The New York Times* and listening to *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* on National Public Radio (90.9 WVPM-FM or www.wvpubrad.org).

INTRODUCTION

This course introduces students to the growing sociological literature on neighborhoods and crime. This literature scientifically examines the distribution of crime as influenced by urban neighborhood-level conditions, such as concentrated poverty, racial/ethnic residential segregation, unemployment, family disruption, residential instability, and culture. We will study the theories and research that are the basis of this literature, focusing on the mechanisms by which neighborhood conditions are linked to crime. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to communicate orally and in writing the ways in which sociology contributes to an understanding of neighborhood crime. They will demonstrate an ability to think critically and show specific knowledge as they investigate important issues.

INSTRUCTOR GOALS AND EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course:

1. Students will recognize and understand the ways that communities have evolved across time and the science of defining communities.
2. Students will recognize and understand the neighborhood variations in opportunities for crime and response to crime, the link between economic deterioration and neighborhood street crime, the role of crime in bringing residents status and power in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and the role that crime plays in the underground economies of some neighborhoods.
3. Students will recognize and understand the application of sociology to the study of neighborhoods and crime and apply the theoretical paradigms that researchers use to examine communities.
4. Students will have learned to look critically at the social, economic, political, and geographic processes by which race and class groups sort into neighborhoods and how those neighborhoods change across time.
5. Students will be able to use the social scientific positivist paradigm to analyze the link between crime and neighborhood environment.

6. Students will have gained an understanding of the normative nature of crime in some neighborhoods.
7. Students will have gained the ability to recognize and analyze the ways in which neighborhood social networks control and promote crime.
8. Students will be able to use, find, apply, and compare levels of U.S. Census data to analyze community demographic patterns and collect their own data to study neighborhood crime and disorder.
9. Students will increase their proficiency in written communications. Students will hone skills in critical thinking and effective communication of thoughts and ideas, especially through **writing**--an essential accomplishment of college graduates. Thinking, reading, listening, and writing are integrally related, so successful completion of this course rests on the development of these skills over the semester. While the sociological study of neighborhoods and crime is the vehicle through which these skills will be developed, successful completion of the course depends on marked development of these skills over the semester. All such forms of communication should take place in a scholarly and informed manner.
10. Students will have gained experience in verbal communication through active participation in class discussion.
11. Students will develop, understand, and exercise a "sociological imagination." The sociological imagination is a unique and useful perspective sociologists use to examine society. When we use this perspective critically and systematically, it helps us examine the way individuals, institutions, and structures interact to comprise society and influence human behavior. **It is challenging to think sociologically; it encourages us to question all that we take for granted.**
12. Students should develop an informed perspective based on reason and supported by FACTS. Students should learn to think about and discuss society *critically* with a broad lens that encompasses multiple points of view. Thinking critically means that you will NOT simply accept reality as others (family, institutions, media, schools, or friends) describe it to you.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance:

While attendance is a matter of students' systems of priorities, Dr. Woldoff expects regular attendance and informed participation. Attendance and participation are 10% of the total grade and provide a great boost to the grades of most students. Dr. Woldoff will take attendance on 11 different and pre-determined days. Each student is granted one day of forgiveness, but after that, Dr. Woldoff will detract one tenth of the points for each day missed. If students leave class early and do not consult Dr. Woldoff, they will not get credit for attendance on that day. Students must take notes to verify their attendance in case of a dispute. Students who are dishonest about their/someone else's attendance will lose all of their attendance points.

At the beginning of class, students may be required to write and submit a short reflection on a concept from the readings. This exercise serves three purposes:

1. It "jumpstarts" the process of thinking sociologically during class, facilitating learning and class discussion.
2. It helps develop students' critical thinking and writing skills, and provides ongoing review for exams.
3. It is a useful way to take attendance.

The reflections are graded as "complete" or "incomplete" and are practice, rather than an evaluation. Since they help me to assess student attendance, no make-up or late exercises will be accepted because students were absent or late.

If students choose to miss class, it will affect their grade as a substantial amount of course material given in class is not available in the texts. Students are expected to attend class and participate in discussion and exercises. **Students should complete the assigned readings *before* class, take notes on them, and be prepared to contribute questions and ideas to the class.** If students miss a class, they are responsible for obtaining the notes from another student. I will not lend out lecture notes or outlines under any circumstances.

