

GIS CRIM 4323 Social Deviance and Control Syllabus

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Ruth A. Chananie-Hill

Ruth Chananie-Hill grew up in the sunshine state of Florida. She dropped out of college, partied hard, worked in the “real world” for a decade or so and joined the Army for two years prior to going back to school at a non-traditional age. She earned her Bachelor’s degree in Sociology at Middle Tennessee State University in 1999, and went on to earn her Master’s degree in Sociology at the same university in 2002. From there, she continued her odyssey north to Carbondale, IL, where she completed her Ph.D. in Sociology at Southern Illinois University in 2007. Her first teaching position was as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology at Manchester University in North Manchester, IN, a small but vibrant liberal arts college. In 2008, she was fortunate enough to join the faculty at the University of Northern Iowa as an Assistant Professor of Sociology. Her primary teaching and research areas include social theory, social movements, social inequalities, and sociology of sport and gender. Currently, her research foci include comparing socio-legal framings of same-sex and interracial marriage; analyzing female bodybuilders’ gendered expressions and extreme dieting practices; and using a third-wave feminist lens to investigate women’s participation in do-it-yourself flat-track roller derby leagues.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Social deviance and control is a fascinating subject of study for many students and researchers. Many people think of deviants (people who commit deviant acts, crimes, etc.) as absolutely wrong, sick, or insane. The sociological perspective on deviance is quite different, however. Explaining why certain people become deviant or engage in deviance is only part of what interests us. We seek answers to questions such as: why is a particular behavior, condition, or belief considered deviant in the first place? Why do different cultures, groups, and even individuals define deviance differently? What does it mean to observe that deviance and crime exist in all societies? Why would an action be deviant in one context or setting and not in another? Why are some behaviors that are not harmful to anyone considered deviant?

Here are a few examples to illustrate the importance of these sociological questions. Imagine you and your college friends are planning a keg party. Everyone

there is of legal age to drink, and drinking alcohol is widely practiced and acceptable to you and your friends. Is this deviant? Well, it depends, doesn't it? If said keg party occurs at a private home off campus, nothing illegal occurs, and no one complains, then it's not deviant. However, if the keg party were to take place in a classroom on campus (or anywhere on a dry campus), then we have a genuine case of deviant behavior. Here's another example. A man walks into a room wearing a dress, sparkling jewelry, and high heels. He's deviant, right? Not if the "room" is a space where a drag show is about to take place! Or if it's Halloween and he's at a party...or if he is a transvestite and is with his tranny friends! The main point of these examples is that **deviance is contextual**. What is deviant in one setting or among one group of people is not necessarily deviant in another.

Another example: You are a female in the United States, and you are wearing men's slacks, a tank top, and a button-down men's shirt. You have on women's underpants, but you are not wearing a bra. Suddenly, two police officers place you under arrest because you do not have on at least two articles of "feminine" clothing. You are tried and convicted and sentenced to six months in jail. That wouldn't happen, you say? It certainly would if the year was 1950. What is considered deviant and/or criminal changes not only in different contexts but also across time. Oh, and let's not forget that *right now* you (as a female) would likely be arrested, accosted, or shunned in societies such as Afghanistan or Saudi Arabia for wearing such clothing, or being seen on the street without a male escort, or without your burqa (garment that cloaks the entire body including veil). Thus, definitions of deviance shift regionally and culturally as well as historically.

Yes, you may argue, but some things are just plain wrong – and have always been deviant in every culture. Like killing someone, right? Wrong. What if the killing is a government-sanctioned assassination of a dangerous drug lord? What if it takes place in the context of war, or a police shoot-out with armed suspects? What if you live in a society where killing your adulterous wife is not only acceptable, but required of you to restore your family's honor? *Murder*, or criminal homicide, is deviant in all cultures and historical periods – but murder is not always defined in the same manner, and killing is not the same thing as murder. So you see, understanding or even identifying deviance is not as simple as it seems. In this course, you will explore these issues and many more, beginning with positivist and constructionist theories of deviance, and then moving on to specific types of deviance, such as criminal, organizational, sexual, physical, and emotional. Also, you will explore specific examples of deviance, including body modification, pedophilia, belief in extraterrestrials, and white supremacy. Welcome to the course, and I hope you enjoy completing it as much as I've enjoyed creating it.

