

**UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology**  
**Course Syllabus: Criminology**  
**SOC 3420 – Online via Canvas**  
**Fall 2016**

**Instructor:**

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**Required Texts and Materials:**

***Textbook Information***

Siegel, Larry J. 2017 (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). *Criminology: The Core*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
{ You must have the correct text and edition of this text to succeed in this course—ISBN:  
9781305642836 }

***Textbook “MindTap” Website and Ancillary Materials Information***

The textbook for this class has an online companion study guide website called “MindTap” organized by the publisher. I have placed the link to the textbook website on the Canvas homepage for this course. I suggest that you take advantage of the study guide materials found on the website. For those students who do not have access to the textbook website, I have placed the essentials materials as PDF files on the Canvas homepage chapter modules. *However, using the textbook website and online resources will not be required.*

***Canvas Learning Management System***

One of the keys to success in the course is to know how to navigate and use various tools and features of our online learning management system—Canvas. I ask students to invest an hour or so the first week of class to do this task. You will find that this investment will save you time in the long run. You can find critical information under the “Resources” tab on the far left Canvas toolbar. Please take the time now before you get too far into the course to click on the “Resources” tab and explore the various links especially the “Canvas Orientation for Students” and “Canvas Help Tutorials” links.

**Course Description:**

In Criminology (SOC 3420), we will examine the various explanations for crime in the U.S. We will describe and explore the characteristics of the major forms of crime, criminals, and crime victims. In this course, students will gain the skills and knowledge needed to think

critically about crime and the criminal justice system. This course may be used to meet requirements of both the major and minor in Sociology, minor in Criminal Justice, as well meeting the requirements in the Law and Society Area Studies program. Please check with your advisor for details regarding these matters.

## **Course Objectives:**

### ***USU's IDEA Essential Course Objectives***

In Criminology (SOC 3420), we will focus on 3 broad learning objectives; These 3 objectives are:

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
3. Learning to apply course materials (to improve rational thinking, problem solving and decisions)

### ***Sociology Program Objectives***

Sociology classes collectively contribute to form the major goals of the Sociology Program. Students will learn to:

- 1) Communicate effectively.
- 2) Think critically, analytically, and reason logically about social issues and/or social problems.
- 3) Understand and use sociological principles, concepts, and theories to examine social behavior and issues.
- 4) Understand and evaluate the application of sociological methods to social behavior and issues.

Specific assignments in this course will assess students' learning in one or more of the above objectives.

In this course we will apply the above general objectives to the areas of criminology. Thus, there are 4 major goals in this course. In SOC 3420, students will learn to:

- 1) Communicate effectively about criminology.
- 2) Think critically, analytically, and reason logically about criminology.
- 3) Understand and use sociological principles, concepts, and theories to examine criminology
- 4) Understand and evaluate the application of sociological methods to criminology.

## **Classroom Policies and Procedures**

### ***Schedule and Attendance***

The good news is the schedule in this class is extremely flexible. I have arranged the course to meet the needs of students with busy schedules. Obviously, we will not meet as a class in a "physical" sense at specific location at a specific time. Nonetheless, we will meet in the "virtual" sense and interact via the various tools of Canvas. You have considerable freedom in this course to set your own schedule within the term you have selected. The bad news is that this flexibility comes at a price. Do not abuse your freedom!!! You are expected to work around your schedule. Having minor difficulties with work, your health, family, and/or

other courses are NOT valid or acceptable reasons for late or unacceptable work. Do not procrastinate!!! If you do not have the time for this course, do not take this course. I would suggest setting aside approximately 7-10 hours per chapter (with related assignments) for this course. You can find specific deadline information summarized below.

For those students enrolled in the Fall 2016 semester, I have established 4 key due dates for the various course assignments. These 4 key due dates are: *September 15<sup>th</sup>*, *October 13<sup>th</sup>*, *November 10<sup>th</sup>*, and *December 15<sup>th</sup>*. These 4 key due dates should allow students considerable freedom to work at their own pace while still assuring that the students are also completing the course materials in a timely and successful manner. You can find descriptions of the specific course assignments in the “Course Requirements Overview” section below. The 4 key due dates are as follows:

By **Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**, you will need to have submitted Chapter 01-02 Quiz, Unit Exam #1, and Writing Assignment #1 Post A.