Participation: Active student participation is mandatory in this course. We deal with a number of controversial topics in class and students are free and encouraged to offer the class their comments or disagreements. Students should keep in mind that varied points of view must be expressed respectfully and in a manner that is sensitive to differences in ability, class, race/ethnicity, lifestyle preference, religion, or sex. Do not express views in a way that others may perceive as a personal attack. In short, having respect for others' differences is a prerequisite for enrollment in this course.

It is extremely counterproductive when people disagree with something said in class or the readings, but refuse to voice this. If you do not agree with something, say so in a respectful fashion. Dialogue and debate are essential to the active learning environment that I seek to create in this class. You are the most important component of such an atmosphere. **I will not penalize students for disagreeing with other students or me, but please be certain your perspective is based on evidence from course or other readings.**

Paper: A five to six page paper is due on 10/24. This paper is worth 30% of the total grade. Students will conduct a small-scale study and play the role of a sociologist. The goal of this assignment is to better understand the sociological nature of a neighborhood and crime and disorder there. The extra credit research is due earlier—see assignment!

Exams: These will consist of multiple choice questions. You are responsible for all readings, films, and exercises, as well as material covered in lectures. Lectures will cover material that is not in the readings, and not all of the readings will be discussed in detail in the lectures.

Optimal performance is the result of attending class and doing assigned readings before lecture!

The professor will give makeups *only* for students with medical problems, such as a serious illness, or other emergencies in the immediate family. The **only** way Dr Woldoff will allow a makeup is if students notify her *before* the exam by sending an e-mail (rachael.woldoff@mail.wvu.edu) AND calling. Makeups must be completed within one week of the original test date. Dr. Woldoff reserves the right to give makeups in an alternative format.

FINAL GRADES

Grade Breakdown:

The breakdown for final grades is as follows:

Attendance	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
<u>Paper</u>	<u>30%</u>
	100%

Grading Scale:

Final grades are determined using the standard grading scale:

A	90-100	D	60-69
B	80-89	F	Less than 60
C	70-79		

Extra Credit (10 possible points added to a test):

In addition to the attendance points that are worth 10% of your grade, five points will be awarded for students who have perfect attendance records for the recorded days. These points will be added to the score on one of the exams. An additional five points will be added to an exam if students type and correctly complete the extra credit. See assignment.

Academic Misconduct:

The professor will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. Do not surrender to peer pressure or let friendships interfere with your college career. All cases of academic misconduct will be immediately referred to the dean of Arts and Sciences office, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled, and the Office of Judicial Programs. Attendance, exams, and assignments contribute to actual grades. In addition, they reflect an individual's ability to understand the course material; therefore, providing and/or seeking assistance from fellow students or using other aids during an exam will constitute cheating. Students should be familiar with the WVU statement on Academic Integrity/Dishonesty published in the undergraduate catalog. See it here:

<http://www.ia.wvu.edu:8888/Undergraduate/2001thru03/pdffiles/frontpages.pdf>

According to the WVU Undergraduate Catalogue (2001-2003), under "Academic Information," Academic Dishonesty Defined, WVU expects that every member of its academic community share the historic and traditional commitment to honesty, integrity, and the search for truth. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to any of the following:

1. Plagiarism is defined in terms of proscribed acts. Students are expected to understand that such practices constitute academic dishonesty regardless of motive. Those who deny deceitful intent, claim not to have known that the act constituted plagiarism, or maintain that what they did was inadvertent are nevertheless subject to penalties when plagiarism has been confirmed. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: submitting, without appropriate acknowledgment, a report, notebook, speech, outline, theme, thesis, dissertation, or other written, visual, or oral material that has been copied in whole or in part from the work of others, whether such source is published or not, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper.
2. Cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and projects, including but not limited to:
 - a. Obtaining help from another student during examinations.
 - b. Knowingly giving help to another student during examinations, taking an examination or doing academic work for another student, or providing one's own work for another student to copy and submit as his or her own.
 - c. The unauthorized use of notes, books, or other sources of information during examinations.
 - d. Obtaining without authorization an examination or any part thereof.
3. Forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud:
 - a. Forging or altering, or causing to be altered, the record of any grade in a grade book or other educational record.
 - b. Use of University documents or instruments of identification with intent to defraud.
 - c. Presenting false data or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for admission, registration, or withdrawal from the University or from a University course.
 - d. Knowingly presenting false data or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for personal gain.
 - e. Knowingly furnishing the results of research projects or experiments for the inclusion in another's work without proper citation.
 - f. Knowingly furnishing false statements in any University academic proceeding.

