

Carleton University
Institute of Criminology & Criminal Justice

CRCJ 2200-A

Contemporary Issues in Criminology

Course Outline

Fall 2023

Professor: Natasha Stirrett

Office: Dunton Tower Room 1722

Office Hours: Mondays from 1:00pm-2:00pm in-person

Email: natashastirrett@cunet.carleton.ca

Classroom Location: Please check with Carleton Central for current room location.

Class Time: Monday 2:35pm-5:25pm

Prerequisites: CRCJ 1000 and Second Year Standing

Method of Delivery: This course is in-person and on campus

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AFFIRMATION

Ni manàdjiyànànìg Màmìwinìnì Anishinàbeg, ogog kà nàgadawàbandadjig iyo akì eko weshkad. Ako nongom ega wìkàd kì mìgiwewàdj. Ni manàdjiyànànìg kakina Anishinàbeg ondaje kaye ogog kakina eniyagizidjig enigokamigàg Kanadàng eji ondàpinangig endàwàdjìg Odàwàng. Ninisidawinawànànìg kenawendamòdjìg kije kikenindamàwin; weshkinigidjig kaye kejeyàdizidjig. Nigijeweninmànànìg ogog kà nìgànì sòngideyedjig; weshkad, nongom; kaye àyànikàdj.

ENGLISH We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded. We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home. We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old. And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, future.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class or Faculty of Public Affairs 20 Teaching Regulations 2020-21 as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity

Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will address some of the most pertinent issues facing Canadian society today and in the field of Critical Criminology. Students will examine various topics on media and popular culture, colonialism and consent, environmental justice, racial profiling, homelessness, the “War on Drugs” which has produced a drug poisoning crisis and movements for racial justice and mutual aid practices. It will also cover cybercrime and the use of surveillance.

The course will be oriented around the concept of *criminalization*, a focal organizing principle in contemporary western society. Talking about contemporary criminological issues using the frame of criminalization moves discussions about crime in society away from an understanding that crime is inherent or natural in certain people or communities. Rather, the notion of criminalization acknowledges that what comes to be understood as *against the law* is constructed by social, political, cultural, and economic forces.

Throughout the course, students will learn to engage with critical criminological approaches, including intersectional, abolitionist and transformative justice frameworks and will apply these ideas to examining ongoing issues, debates, and movements. Informed by Indigenous, Black, anti-racist, queer and feminist readings, this course will critically examine criminalization, racial and colonial injustice, policing, systems, institutions, and societal concerns. In addition, students will learn about emancipatory praxis, collective care, and community mobilization.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will have demonstrated their ability to:

- Identify, compare, and contrast an array of important contemporary criminological issues and appraise different theoretical frameworks and approaches
- Define and explain the concept of criminalization and its application to contemporary socio-legal issues in Canadian society, debates, and movements
- Employ close, critical reading of course texts and content, and identify both central and supporting ideas
- Critically examine racial and colonial injustice, institutional practices and systems, and collective care through analyzing real-world problems and apply this knowledge through individual written and audio exercises

Brightspace, Readings and Course Materials

This course uses Brightspace to provide the required readings on ARES, for students to submit assignments including the midterm and take-home exam and other links to course materials and resources. This course will cover a range of contemporary criminological topics and emergent issues relevant to the themes of the course. Be sure to check out our course page on Brightspace regularly.

There is no one simple textbook or a (couple of texts) that can address the many complex and current issues this course will address, and therefore the course content will include a range of articles, book chapters, videos, and other sources. Other instructors have collaboratively influenced this course in terms of design, content, and focus.

ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments in this course are designed to build upon each other and ensure students do a close and critical reading of all the course content and are thus able to realize the learning objectives. In addition, the assignments are intended to support student success, develop critical thinking skills and engagement with current criminological issues.