By **Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>**, you will need to have submitted Chapter 03-06 Quiz, Unit Exam #2, and Unit Exam #3.

By **Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>**, you will need to have submitted Chapter 07-10 Quiz, Unit Exam #4, Unit Exam #5, and Writing Assignment #1 Post B.

By **Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**, you will need to have submitted Chapter 11-14 Quiz, Chapter 11-14 Exam, and Writing Assignment #1 Post C and Writing Assignment #2.

I will not accept any assignment submitted after the assigned due date. Students are responsible for knowing the above deadlines. I will strictly follow USU policy for granting an incomplete grade in this course. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the deadlines.

### ***On-Line Office Hours, Contact, and Grading Information***

Please feel free to contact me with questions, issues, or concerns during the semester. You may use Canvas to mail me, phone me, or stop by my office (M224G) if you are in the Logan area. In general, I will log on to SOC 3420 every couple days to check email. Thus, you can expect me to respond to an email usually safely within 2 business days. However, during the course of a semester, I usually leave town to attend professional meetings or conferences a couple of times a year and this will delay or reschedule responding to email or grading. I will let you know in advance via the Canvas mail tool found on the course homepage if I will be unavailable for an extended period of time.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice. Please let me

know how I can assist you in succeeding in this course.

### ***Academic Dishonesty***

Acts of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating, falsification, plagiarism) will not be tolerated in this class. I will follow University guidelines regarding my academic dishonesty policy. Students who participate in academically dishonest activities will receive an F for the course at the minimum. Thus, if you are caught cheating even on a 5 point quiz/activity, you will flunk this course and may face stiffer penalties depending upon the nature of the offense.

## **Course Requirements Overview**

There are 3 major requirements for this course. First, for each chapter from the *Criminology: The Core* text by Siegel students will be expected to complete a short multiple choice quiz (see Chapter Readings and Quizzes below). Second, for each of the 2 chapter “Units” taken from *Criminology: The Core*, students will be expected to take a multiple choice exam that is “closed book” and must be properly proctored (see Unit Exams below). Third, students will be expected to complete 2 writing assignments also based in the text (see Writing Assignments below).

## **Chapter Readings and Quizzes**

### ***Chapter Readings and Quizzes Overview***

Each of the 14 chapters from the *Criminology: The Core* text by Siegel has a corresponding chapter quiz. The goal of the chapter quizzes is to get you familiar with exam-like questions and to test your comprehension of the chapter reading. After reading each chapter, students are expected to take the online quiz for the chapter. The chapter quizzes are open note and open book and can be taken "at home" outside of a secure, proctored environment. Please read the chapter before you take the chapter quiz. **In calculating your total points for the course, your 2 lowest chapter quiz scores will be dropped.** Thus, of the 14 chapter quiz scores, the highest 12 quiz scores will be used in calculating your total points for the course. Each chapter quiz will consist of 5 multiple choice or true/false items worth 2 points each and will be worth a total of 10 points. **Each chapter quiz can be taken 2 times with the highest score used in calculating a student's grade.** Students have a maximum of 15 minutes for each quiz attempt. Students can find guidelines on how to take a quiz in Canvas by clicking the “Resources” tab on the far left Canvas toolbar. Each of the 12 chapter exams used will be worth a maximum of 10 points each (12 x 10 points = 120 points total).

I have attempted to allow students considerable flexibility on how much material and to a certain extent what material they would like to be quizzed on at any given time. Students can choose to opt out and not take 2 chapter quizzes. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding chapter quizzes.

