



Utah State University

SOCIAL DEVIANCE

Department of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology
SOC 3430, Section 001, Spring 2016, CRN 13503
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:30 am-12:20 pm
Old Main, Room 121

Instructor: Stephen G. VanGeem, PhD
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Office: Old Main 224D
Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 1:00-3:00pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

As human beings are intensely social creatures, it stands out when someone behaves in a way that appears inappropriate or that violates social expectation. At its most extreme, a breach of normalcy would be classified as deviant or even abnormal. In this course, we will examine social deviance, paying particular attention to issues of what is considered conformist (as opposed to deviant), who defines what is considered normal and why, and what degree of deviation is necessary for someone or some behavior to be labeled as “socially deviant.” The focus throughout the course will be on developing critical thinking skills when evaluating and critiquing theory, research, and policy related to deviation, in an effort to develop a well-rounded understanding of how we classify and react to social deviance.

REQUIRED TEXT AND EQUIPMENT

- Anderson, Leon. Forthcoming. *Deviance: Social Constructions and Blurred Boundaries*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Your course grade will be based upon three exams, a final paper, a series of writing assignments, and weekly discussion. Each exam is worth 20 percent, the term paper is worth 15 percent, the writing assignments are cumulatively worth 20 percent, and class participation is worth 5 percent.

Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Exam #3	20%
Term Paper Assignment	15%
Writing Assignments	20%
Class Participation	5%
Total	100%

GRADING SCALE

A 94 and above	A- 93-90	B- 83-80
B+ 89-87	B 86-84	C- 73-71
C+ 79-77	C 76-74	F 59 and below
D+ 69-67	D 66-60	

EXAMINATIONS

Each exam will be comprised of a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, and short answer questions.

TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

As one of the goals of this class is to critically examine definitions of “social deviance” (and by extension “normalcy”), your term paper assignment is to select a particular behavior or population that you find interesting and that is labeled deviant, and explain:

- What is the deviant behavior or population?
- What is considered conformist or normal?
- Who defines what is considered deviant and why?
- Does this definition appear universal or contextual? What evidence supports either claim?
- What degree of deviation is necessary for a particular behavior or population to be labeled “socially deviant?”

Your term paper should be 5-10 pages in length and should reference at least 2 sources other than your textbook. In lieu of a final examination, your final paper ***must be uploaded to CANVAS*** by noon on Friday, May 6.

When presenting your argument, please try to use your own words, paraphrase major points, or, when quoting directly from a text, acknowledge the material in quotations and reference the source and page number correctly using American Sociological Association (ASA) style (for in-text citations please see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/02/> and for reference page formatting please see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/03/>.) If you copy material without citing it, you will get a zero for the assignment and may also get a FF for the course.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

There will be ten short writing assignments due throughout the course of the semester. Each response should be at least a paragraph in length and should reference the textbook and class lecture in order to demonstrate a keen understanding of the material. Each assignment ***must be uploaded to CANVAS*** by 11:30am on the assignment due date.

LECTURES AND CLASS DISCUSSION

As this is a discussion-based course, class participation is a mandatory component in order to provide students with the most interactive experience possible. As the instructor, my goal is to guide your learning as much as I can. To this end, while my lectures will focus on the assigned readings, I may expand the scope to include other information or narrow the focus to highlight only a few key elements. In this regard, students cannot just attend lectures and ignore the book, or vice versa, and still have exposure to all of the information necessary to complete this course.

COURSE POLICIES

1) Please extend courtesy and respect to your fellow students in any discussion and avoid any overtly hostile or demeaning language when reacting to another student's ideas. Repeated disrespectful and rude behavior may be grounds for dismissal from the class.

2) Late assignments will not be accepted unless: (1) you notify me 48 hours ***before*** the assignment is due and (2) provide me with an acceptable reason for why the assignment will be late. I may request

written documentation for the excuse if deemed necessary. If you do not follow this procedure then you will receive a zero on the assignment.

3) Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated (see below).

4) This syllabus is not a contract. I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any time throughout the semester and will give you ample notification beforehand via class-wide announcements. It is your responsibility to stay abreast of any changes made.

5) In line with university policy, students with disabilities who are in need of academic accommodations must (1) register with and provide documentation to the Disability Research Center (DRC) and (2) bring a memorandum from the DRC to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be accomplished within the first two weeks of the semester. Additional information can be accessed at www.usu.edu/drc/

6) In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), academic progress in this course will be kept private from all third parties unless waived by the individual student. This waiver, along with other information, can be found at <http://www.usu.edu/registrar/htm/ferpa>.