30% Critical Reading Responses (2 at 15% each)

15% In-Class Midterm Exam

15% Podcast Proposal

25% Podcast

15% In-Class Final Exam

Critical Reading Responses 30% (2 at 15% each) Due September 25th and October 16th

You are asked to submit 2 (3-page) double-spaced reading response papers. The first response paper will be based on 1 reading covered during weeks 1-3 of the course (**due September 25th**). The second response paper will be based on 1 reading based on weeks 4-5 (**due October 16th**). You will do a close reading of a text. Do not only summarize the reading. Instead, you want to take an analytical approach to the text. Responses should reflect upon, engage, and evaluate the readings' ideas and arguments, comment on their implications, articulate new insights you have acquired, or questions the reading raises that you would like to discuss. To demonstrate engagement with the reading, students are asked to develop 3 interesting or surprising things you learned, 2 critical questions you would like to pose to the author, along with a short description of the argument. You may write in the first person. Please avoid colloquial language and maintain an academic tone. This assignment must be based solely on a reading, not other course content.

In-Class Mid Term Exam 15% November 6th

The midterm (15%) will take place during our regular class time on **November 6th**. The mid-term exam will cover the course materials of weeks 1-6. There will be a short lecture prior to the mid-term exam on this day. To help you prepare for the exam, a study guide inclusive of week 6 will be made available on Brightspace. Important key points will be covered in class before the midterm commences on exam day, ensuring you are well-prepared and know what to expect. Additional information will be discussed in class and posted on Brightspace.

Podcast Proposal 10% Due November 20th

You are asked to submit a (3- page) double-spaced podcast proposal **due November 20th**. Your proposal should demonstrate how you plan to incorporate a critical criminological perspective into your podcast, focusing on aspects like social structure, economic forces, institutions, and power relations, which have been covered in class. By applying this critical criminological perspective in your podcast, you will have the opportunity to delve into underlying societal influences and power dynamics that contribute to the process of criminalization. By examining social, economic, and political structures at play, your podcast can explore; the production and interpretation of crime, social harm, structural inequalities, and systems that can shed light on the roots causes of criminalization. Your podcast proposal should include: your chosen topic, a brief introduction/overview, episode outline, incorporation of 1-2 course concepts (ie. carding, criminalization, homelessness). Please attend to at least 1 course reading and refer to content from at least 2 lectures. Use proper in-text citations and include references. This podcast proposal offers you an opportunity to explore critical criminology and showcase your understanding of key course concepts. Additional information will be discussed in class and posted on Brightspace.

Podcast 25% Due December 4th

Building on your drafted podcast proposal, your task is to create a thought-provoking 10–12 minute podcast that delves into critical criminology and its relevance to contemporary issues of social harm, justice and social inequalities that have been explored in the class. You will need to include details and explanation to support your analysis that makes connections between 1-2 course concepts (ie. carding, racialization, homelessness, or others) and criminalization. As part of your podcast, you must incorporate details and explanations that effectively connect the chosen course concepts to the issues discussed. Use examples, evidence, and insights from at least one course reading and content from at least two lectures to bolster your analysis. Please include a reference page listing all the sources used in your podcast. Additional information will be discussed in class and posted on Brightspace.

In-Class Final Exam 15% Due December 8th

The final exam (15%) will be held during the last day of class on **December 8th** (Class makeup day for Carleton courses that follow a Monday schedule). The final exam will cover the course materials of weeks 7-10. Additional information will be posted on Brightspace.

***How to submit assignments:** Please submit assignments using the dropbox feature located on Brightspace. Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the due date. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade.*

COURSE INFORMATION

Expectations Regarding Due Dates: All assignments are due on the specified date on Brightspace by 11:59 pm. If an assignment is handed in after the due date (up until seven days after), for any reason, it will be accepted, but the mark will be reduced by 5% for each late day. Sometimes life sucks, and things fall apart a little. A late assignment for any serious reason must be justified in writing to the professor or teaching assistant within three business days after the assignment was due (at the latest). Every effort should be made to make prior arrangements for an extension with the professor or teaching assistant in advance of assignment due dates. The professor reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Please see university policies on exam deferrals <https://carleton.ca/registrar/deferral>.