Textbooks:

Goode, Erich. 2011. *Deviant Behavior* (9th ed.) Boston: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0-205-74807-5

Goode, Erich and D. Angus Vail (eds.). 2008. *Extreme Deviance*. Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press. ISBN: 978-1-4129-3722-1

Course Objectives:

- **Develop a sociological perspective of social deviance and control.** Understand sociological concepts and principles regarding deviant behaviors, beliefs, and conditions and apply them to explain specific examples of both criminal and non-criminal behavior and interaction.
- **Use a sociological lens to make sense of the world, one's identities, and one's actions in relation to social deviance and control.** Gain a wider, multicultural and cross-historical perspective regarding deviance, as well as the role of power in labeling and social control of deviance and crime.
- **Understand the role of theory in the study of social deviance and control.** Become familiar with major deviance theories and their importance in building sociological knowledge, compare and contrast their key concepts and assumptions, and apply them to explain various aspects of deviance.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

This course will be delivered via UNI's eLearning system. It consists of 11 assignments and 2 exams (plus a research paper for graduate students*). The assignment questions are meant to be taken seriously, and are graded accordingly. They are critical thinking questions designed to a) instill in you an appreciation for the dynamics of social deviance and control that you will retain after the course is over; and b) prepare you for the exams.

Basic Course Outline:

Assignment 1 – Introduction to Deviance
Assignment 2 – Positivist Theories
Assignment 3 – Constructionist Theories
Assignment 4 – Application: Tattooing and White Supremacy
Assignment 5 – Criminal Deviance, Part 1
Assignment 6 – Criminal Deviance, Part 2

Exam 1 – Covers all course materials from Assignments 1-6 (including instructor overviews). Upon completion of Assignment 6, you are **required** to take Exam #1 before submitting further written assignments. In your eLearning course page under 'content,' click on 'Exam 1 request' to arrange to take the exam. If you have any difficulty with this procedure, call Continuing Education <http://www.uni.edu/continuinged/>

Assignment 7 – Elite and Organizational Deviance
Assignment 8 – Sexual Deviance
Assignment 9 – Deviant Belief Systems
Assignment 10 – Emotional Deviance
Assignment 11 – Physical Deviance

Exam 2 – Final exam, covers all course materials from Assignments 7-11. Click on 'Exam 2 request' to schedule (see instructions above).

*Assignment 12 (graduate students only) – Research Paper – see instructions below.

Readings:

The assigned texts provide the core reading material for this course. It is imperative that you read the materials carefully in order to do well on the assignments and exams. Students come to these courses with varying skill-levels regarding reading comprehension and English language vocabulary. You are the best judge of your current reading and vocabulary skills, so do what is best for you to ensure you understand the readings as thoroughly as possible. Feel free to ask me questions about the readings as you go along. If you need it, obtain help and assistance from UNI's student learning resources <http://www.uni.edu/unialc/> or the local resources in your area. If you let me know about any issues you are having understanding the readings, I will be happy to make some suggestions. Also see Critical Reading towards Critical

Writing: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/reading-and-researching/critical-reading>

Disclaimer: Some of the material you read for this course may be disturbing to you, depending on your belief systems and/or life experiences. Readings will discuss issues such as pedophilia, white supremacy, rape, homosexuality, abortion, sadomasochism, mental illness, obesity, and so forth. Sensitivity to such issues will not excuse you from completing the assignments. Higher education is a venue in which your deepest assumptions may be challenged, and thus discomfort is often part of the experience. The purpose of this course is not to change your belief systems, but to get you to think sociologically about the issues presented. If you feel you cannot do this, this course may not be for you.

Written Assignments:

Each of the eleven written assignments is composed of a series of questions that require you to read, think about and/or summarize what you've read, and apply the theories, concepts or ideas to examples of deviance and/or crime. In general, I am looking for your ability to reason logically and persuasively, based on reading content, any additional research you might do, and, if applicable, your own experience with deviance. For some questions, there are no "right" answers. This does not mean that all answers are equally valid; some, of course, will be better than others. It does mean, however, that I am mainly interested in your ability to **think critically** about what you've read, to **apply** the concepts you are learning, and to coherently **communicate** your ideas and the ideas of others in writing (be sure to cite them – see next). These skills are crucial for all of your college and career endeavors. I will assess you based on a) critical thinking ability; b) clarity of communication (i.e., good writing skills); c) logical arguments accompanied by supporting evidence (such as examples from the readings or your research); and d)

thoroughness of answers. Although length will vary a bit, a reasonable guideline is approximately 4-5 double-spaced, typed pages for each assignment for undergraduates, and 5-8 pages for graduate students.