## **Unit Exams**

### *Unit Exams Overview*

This class is divided into 7 “Units” each consisting of 2 chapters (Unit #1=Chapter 1 & 2; Unit # 2=Chapter 3 & 4; Unit #3=Chapter 5 & 6....). Each of the 7 Units has a corresponding Unit Exam which covers materials from its assigned 2 chapters. Each of the 7 Unit Exams will worth a maximum of 80 points and will consist of 20 multiple choice and/or true/false items worth 4 points each. Unit Exams are "closed book" with no course materials allowed to be used and must be taken online in a proctored environment approved by USU Regional Campuses and Distance Education (RCDE). All regulations and policies of USU RCDE regarding the taking of exams must be followed by the student. Exam proctors will need to have the access code/password for the Unit Exam in order to access the Unit Exam for the student (see below for more details). Students can find guidelines on how to take a quiz in Canvas by clicking the “Resources” tab on the far left Canvas toolbar. Students have a maximum of 40 minutes for each of the 7 Unit Exams.

**In calculating your total points for the course, your lowest Unit Exam score will be dropped.** Thus, of the 7 Unit Exam scores, your top 6 scores will be used in calculating your total points for the course. Each of the 6 module exams used will be worth a maximum of 80 points each (6 x 80 points = 480 points total).

I have attempted to allow students considerable flexibility on how much material and to a certain extent what material they would like to be tested on at any given time. Thus, students can take each Unit Exam during a separate period or may choose to take several Unit Exams during a single period. Likewise, students can choose to opt out and not take 1 Unit Exam. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding Unit Exam.

### *Arranging for Unit Exam Proctors and Passwords*

It is remarkably easy to take an exam in this course for in-state students, out-of-state students, and even international students. I have had students in a dozen states and several other countries all manage to find a place to take an exam. RCDE has already forwarded my passwords for the exams to the various USU testing sites. Thus, for most Utah students, all you need to do is to schedule a date and time for an exam at an established testing site. However, still it never hurts to double-check before you arrive to make certain that the proctor has the password for the specific exam.

If you need to arrange for a proctor, please see “Proctored Exams Support” link inside the “Resources” tab on the far left Canvas toolbar. USU RCDE arranges for and verifies proctors and forwards the exam passwords for this course. I do not verify proctors and forward exam passwords!!! Moreover, feel free to contact USU RCDE at (435) 797-9700 if you still have questions about arranging for a proctor. Students are expected to follow the guidelines, policies, and regulations of USU RCDE regarding the scheduling of exams. Please allow ample time to schedule your exams. If you have reviewed the information under the “Proctored Exams Support” link inside the “Resources” tab on the far left Canvas toolbar and still have questions, you can feel free to contact me with questions.

### ***Unit Exam #1 Exception***

To help you get off to a good start in this course, I have lessened the restrictions placed on Unit Exam #1 in several areas. First, there is no password or proctoring needed for Unit Exam #1. Thus, Unit Exam #1 is open note and open book and can be taken "at home" outside of a secure, proctored environment. Second, Unit Exam #1 can be taken 2 times with the highest score used in calculating the student's final total points for the course. Students are encouraged to review their first attempt at the exam before they take the exam a second time. Please note that Unit Exam #1 is worth the same number of points (80 points) as any other chapter exam, has the same number of questions (20 questions) as any other chapter exam, and has the same time limit (40 minutes) as any other chapter exam. These exceptions apply to only Unit Exam #1 with all other chapter exams following the guidelines set forth above in the syllabus!!!

### **Writing Assignments**

#### ***Writing Assignments Overview***

Students are expected to complete 2 writing assignments in this course. The goals of writing assignments are to allow students to interact with me as well as other students in the class, to get students to think analytically and critically about criminology, and encourage students to apply sociological concepts. Each writing assignment is worth 75 points (150 points total). The writing assignments are open note and open book and can be taken "at home" outside of a secure, proctored environment. Students can learn how to post and reply on the class discussion bulletin boards and how to submit a written assignment by using the "Resources" tab on the Canvas homepage.

The 2 Writing Assignments are assigned as follows:

#### ***Writing Assignment #1 "Critical Thinking Class Discussion Bulletin Board" (75 points)***

Writing assignments #1 involves critically thinking about criminology by interacting with other students using the class discussion bulletin board. **You must post the 3 separate contributions in the class discussion bulletin board (Post A, Post B, and Post C described below) for writing assignment #1. All post must be labeled (Post A, Post B, or Post C).** Do not submit these posts as file attachments as other students will not open it and read them.