When in doubt, paraphrase and cite! Remember that you must always paraphrase—the words themselves must be your own—not the author's. Citations and references are necessary for an acceptable paper. When writing, remember that the professor may be very familiar with the topic, writings on the topic, and she may check sources. Cheating and plagiarism are not the only forms of academic misconduct; therefore, students should go to the above link for a more detailed discussion of student responsibility.

Classroom Conduct: The Rules and the Reasons

The following behaviors are unacceptable and are examples of rudeness, distractions, and passivity: lateness, eating, chatting, reading newspapers, sleeping, audible beepers and cellular phones, **leaving early**, and missing class. These verbal and physical incivilities are not harmless, but interfere with other students' learning and prevent the class from being all that it might be. For the few to who violate these rules, the professor will ask you to stop the behavior, but if the behavior persists, offending students may be removed from the class.

Student Services:

Dr. Woldoff does not require this, but she encourages students to schedule a time to meet with her. Dr. Woldoff is willing to discuss student concerns and progress during individual appointments. The professor makes every effort to assist students who are experiencing difficulty in this course. In addition, WVU offers several other options for students who need additional assistance. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services:

Carruth Center for Counseling
& Psychological Services
3rd Floor of Student Services Building
304-293-4431
<http://www.wvu.edu/~cocenter/>

Center for Writing Excellence
240 Stansbury Hall
304-293-3107
<http://www.as.wvu.edu/english/cwe>

WVU Student Support Services/TRIO
304-293-6629
sss_trio@mail.wvu.edu

Social Justice Statement:

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our university does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner.

Course Outline

Note: this is only a guide. There may be points over the semester when we move slightly faster or slower than indicated below. Dr. Woldoff will inform students of any large deviations from this outline. By the end of the semester, students should understand and be able to clearly communicate sociological perspectives, patterns, and findings on the following general issues:

Date	Topics/Readings
8/22	Course Introduction/ Introduction to the Study of Sociology
8/24	Lyon, Chapter One
8/29-8/31	Lyon, Chapters Two and Three
9/5-9/7	Lyon, Chapter Three continued and Chapter Five
9/12-9/14	*Film/Discussion* *Extra Credit Due on 9/14*
9/19	Exam 1
9/21	Pattillo-McCoy: Introduction and Chapter One
9/26-9/28	Pattillo-McCoy: Chapter Two and Three
10/3 -10/5	Pattillo-McCoy: Chapters Four and Five
10/10- 10/12	Pattillo-McCoy: Chapters Six and Seven
10/17-10/19	Pattillo-McCoy: Chapters Eight and Nine
10/24	*Papers Due* Pattillo-McCoy: Conclusion and Methods
10/26	Study Day
10/31	Exam2
11/2	Anderson: Preface and Introduction
11/7	Election Day
11/9	Anderson: Chapter One
11/14-11/16	Anderson: Chapters Two and Three
11/28-11/30	Anderson: Chapters Four and Five
12/5-12/7	Anderson: Chapters Six, Seven and Conclusions
	Final Examination: Monday 12/11 from 11-1 (in classroom) Good luck!

Requirements for Writing–Checklist

Dr. Woldoff will be grading papers with strict guidelines. Please take checklist seriously. She will deduct a significant number of points for each incidence of writing that strays from these guidelines.