Email policy: Please engage with the Professor and course TAs in a formal and respectful fashion when communicating via email. Please indicate the course name and number (CRCJ 2200-A) in the subject heading if an email is required. In addition, ensure that you include your full name and indicate your message objective(s). If you do not have all these things, it will be difficult for the professor and/or course TAs to assist you. Big questions and/or conversations are best served through office hours/appointments with the professor.

During the week, it may take up to 48-hours for the professor to respond to your email. The course professor and TAs do not respond to emails over the weekend. Please plan accordingly. If you send the professor and/or TAs more than one message about the same thing in one span of 48-hours, they will likely find this highly annoying (you would probably agree if you were in their shoes).

Writing Policy and Format: Students will also be assessed on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take appropriate measures to avoid spelling, syntax and punctuation errors, inappropriate use of terms, etc.

Format for all written assignments

- Double spaced text (be sure there is no 'extra' space between paragraphs)
- Font should be Times New Roman
- Font size 12
- Font colour for all text should be black
- 1-inch/ 2.54 cm margins
- Include page numbers (preferably on the bottom right) starting on the first page of text (the title page should not be numbered)
- Include a title page with your name, student number, name of assignment, and title of paper
- Start references on a new page, APA referencing style is preferred but not required. Be sure whatever referencing style you use to be consistent throughout. To learn more about this format, see the Library reference page: <https://library.carleton.ca/help/apa-citation-style>

Did you know there is a dedicated librarian to legal studies and criminology? Find out more here:

<https://library.carleton.ca/research/subject-guides/criminology-and-criminal-justice-detailed-guide>

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a University student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a link to information about all of the resources, both on campus and off, that you may find helpful: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: September 11th

Introduction

Readings:

- Bertrand, Marie-Andree, Mosher, Janet, Brockman, Joan. 2010. "Introduction" in *Constructing Crime: Contemporary Processes of Criminalization*. Pp 1-16.
- Murdocca, Carmela. 2014. "Racialization, Criminalization, Representation" in *Criminalization, Representation, Regulation: Thinking Differently About Crime*. Pp 107-132.

Week 2: September 18th

Communication, Popular Culture and Film

- Khan, Umni. 2022. "A Guilty Pleasure: The Legal, Social Scientific and Feminist Verdict Against Rap". *Theoretical Criminology*. Vol. 26(2) 245-263.
- Supplementary Reading: Manning, Grattan, Ewen and Leaning. 2021. "Introduction" in *Capitalism, Crime and Media in the 21st Century*. Pp 1-13. Palgrave Macmillan: UK.

Week 3: September 25th Critical Reading Response 1# due

Indigenous Peoples, Colonialism, and Consent

- Corntassel, Jeff. 2021. "Indigenous Laws on Indigenous Lands: Land Back as Community Resurgence". *Rooted: An Indigenous Law Publication*. Pp 1-25.
- Supplementary Reading: Stark, Heidi. 2017. "Changing the Treaty Question: Remediating the Right(s) Relationship" in Coyle, Michael and Borrows, John. *The Right Relationship: Reimagining the Implementation of Historical Treaties*. Pp 248-276. University of Toronto Press.

Week 4: October 2nd

Anti-Black Racism, Racial Profiling and The Movement for Racial Justice

- Sui, Bobby. 2018. Chapter 1. "Defining Racial Profiling" in *Racial Profiling and Human Rights in Canada* by Lorne Foster, Jacobs, Lesley A and Bobby Sui.
- Hooks, Bell. 2014. "Loving Blackness as Political Resistance" in *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Taylor & Francis: UK.
- Walcott, Rinaldo. 2021. Chapter 1. "Moving Toward Black Freedom". *The Long Emancipation: Moving Toward Black Freedom*. Pp 1-7.