#### **Post A Requirements**

You must place your Post A in the "Writing Assignment #1" class discussion site and label this post as "Post A." Post A consists of four elements. Using the class discussion bulletin board #1, please offer a paragraph describing yourself to both the other class members as well me. Also in Post A, I would like you to end by asking an informal question of your fellow students. Please "pretend" that you are sitting with a group of your classmates before class and are chatting about something (the class, the bookstore, hiking, kids, quilting, or football). Keep in mind that I am also present off to the side so use common sense about what you are talking about (no questions about illicit drugs or cheating in class!). Also in Post A, you need to answer another student's question. You may do this in the same post as

your introduction or you may wait and see what other students ask later in the semester and return and make another Post A in the class discussion bulletin board #1.

### Post B Requirements

Each chapter of your text, *Criminology: The Core* by Siegel concludes with a section entitled “Critical Thinking Questions” (for example see pages 26 and 55 for the first 2). Your task in writing assignment #2 is to engage in an on-line class discussion regarding one of these questions from one of these sections. Students can find these “Critical Thinking Questions” highlighted purple numerals. Students can choose any question from the end of any of the 14 chapters. For example, on page 55 the critical thinking question #2 asks 2 questions (How would you explain gender differences in the crime rate? Why do you think males are more violent than females?) which you possibly could use for this assignment. *Please use text-based ideas, concepts, and theories in your responses to these questions.*

You must place your Post B in the “Writing Assignment 1” class discussion site and label this post as “Post B.” Post B consists of four elements. First, you are to identify yourself. Second, tell the class the chapter and question you will be using in this assignment. Third, you need to answer the *one* question set that you chose. Fourth, you will conclude your Post B by asking the class your own unique question regarding the issues that you chose. Thus, if you were using the critical thinking question #2 on page 55 you would first tell us how you would explain gender differences in the crime rate and why you think males are more violent than females. You would then conclude by fashioning a related question for other students in class to possibly answer.

### Post C Requirements

You must place your Post C in the “Writing Assignment 1” class discussion site and label this post as “Post C.” In order to complete Post C, you must read over other students’ Post B entries. Post C consists of 2 written parts. First, identify yourself. Second, provide an answer to just one other student’s unique question that another student added to conclude her/his Post B. In your answer please identify the student/post to which you are directing your reply. *Please use text-based ideas, concepts, and theories in your responses to these questions.* Writing Assignment #1 is worth 75 points.

### *Writing Assignment #2 “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” (75 points)*

There are 23 “Policies and Issues in Criminology” boxed inserts in *Criminology: The Core* by Siegel (for example see page 6 and pages 40-41 for the first 2). Students will use the information presented in one of these boxed inserts and the “critical thinking” questions found at the end of the boxed insert as the basis for the “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment. For example, a student might chose the boxed insert entitled “Policies and Issues in Criminology: International Crime Trends” starting on page 40. This student would then be answering and discussing the “critical thinking questions” (1. Although risk factors..., and 2. The United States is notorious...) found at the end of the boxed insert on page 41.

The “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment will be graded in terms of both form/style and content. In terms of form and style, you need to make certain that your responses are well-organized, clear, and free from grammatical and spelling errors. In

terms of content, the “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment should consist of 3 parts. *First*, there should be a short summary of the content of the boxed insert. This should be in the students own words with no quotes taken directly from the boxed insert. *Second*, the student should identify then describe text-based ideas, concepts, and theories that can be used to help better understand the boxed insert and that will be used in answering the “critically thinking” questions that close each boxed insert. *Third*, students will answer and discuss the 1-4 “critical thinking” questions found at the end of each boxed insert. *Please use text-based ideas, concepts, and theories in your responses to these questions.* Likewise, feel free to add life experiences and/or current events into your answers. Please fully explain your positions and decisions. In terms of length of each assignment, much of it depends on the boxed insert and the writing style of the individual student. In general, I would image the summary would take about 2-3 paragraphs, the description of text-based ideas, concepts, and theories should be about 2-3 paragraphs, and the analysis of the critical thinking questions should take 3-5 paragraphs. As a whole, the “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment should be between 3-4 pages (doubled spaced) in length. I think students should invest about 3-4 hours on this assignment after they have read the assigned chapters.