√	Writing Task
	I spelled out all numbers between one and ten.
	I maintained a formal style and did not use contractions, such as "didn't." I did not use casual phrases, such as "it was no big deal." I used "men/women" to refer to adults and not "guys/girls." I used full sentences rather than fragments. I used "think" instead of "feel" unless appropriate.
	I did not end a sentence with a preposition! A preposition is usually followed by a noun and is never followed by a verb or left alone at the end of a sentence. These are examples of prepositions: ABOUT, AT, BY, FOR, FROM, IN, INTO, OF, ON, TO, WITH . . .
	I indented the first line of every paragraph.
	To indicate possession, end a singular noun with an apostrophe followed by an "s." Otherwise, the noun's form is plural (e.g., Lobster's versus lobsters)
	I used only one direct quote from references.
	I proofread. There is no excuse for sloppiness! SPELL CHECK! Do not mix up these words: effect and affect; too and to; there and their; its and it's. Read the paper aloud. Omitted words and usage errors result in point deductions. Ask a friend who speaks Standard American English to read the paper and edit it with a red pen.
	I avoided redundancy and maintained direction and detail. Do not compromise the assignment and interpretation--go deeper. Do not use circular definitions. Ex: What he did was deviant because it was nonconformity. Instead, explain why it was an example of nonconformity.
	I used one-inch margins all around (see page setup), double-spaced the body of the paper, used 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and used left justification.
	I checked that all capitals are used correctly (titles, names, places, etc).
	I did not use a title page, but placed personal information in three single-spaced lines at the top corner of the paper.
	I stapled papers and numbered pages at the bottom center of the page.
	My paper is organized properly. Use subheadings, outlines, and include an introduction, body, and summary as well as topic sentences. Always use summary paragraphs, rather than abruptly ending the paper.
	I used at least five sociological terms and concepts from the course. This is required, so incorporate these into the paper and all interpretations.
	I used the active voice rather than the passive voice. The active voice is a stronger writing style and is more fun to read. ("Dr. Woldoff researched the topic" is in the active voice, but "The topic was researched by Dr. Woldoff" is passive.)
	Used the American Sociological Association citation format. See here: http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?name=Quick+Style+Guide&section=Sociology+Depts

Neighbors by The Rolling Stones

Neighbors, neighbors, neighbors
Have I got neighbors?
Have I got neighbors?
All day and all night
Neighbors
Have I got neighbors?
Ringing my doorbells
All day and all night
Ladies, have I got crazies?
Screaming young babies
No piece and no quiet
I got TVs, saxophone playing
Groaning and straining
With the trouble and strife
Is it any wonder
Is it any wonder
Is it any wonder
That we fuss and fight
Neighbors, do unto strangers
Do unto neighbors
What you do to yourself, yourself,
yourself
Is it any wonder
Is it any wonder
Is it any wonder
That we fuss and fight
Neighbors do unto strangers
Do onto neighbors what you do to
yourself
Yourself, yourself, yourself
Neighbors, neighbors, neighbors
Do yourself a favor
Don't you mess with my baby
When I'm working all night
You know that neighbors
Steal off my table
And doing alright, alright, alright
Neighbors do unto strangers
Do unto strangers
What you do to yourself

H.O.O.D. by Masta Ace

Yea, goin' out to the H double--That's for you, you, and you
They got broke people, poor people, my people, your people wherever I
go.
Listen and they won't change, ever change, can't change, don't change
and everyone knows
As I travel through various towns and strange places, I see the same
scowls and frowns on the same faces
The game races and cats try to catch it before they know it--they know
death on a first name basis
Whether it's slangin' or banging, drinking or smokin', there's bound to be
one cat thinkin' of loccin'
The hood's like a sitcom--leave ya bike outside, come back outside, I
guarantee your sh-- gone
Young cats be sellin' the rock--Money busting out they sock--Mama
tellin' them stop, but desperate times call for desperate means
It all seems so simple when you're just a teen--only take one bad apple to
poison the good
This for the girls on the block, the boys in the hood
And wherever I go it's the same as home--it's the H double O D the name
is known
They got broke people, poor people, my people, your people
(Wherever I go) Listen and they won't change, ever change, can't change,
don't change (And everyone knows) Listen
They got broke people, poor people, my people, your people
They got wild and rough blocks where it's hard to trust cops
Get shot on your way to school at the bus stop, damn that kid was a fine
scholar--hear his mama whine and holler he died for nine dollars
Young mothers trying to learn the ropes
And them one dollar lotto games turn their hopes
They keep hoping that they number coming
They dreamin' about getting rich driving in they hummer dummin'
Old ladies keep they purse in the front
Cuz them fiends on the prowl it's the first of the month
And you still feel good when you there, yup
And you know you in the hood when you there
They got one in every spot on the planet
And if you wasn't raised there you prolly can not stand it
Some call it the hood I'm calling it home
And there's love feel it all in my poem? what they got?
H dot O dot O dot D--should I turn my back on the hood? No not me
Whether P.R., D.R., or the West Indies or 50 other spots that are just like
these; Chicago know what I mean, Philly as well
S___ I hear nowadays sounds silly as hell
Whether in Miami or in Houston, Texas where some so broke they're not
used to breakfast--Oakland know what I mean, L.A. too--D.C. feel me, I
can tell they do--When will it change?
Never-- I know. And I see the same things wherever I go
They got broke people, poor people, my people, your people