

# Sociology of Deviant Behavior (Spring 2008)

Professor John Rice

Office: SBS 208D (962-7313; [ricej@uncw.edu](mailto:ricej@uncw.edu))

Course Web Page: <http://www.uncw.edu/soccrj/about-faculty-rice.html>

(Course page link at bottom of my department page)

Office Hours: MWF, 1:00-1:30; 3:00-3:30; MW, 5:00-5:30; R, 2:00-3:15  
(and by appointment)

## I. Course Description

Every society is organized according to someone's design. This design varies historically and cross-culturally, and the "designers" themselves are most often quite invisible. Nonetheless, a social order reflects someone's judgment that *this*, rather than another, is *the* way that things will be done. Social institutions both embody and reproduce this decision. From this decision, design, or judgment, then, the social category of "the deviant" is born.

Deviance has been an inexhaustible subject of inquiry, as well as a major source of employment, not only for those who have made a "career" of their deviance but, among others, for the legal profession, the police, criminologists, penologists, psychologists, social workers, and, of course, sociologists. All have been concerned with the obvious questions: Why do people deviate? How can this be stopped? How can we keep them from doing it again? The Deviant, however, is not an unchanging social role: public attitudes change, becoming more "liberal," or more "conservative," more or less punitive, more or less "scientific," more or less "moralistic." Not surprisingly, this ebb and flow in how laws, norms, and sanctions are thought about is reflected in what is and is not considered deviant, in social control practices, and in the study of deviance. Broadly speaking, the sociological perspective has shifted its focus from asking why people deviate, to asking how they do so, and to who decides what is and is not deviant. These three orientations correspond with what we will call the naturalistic, the appreciative, and the critical approaches toward deviance, and the emergence of each new approach is grounded in and issues from larger societal, cultural, and historical changes.

This course will present an overview of these three approaches, in something of a rough chronological order. By the end of the semester, students will have been exposed to and will be expected to have a solid grasp on the major sociological perspectives on deviant behavior and, more importantly, they will learn that the study of those modes of personal conduct that a society relegates to the status of "outsiders" offers a vital glimpse into the nature of that society as a whole.

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## II. Course Requirements/Texts

A. There will be two texts for the course:

*Classics of Criminology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Joseph E. Jacoby

*Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, by Howard S. Becker

**B.** It will be possible to earn 100 total points in this course, which will be broken down by your scores on the following:

1. An early-semester exam worth 25 points.
2. A mid-term exam worth 25 points.
3. A term paper worth 15 points (3 of these points will be decided by a 3 to 4 page prospectus/draft, to be submitted early in the semester -- see below).
4. A final exam worth 30 points.
5. Attendance and Participation: worth 5 points. A successful and enjoyable class depends to a significant degree upon the active intellectual involvement of both students and professor. Students are not simply receptacles into which teachers "pour" information, and learning involves the ability to actively engage – wrestle with, think through, challenge – the ideas presented in the class. I both encourage and expect that active intellectual involvement in my classes, and that involvement requires that students be present in class (both physically and mentally) and that they be prepared for the class.
  - a. In the interests of fairness, I start all student scores on this measure at 4 points (which is 80% of the total points you can earn for attendance/participation), and either add to or subtract from those points based upon your in-class performance. Points will be added for perfect or near-perfect (all but 1 or 2 classes) attendance, and for positive involvement in the life of the class; they will also be added in the event that – for those reluctant to actively participate in discussions – students take advantage of my office hours to clarify any points about which they are uncertain or interested. Points will be subtracted for excessive absences and/or late arrivals, and for being a negative presence in the class (disruptions, mentally absent). At the extremes, it is possible to earn all 5 points or to earn no points at all.

Exams will cover both lecture and reading material, with somewhat greater emphasis placed upon lecture material. The tests will comprise short answer, and short and long essay questions.

The prospectus/draft mentioned in #2, above, will be a 3-4 page, typed, double-spaced paper, describing: (1) the subject you have chosen to study; (2) the analytical approach you will be taking; and, (3) a complete list of some of the relevant references you will be using. I will provide you with more detailed specifications about a month into the semester. The prospectus/draft will be due in class on **Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**. Primarily, the prospectus/draft is one way of ensuring that you do not put in too much work on a paper that is too ambitious, not ambitious enough, too unfocused, or not appropriate for a sociological inquiry. The prospectus/ draft will be handed back to you, with detailed suggestions for improving your papers, early enough in the semester that you will have time to make changes or select a new topic if the need arises.