*****Stat Holiday (October 9th) *****

Week 5: October 16th Critical Reading Response Paper #2 due

The "War on Drugs" and the Overdose Crisis

- Tyndall, Mark, & Dodd, Zoë. 2020. "How Structural Violence, Prohibition, and Stigma Have Paralyzed North American Responses to Opioid Overdose" *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics* 22(8): 723-728.

- Levine, Sarah, Medley, Andrea, Norton, Alexa. 2021. “Putting Indigenous Harm Reduction to Work: Developing and Evaluating “Not Just Naloxone”. *International Journal of Indigenous Health*.

*****FALL BREAK (October 23-27th)*****

Week 6: November 6th Mid Term Exam

The Criminalization of the Poor: Homelessness, Poverty and Eviction

- Flynn, A, Hermer, J, Leblanc, C, MacDonald, S-A, Schwan, K, Van Wagner, E. 2022. Overview of Encampments Across Canada: A Right to Housing Approach. The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate Pp 10-28.
https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Overview%20of%20Encampments%20Across%20Canada_EN_1.pdf
- Supplementary Reading: National Indigenous Feminist Housing Working Group. 2022. Homeless on Homelands: Upholding Housing as a Human Right for Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, and Gender Diverse People.
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/573e02ab62cd943531b23633/t/62a91dcb9a491179856bf9d7/1655250380602/EMBARGOED+-+Indigenous-Led+Claim+Submission+to+OFHA+-+June+14+2022%5B65%5D.pdf>

Week 7: November 13th

Cyber Crime, Borders, and Crim-migration

- Fakhrashrafi, Mitra, Kirk, Jessica, Gilbert, Emily. 2019. “Sanctuary Inter/rupted: Borders, Illegalization, and Unbelonging”. *The Canadian Geographer*, 63(1): 84-99.
- Wall, D. S. (2008). Cybercrime, Media, and Insecurity: The Shaping of Public Perceptions of Cybercrime. *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, 22(1-2), 45–63.
- Supplementary Reading: McCarthy, Adrienne and Steinmetz, Kevin. 2020. Chapter 30. “Critical Criminology and Cybercrime” in *The Palgrave Handbook of International Cybercrime and Cyberdeviance*. Pp. 602-616. Palgrave Macmillan: UK.

Week 8: November 20th Podcast Proposal

- Mc Gregor, Deborah. 2018. “Mino-Mnaamodzawin: Achieving Indigenous Environmental Justice in Canada”. *Environment and Society*. Vol 9 (1). Pp 7-24.
- Supplementary Reading: Nurse, Angus. 2017. “Green Criminology: Shining a Critical Lens on Environmental Harm”. Vol 3. (1). Palgrave Communications

Week 9: November 27th

Restorative Practices: Transformational Justice and Mutual Aid Initiatives

- Maree Brown, Adrienne. 2020. Chapter 23. “What is/Isn’t Transformational Justice?” in *Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement*. Edited by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Ejeris Dixon. Chico, CA: AK Press.

- Spade, David. 2020. “Solidarity Not Charity: Mutual Aid for Mobilization and Survival”. Duke University Press. *Social Text*. Vol.38 (1): Pp.131-151.

Week 10: December 4th *Podcast due*

Hate Culture and the Media

- Mercier-Dalphon, Genevieve, Helly, Denise, 2021. “Anti-Muslim Violence, Hate Crime, and Victimization in Canada: A Study of Five Canadian Cities”. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*. Pp 1-22.
- Perry, B., & Olsson, P. (2009). Cyberhate: The Globalization of Hate. *Information & Communications Technology Law*, 18(2), 185–199.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13600830902814984>
- Supplementary Reading: Barker, Kim, Olga Jurasz. 2021. “Online Misogyny as a Hate Crime” in *Misogyny as Hate Crime*. Chapter 4. Routledge: London.

Week 11: December 8th *Final Exam*