Important note on citation: In your written work, always identify the source of the ideas or information you are discussing. For example, if you are referring to a specific course reading, put the name(s) of the author(s) either in the sentence or in parentheses after the sentence. If you are quoting, include a page number. If you are using an Internet source, include the website address somewhere in the text or in parentheses at the end of the sentence (or a footnote) when you first mention information from it. Failure to credit your sources properly can result in unpleasant consequences (see section on Academic Honesty below). If you have questions on how to do this, please ask immediately. **Grad students** – I expect you to use correct ASA (or APA) style citations wherever applicable for all assignments. See Assignment 12 and the additional embedded resource links for guidance **before** you begin the course.

Type written assignments using a word processing program and save as a file. If you are using a word processing program other than Microsoft Word, then please save the file as Rich Text Format.

Submit your assignment by clicking on the **Assignment Submission** link in the **Course Content** menu on the left and uploading your assignment. **Need help?** See the [eLearning Tutorials](#) for instructions on how to submit an assignment.

Exams: There will be two proctored exams, worth 100 points each. Exams consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Exam questions are based on the readings and my assignment overviews. I provide a terms list at the end of each assignment. These lists plus your assignment questions will help you prepare and review for the exams. The second (final) exam will not be cumulative. You will need to schedule your exams with a suitable proctor according to continuing education policies (see instructions above). **Note: you must complete Assignments 1-6 prior to taking Exam 1, and Assignments 7-11 prior to taking Exam 2.**

Graduate Students:

Students completing the course for graduate credit are required to do work which is both quantitatively and qualitatively more complex than undergraduates, including correct ASA or APA citation format. Graduate students can expect assignments and exams to be graded with greater scrutiny. **Additionally, graduate students are expected to complete a scholarly research paper, as described in the "Research Paper (Graduate students only)" document in the Course Content menu:** Download detailed instructions from eLearning, and be sure to click on the embedded resource links. The other assignments will help your prepare to write your research paper, so I suggest you take a look at the research paper instructions early so you can begin thinking about a topic. In addition, your research paper will be evaluated through Turnitin.com.

Technical Requirements of Learners:

This is a web-based course. Elements of this course will require students to access documents using UNI's eLearning program, perform research online, communicate with the instructor via email, and submit typed assignments using word processing software.

Academic Honesty:

As members of a college community, we have a responsibility to be honest and act ethically. Academic dishonesty is a **serious offense**. All cases of cheating and plagiarism will be subject to academic discipline according to university policy. **Ignorance of these policies does not preclude individual responsibility for such actions.** If you are unsure what counts as plagiarism and how to avoid it do not hesitate to ask.

See <http://www.uni.edu/pres/policies/301.shtml> in UNI Student Handbook and summary below:

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: presenting as your own, for academic evaluation, the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment and citation of sources, including purchasing another's work (i.e. plagiarizing; also includes cutting and pasting from web sites); using unauthorized assistance (e.g. having someone write your assignments for you or cheating on an exam); and providing unauthorized assistance (doing someone else's work for them, helping them on an exam). Disciplinary actions include: Failing grade for the specific assignment/exam; Failing grade for the course (at instructor's discretion); Written report to student's and instructors department head, and to the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Possible suspension and loss of credit; Possible permanent expulsion from UNI.

GRADING

Please note that UNI Guided Independent Study requires that you complete all assignments to pass the course.

Assignments (11 x 20)	220 pts.
Two Exams (2 x 100)	200 pts.
Research Paper (grad only)	100 pts.

Grade	Percent (Minimum)	Undergraduates (420 possible points)	Graduates (520 possible points)
A	93%	390	483
A-	90%	378	468
B+	88%	369	457
B	83%	348	431
B-	80%	336	416
C+	78%	327	405
C	73%	306	379*
C-	70%	294	
D+	68%	285	
D	63%	264	
D-	60%	252	

* Graduate students must earn a "C" or better to earn graduate credit.