The “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment is to be submitted within Canvas. Students can learn how to submit a written assignment by using the “Support” tab on the Canvas homepage. The “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment is open note and open book and can be taken "at home" outside of a secure, proctored environment. I will accept only MS Word, Adobe Acrobat PDF, .txt, or .rtf file attachments in the drop box. All other types of file attachments will be rejected (such as .wps, .odt, or .papers). The “Policies and Issues in Criminology Paper” writing assignment is worth 75 points.

## **Grades**

### ***Grades Overview***

Grades will be determined on a total points basis. Remember that your lowest chapter quiz score and lowest chapter exam score will be dropped. There is no extra credit planned for the course. Please regularly refer to the Canvas grades link to examine your grades. Points and grades will be assigned as follows:

12 of 14 Chapter Quizzes	120 points	697-750 points = A (93-100%)
6 of 7 Unit Exams	480 points	675-696 points = A- (90-92%)
<u>2 Writing Assignments</u>	<u>150 points</u>	652-674 points = B+ (87-89%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>750 point</b>	622-651 points = B (83-86%)
		600-621 points = B- (80-82%)
		577-599 points = C+ (77-79%)
		547-576 points = C (73-76%)
		525-546 points = C- (70-72%)
		502-524 points = D+ (67-69%)
		450-501 points = D (60-66%)
		449 or below = F (59-0%)



## **Keys to Success in Criminology--SOC 3420**

There are many things students can do (and avoid doing) which will enable them to be successful in this course. Below you will find several general keys to success in SOC 3420.

### *1. Stay connected and contact me if you need help*

Please check your Canvas communication settings and check for messages from me on a regular basis. I assume you check your course communications at least once a week. After 7 days have passed, I assume you have the information and have had a chance to act upon it. You are responsible to check your course communication and act on any information.

**Remember that I am here to help you.** I am excited about teaching this class and I look forward to interacting with you and assisting you. I will check my class email on a regular basis and you may also call me (435.797.7123). Please do not hesitate in contacting me with your questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns.

### *2. Do not procrastinate*

I have provided you with a course outline thru the course modules found on the homepage of this course. You can also find quizzes and exams listed under the “Assignments” link found on the left toolbar of the course homepage. Remember you are free to work ahead as well as fall behind.

### *3. Do not rush*

It will take a modest investment of time to succeed in this course. I expect students to spend between 7-10 hours per chapter. Please set aside enough time to carefully read the chapters from the text, complete the workbook, and write your assignments. Also, remember to carefully and thoroughly study for the exams. I am confident that your grade will partially reflect the amount of time you spend on this course.

### *4. Learn Canvas*

You must be able to use the various tools of Canvas. Please spend some time at the beginning of the course to learn Canvas. Make sure you know how to take an exam, quiz, and submit your critical thinking writing assignments before you attempt to do so for class credit. You assume the vast majority of the responsibility if you submit poor work because you did not take the time to learn Canvas. Remember that Canvas is user-friendly and can be easily learned in minimal time. Please see the “Resources” tool found on the course homepage for information on how to take an exam or quiz, schedule and arrange for an exam proctor, post and a class discussion bulletin board, and how to submit files.

### *5. Know how to get technical assistance*

In addition to contacting me for help in this course, you can also contact the USU Helpdesk at 797-HELP (4357). The USU Helpdesk has been trained to assist and answer most of the technical questions you might have regarding Canvas. Remember that many questions can be answered thru the “Resources” tab on the top of the Canvas course homepage. Please get help if you need help!!!!

*6. Be Aware of USU Policies and Deadlines*

Students are responsible for knowing and following the policies and guidelines given in this syllabus, by USU in general, and by USU RCDE. Please allow ample time to submit work, schedule exams, arrange for an exam proctors, and the like. Remember that you are responsible for knowing about the deadlines set forth above in the syllabus. I will not contact students regarding course deadlines unless there is a change in the schedule.