The term paper itself will be 8-10 pages (including the appropriate references and end-note sections). The content of the paper should develop a sociological analysis of some

form of "deviance." The analysis may (**AND MUST**) employ any of the major **sociological** perspectives we will be covering during the semester. (I stress "sociological," because we will also devote some time to biological and psychological approaches, but, as this is a sociology course, I will expect a sociologically informed analysis.) There is, in short, a great deal of freedom involved in putting together your paper. The prospectus will help guarantee that that freedom does not become a form of suffering.

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### **III. Exam Dates, Absences, Late Papers, Grading.**

- A. The first exam will be given during regular class time on Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>
- B. The second exam will be given during regular class time on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>
- C. The Final Exam will be given on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- D. You must notify me in advance if you have to miss an exam. If you do not, and you do not have a legitimate (e.g. emergency surgery) and provable excuse, you will not be allowed to make up the exam.
- E. The Prospectus/draft, again, will be due during class time on **March 10<sup>th</sup>**. The Term Paper will be due on **April 28<sup>th</sup>**, at the beginning of the class period.

**1. The requirements for turning in papers are the same as for excused absences from tests; you must check with me. Late Papers will be docked one letter grade for each day late, unless you have a legitimate excuse.**

**F. Grades:** Your Course Grades will be based upon a standard conversion of the total points you have earned into a corresponding letter grade. (Because you can earn 100 points, your scores are your percentages.)

A = 93 and above	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = 59% or less
A- = 90-92	B = 83-86	C = 73-76	D = 63-66	
	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72	D- = 60-62	

**G. Cheating, Plagiarism:** All work – tests, papers – must be the product of your own efforts. Any attempt by a student to represent the work of another as his or her own is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism includes copying the answers of another student on an examination or copying or substantially restating the work of another person or persons in any oral or written work without citing the appropriate source, and collaborating with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging his or her contribution.

Pay close attention to this definition, **because if you are guilty of plagiarism you will receive an “F” for the entire course.** It is not difficult to tell when a term paper or exam has been plagiarized, and I do take the time and make the effort to apprehend cheaters. Academic dishonesty is nothing other than lying and stealing; if you choose to lie or steal

you will be treated accordingly.

## Course Outline

<b>Part I. The Naturalistic Approach</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and Readings</b>
<b>Jan. 9</b>	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Course Syllabus and Outline</li> <li>2. <a href="http://www.salemweb.com/guide/witches.shtml">http://www.salemweb.com/guide/witches.shtml</a></li> </ol>
<b>Jan. 11, 14</b>	<p>The Demonic Perspective Deviance as the work of the devil</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> <i>Note: assigned readings are for the following week's classes (so these readings are for the discussion of the classical perspective [below])</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In Jacoby, Beccaria pp. 352-360; Bentham, pp. 105-108</p>
<b>NO CLASS JANUARY 21<sup>st</sup>: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</b>	
<b>Jan. 16, 18, 23</b>	<p>The Classical Perspective Deviance as Rational and Intentional Individual Action</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In Jacoby: Lombroso-Ferrero, pp. 141-156; Dugdale, pp. 157-164;</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">Goddard, pp. 165-171; Hooton, pp. 180-191</p>
<b>Jan. 25, 28, 30</b>	<p>The Bio- and Psycho-pathological Perspective Deviance as Irrational, Beyond Individual Control</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lombroso Sheldon XYY syndrome, etc.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>In Jacoby:</u> Shaw and McKay, pp. 19-25, 240-247; Sellin, pp. 235-239; Thrasher, pp. 4-8</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Helpful additional info, not required:</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;"><a href="http://www.crimetheory.com/Soc1/Chic1.htm">http://www.crimetheory.com/Soc1/Chic1.htm</a> <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/disorg.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/disorg.html</a></p>
<b>Feb. 1, 4, 6</b>	<p>Urbanization and Social Disorganization Deviance as the Product of Rapid Social Change, Disorganization, &amp; Cultural Conflict</p> <p>Review</p>

