



### **SOCIAL DEVIANCE**

Department of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology  
SOC 3430, Section 001, Spring 2017, CRN 12957  
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:30 am-12:20 pm  
Old Main, Room 121

Professor: Stephen G. VanGeem, PhD  
E-mail: stephen.vangeem@usu.edu  
Office: Old Main 224D  
Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 12:30-2:00pm and by appointment  
Teaching Assistant: Max Roberts  
E-mail: streborxam66@yahoo.com  
Office hours: By appointment in the Sociology Population Lab, Old Main 226

### **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 93 and above	A- 92-90	
B+ 89-87	B 86-83	B- 82-80
C+ 79-77	C 76-73	C- 72-70
D+ 69-67	D 66-60	F 59 and below

**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 Wednesday, May 3\***.

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/](http://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 9)

#### **The Drama of Deviance (Wednesday, January 11)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 1

#### **Quantitative Research Methods (Friday, January 13)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 2

### Week 2: **\*\*NO CLASS\*\*** (Monday January 16)

#### **Qualitative Research Methods (Wednesday, January 18)**

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 is due before class**

#### **Introduction to Positivistic Theory/Biological Theory (Friday, January 20)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 3

### Week 3: Positivistic Theory: Social Disorganization Theory (Monday, January 23)

#### **Positivistic Theory: Anomie and Strain Theory (Wednesday, January 25)**

#### **Positivistic Theory: Differential Association and Social Learning Theory (Friday, January 27)**

### Week 4: Positivistic Theory: Control Theory (Monday, January 30)

#### **Introduction to Social Constructionist Theory/Labeling Theory (Wednesday, February 1)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 4

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 is due before class**

#### **\*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Friday, February 3)**

### Week 5: **\*\*NO CLASS\*\*** (Monday, February 6)

#### **Social Constructionist Theory: Stigmatization (Wednesday, February 8)**

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #3 is due before class**

#### **EXAM #1 (Friday, February 10)**

### Week 6: Introduction to Murder (Monday, February 13)

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 5

#### **Theorizing about Murder (Wednesday, February 15)**

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #4 is due before class**

#### **Introduction to Rape (Friday, February 17)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 6

**Week 7: \*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Monday, February 20)**

**Theorizing about Rape (TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21)**  
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #5 is due before class**

**Introduction to Financially-Motivated Street Crime (Wednesday, February 22)**  
Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 7

**Theorizing about Underprivileged Crime (Friday, February 24)**

**Week 8: Introduction to White Collar Crime (Monday, February 27)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 8

**Theorizing about Privileged Crime (Wednesday, March 1)**  
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #6 is due before class**

**EXAM #2 (Friday, March 3)**

**\*\*SPRING BREAK\*\* (Monday, March 6 – Friday, March 10)**

**Week 9: Introduction to Alcohol Abuse (Monday, March 13)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 9

**Theorizing about Alcohol Abuse (Wednesday, March 15)**  
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #7 is due before class**

**Introduction to Drug Abuse (Friday, March 17)**  
Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 10

**Week 10: Theorizing about Drug Abuse (Monday, March 20)**

**Introduction to Sex Work (Wednesday, March 22)**  
Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 11

**Theorizing about Sex Work (Friday, March 24)**  
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #8 is due before class**

**Week 11: More Theorizing about Sex Work (Monday, March 27)**

**Introduction to Mental Illness (Wednesday, March 29)**  
Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 12

**Theorizing about Mental Illness (Friday, March 31)**  
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #9 is due before class**

**Week 12: Introduction to Obesity and Eating Disorders (Friday, April 3)**

Anderson, *Blurred Boundaries*, Chapter 13

**Theorizing about Obesity and Eating Disorders (Wednesday, April 5)**

**\*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Friday, April 7)**

**Week 13: EXAM #3 (Monday, April 10)**

**\*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Wednesday, April 12)**

**\*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Friday, April 14)**

**Week 14: Discussion of Final Paper Assignment (Monday, April 17)**

**Introduction to LBGTQ Identities (Wednesday, April 19)**

**\*\*OUTSPOKEN PANEL\*\* (Friday, April 21)**

**WEEK 15: Theorizing about LGBTQ Identities (Monday, April 24)**

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #10 is due before class**

**Summary of Course (Wednesday, April 26)**

**\*\*NO CLASS\*\* (Friday, April 28)**

**Finals Week: TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT is due Noon on Wednesday, May 3**