7) If you have a problem, please do not hesitate to contact me. It is easiest to reach me via email, although I do request that you include your *first name*, your *last name*, your *A number*, and the *course number* in all correspondence. I check my email account daily, so if you need to contact me, you can expect a response within 24 hours, but you should not wait until the last minute before deadlines to write to me with questions.

CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. A single case of cheating can be the basis for a failing grade and/or dismissal from the University. Plagiarism includes knowingly “representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials” (*Code of Policies and Procedures for Students*, Article V, Section 3A.1). The penalties for plagiarism are severe and may include probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, referral to psychological counseling, and other appropriate disciplinary actions. If you have any questions concerning what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, feel free to ask me.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Week 1: Course Introduction (Monday, January 11)

The Drama of Deviance (Wednesday, January 13)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 1

Deviance as Symbolic Interaction (Friday, January 15)

Week 2: **NO CLASS (Monday January 18)**

Quantitative Research Methods (Wednesday, January 20)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 2

Qualitative Research Methods (Friday, January 22)

Week 3: Introduction to Positivistic Theory (Monday, January 25)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 3

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 from Chapter 2, pages 22-23, is due at the beginning of class

Positivistic Theory: Social Disorganization Theory (Wednesday, January 27)

Positivistic Theory: Anomie and Strain Theory (Friday, January 29)

Week 4: Positivistic Theory: Differential Association and Social Learning Theory (Monday, February 1)

Positivistic Theory: Control Theory (Wednesday, February 3)

Introduction to Social Constructionist Theory: Conflict Theory (Friday, February 5)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 4

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 from Chapter 3, pages 25-26, is due at the beginning of class

Week 5: Social Constructionist Theory: Labeling Theory (Monday, Feb. 8)

Social Constructionist Theory: Techniques of Neutralization (Wednesday, February 10)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #3 from Chapter 4, pages 16-18, is due at the beginning of class

EXAM #1 (Friday, February 12)

Week 6: **NO CLASS (Monday, February 15)**

Introduction to Murder (TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 5

Positivistic Theory: Murder (Wednesday, February 17)

Social Constructionist Theory: Murder (Friday, February 19)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #4 from Chapter 5, page 25, is due at the beginning of class

Week 7: Introduction to Sexual Assault (Monday, February 22)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 6

Positivistic Theory: Rape (Wednesday, February 24)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #5 from Chapter 6, pages 22-24, is due at the beginning of class

Social Constructionist Theory: Rape (Friday, February 26)

Week 8: Introduction to Underprivileged Crime (Monday, February 29)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 7

Positivistic Theory: Underprivileged Crime (Wednesday, March 2)

Social Constructionist Theory: Underprivileged Crime (Friday, March 4)

****SPRING BREAK** (Monday, March 7 – Friday, March 11)**

Week 9: Introduction to Privileged Crime (Monday, March 14)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 8

Positivistic and Social Constructionist Theory: Privileged Crime (Wednesday, March 16)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #6 from Chapter 8, pages 21-22, is due at the beginning of class

EXAM #2 (Friday, March 18)

Week 10: Introduction to Alcohol Abuse (Monday, March 21)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 9

Positivistic Theory: Alcohol Abuse (Wednesday, March 23)

Social Constructionist Theory: Alcohol Abuse (Friday, March 25)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #7 from Chapter 9, page 32, is due at the beginning of class

Week 11: Introduction to Drug Abuse (Monday, March 28)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 10

****NO CLASS** (Wednesday, March 30)**

****NO CLASS** (Friday, April 1)**

Week 12: Positivistic Theory: Drug Abuse (Friday, April 4)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #8 from Chapter 10, *Ethnographic Voices*, is due at the start of class

Social Constructionist Theory: Drug Abuse (Wednesday, April 6)

Introduction to Sex Work (Friday, April 8)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 11

Week 13: Positivistic Theory: Sex Work (Monday, April 11)

Social Constructionist Theory: Sex Work (Wednesday, April 13)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #9 from Chapter 11, *Defining Obscenity*, is due at the start of class

Introduction to Mental Illness (Friday, April 15)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 12

Week 14: Positivistic Theory: Mental Illness (Monday, April 18)

Social Constructionist Theory: Mental Illness (Wednesday, April 20)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #10 from Chapter 12, pages 32-33, is due at the beginning of class

EXAM #3 (Friday, April 22)

WEEK 15: Introduction to Non-Heterosexuality (Monday, April 25)

****OUTSPOKEN PANEL** (Wednesday, April 27)**

Summary of Course/Discussion of Final Paper Assignment (Friday, April 29)

Finals Week: TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT is due Noon on Friday, May 6