Feb. 8	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXAM #1</b></p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby:  Durkheim, pp. 119-123</p>
Feb. 11, 13, 15	<p>Functionalism  Deviance as a Necessary and Positive Part of Society  Return, go over exams</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Durkheim, pp. 208-213; Merton, pp. 214-223; Cohen, pp. 248-253; Cloward and Ohlin, pp. 283-287</p> <p><u>Helpful, but not required:</u>  <a href="http://www.crimetheory.com/Merton/index.html">http://www.crimetheory.com/Merton/index.html</a> (Explanation of Merton's version of Anomie)  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/cohen.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/cohen.html</a> (Cohen)  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/diff_opp.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/diff_opp.html</a> (Cloward and Ohlin)</p>
Feb. 18, 20, 22	<p>Anomie  Deviance as the product of normlessness and social strain  Durkheim  Merton</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Sutherland, pp. 272-275; Burgess and Akers, pp. 275-282; Sykes and Matza, pp. 268-271; Hirschi, pp. 294-301  In <u>Outsiders</u> (Becker): Chapter 3</p> <p><u>Helpful, but not required:</u>  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/hirschi.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/hirschi.html</a> (Hirschi's Social Bond Theory)  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/differ.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/differ.html</a> (Sutherland, Differential Association Theory)  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/sykes_matza.html">http://home.comcast.net/~ddemelo/crime/sykes_matza.html</a> (Sykes and Matza, "Techniques of Neutralization")</p>
Feb. 25, 27, 29	<p>Deviance as Learned Behavior</p> <p>Sutherland, "Differential Association"  Hirschi, "The Social Bond"  Sykes and Matza, "Techniques of Neutralization"  Burgess and Akers, "Differential Reinforcement"</p>

<b>NO CLASS, Week of March 1<sup>st</sup> – SPRING BREAK!!</b>	
<b>Part II: The Appreciative Approach</b>	
	<p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Tannenbaum, pp. 312-313; Lemert, pp. 314-316  In <u>Outsiders</u> (Becker): Chapters 1 and 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(NB: Term Paper Draft Due, March 10<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>
<b>Mar. 10, 12</b>	<p>Labeling and Social Constructionism  Theoretical Background:  Phenomenology, Ethnomethodology, Symbolic Interactionism  Becoming Deviant</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In <u>Outsiders</u> (Becker): Chapters 7 and 8</p>
<b>Mar. 14, 17</b>	<p>Creating Labels:  "Banning," Moral Entrepreneurialism and Moral Crusades  The Marijuana Tax Act  Review</p>
<b>Mar. 19</b>	<b>EXAM #2</b>
	<p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Skolnick, pp. 419-432; Black and Reiss, pp. 433-439</p>
<b>NO CLASS MARCH 21<sup>st</sup>: STATE HOLIDAY</b>	
<b>Mar. 24, 26, 28, 31, Apr. 2, 4</b>	<p>Return, go over exams  Applying the Labels:  Contingencies, Counting Deviance, and Status Degradation  Child Predators</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Clemmer, pp. 506-510; Sykes, pp. 511-520</p>
<b>Apr. 7, 9, 11, 14</b>	<p>Consequences of the Label:  Stigma, Deviance Amplification, and the Reorganization of Identity</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  In Jacoby: Marx, pp. 124-130; Quinney, pp. 131-140; Chambliss, pp. 381-390  Helpful, but not required:  <a href="http://www.sociology.org.uk/devtmarx.doc">http://www.sociology.org.uk/devtmarx.doc</a>  <b>Scroll down: Pp. 10-end)</b></p>
<b>Part III: The Critical Approach</b>	

<p><b>Apr. 16, 18, 21</b></p>	<p>Beyond Labeling Theory:          Criticisms of the Interactionist View          Conflict Theory and The Political Economy of Deviance</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> Conrad and Schneider – “Medicalization” (see link on electronic version of syllabus)</p>
<p><b>Apr. 23, 25, 28</b></p>	<p>The Political Economy of Deviance: Professionalization and Medicalization</p> <p>Last Day of Class: Wrap up and Review</p>
<p align="center"><b>(NB: TERM PAPERS DUE IN CLASS, April 28)</b>  <b>Wednesday April 30<sup>th</sup>: Final Exam, 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</b></p>	