

Criminal Justice 496 - Communities and Crime
Spring 2012
Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:00-6:20pm, Tillet 207
Course web page is available on <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>

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Course Overview: Why do some communities have so much more crime than others? What social conditions make it so much more likely for crime and violence to flourish in some neighborhoods while other are relatively free from these problems? How do race, class, and gender inequality play into these differences in crime? And, how do the police and prisons connect with communities to help or hinder the crime problems faced by local areas? In this course, we will address these and other questions to learn about the ways in which crime and violence are connected with various aspects of community context. We will discuss both longstanding theoretical approaches and current research about what causes crime within local communities, what consequences crime and violence have for neighborhoods, and how policing and imprisonment influence crime, violence, and the people who live in areas where these are everyday problems.

Required Texts

Jones, Nikki. 2010. *Between Good and Ghetto: African American Girls and Inner-City Violence*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

All other readings noted on the syllabus are available on the sakai class webpage.

Requirements

1. A written letter of introduction is required of each member of the class. These will provide a way for you to get to know your classmates. The letter is due in class on Monday January 23. The letters will be read to one another in class on that day. This assignment is worth 2% of your course grade.
2. Each student will complete a written review and a presentation of a recent empirical article (that is not assigned for class) on an issue related to communities and crime. You will provide me with your preferences for the topic of this article and I will assign you to topics based upon these requests. The due date for the paper and presentation correspond with the date for the topic as listed below on the course outline and on the article preference sheet that I will pass out. A description of the required content of the paper and presentation will be passed out early in the semester. The article review and presentation count for 10% of your course grade.

3. A written essay providing a critical evaluation and reaction to the book *Between Good and Ghetto* is due in class on the first day that this book is discussed. A description of the required content of this paper will be passed out early in the semester. This assignment is worth 15% of your course grade.
4. Students are required to conduct a research project in which they compare two or more communities in relation to an issue covered in the class. You will then make a presentation to the class reporting on your research question, hypotheses, and findings. Finally, you will write a paper summarizing all of your work. You may work alone or in groups of 2-3 students, but I strongly suggest that you work in a group. A description of the requirements for this project will be passed out early in the semester along with a set of general topics for the project. Students will indicate their preferences for project topics and whether they would like to work in a group. I will assign you to a topic and group based upon these preferences. Note that some in-class planning time will be provided. This assignment is worth 20% of your course grade.
5. One in-class midterm examination will be given during the semester as scheduled on the course outline below. This exam is worth 20% of your course grade.
6. A non-cumulative final examination will be given during the regularly scheduled final examination time. The time of this exam is also noted below on the course outline. This final exam is worth 20% of your course grade.
7. Attendance and active participation is an essential part of this course. This is a small discussion-based class and the success of the course depends upon the active participation of all class members. Attendance and participation are worth 13% of your course grade. If you must miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from someone else in the class and for finding out about any announcements made during class.

Note

No make-up exams or late assignments will be permitted unless you contact me ***PRIOR TO THE EXAM OR THE DUE DATE.***

Academic Misconduct

Academic honesty is a subject that I take very seriously. I encourage all students to familiarize themselves with the Rutgers University policies and procedures on academic honesty, available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>. All violations of academic integrity, for example, cheating in examinations or plagiarizing others' work for your written assignments, will be referred to the appropriate authorities and sanctioned accordingly.

Students With Disabilities

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester. Students with disabilities must be registered with Office of Student Disability Services and must provide verification of their eligibility for such accommodations.

COURSE OUTLINE

The dates provided here are tentative and could change depending on how this class proceeds. In other words, some topics may take a bit more time than indicated below and some may take somewhat less time than indicated here. Any changes in dates, including changes in exam dates will be announced in class. You are responsible for finding out about any announcements made in class.

I. INTRODUCTION: CRIME IN COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Wednesday, January 18 - Introduction to the Course

Monday, January 23 - Patterns of Crime Across Communities

Letter of Introduction due in class.

Wednesday, January 25 - What Is Community? Why Should We Study Crime Within a Community Context?

Reading: Orum, Anthony. 1998. "The Urban Imagination of Sociologists: The Centrality of Place." *Sociological Quarterly* 39:1-10.

II. EXPLAINING COMMUNITY CRIME PATTERNS

Monday, January 30 - Social Disorganization Theory

Reading: Bursik, Robert J., Jr. 2000. "The Systemic Theory of Neighborhood Crime Rates." Pp. 87-103 in *Of Crime and Criminality: The Use of Theory in Everyday Life*, edited by Sally S. Simpson. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Wednesday, February 1 - The Role of Collective Efficacy

Reading: Sampson, Robert J. Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls. "Collective Efficacy and Crime." Pp. 112-117 in *Criminological Theory: Past to Present, Essential Readings*, edited by Francis T. Cullen and Robert Agnew. New York: Oxford University Press.

Monday, February 6 - Informal Social Control, Further Considerations

Reading: Pattillo, Mary. 1998. "Sweet Mothers and Gangbangers: Managing Crime in a Black Middle-Class Neighborhood." *Social Forces* 76: 747-774.

Wednesday, February 8 - No class, project work time

Monday, February 13 - Informal Social Control, The New Parochialism

Reading: Carr, Patrick. 2003. "The New Parochialism: The Implication of the Beltway Case for Arguments Concerning Informal Social Control." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:1249-1291.

Guest speaker, Professor Patrick Carr, Rutgers University.

Wednesday, February 15 - Culture, The Code of the Street

Readings: Anderson, Elijah. 1994. "The Code of the Streets." *The Atlantic Monthly* 273(5):80-94.

Stewart, Eric A. and Ronald L. Simons. 2009. "The Code of the Street and African-American Adolescent Violence." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 223509.

Monday, February 20 - Disorder

Readings: Kelling, George L. and James Q. Wilson. 1982. "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety." *Atlantic Magazine* March:29-38.

Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 2001. "Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods--Does it Lead to Crime?" Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 186049.

Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 2005. "Neighborhood Stigma and the Perception of Disorder." *Focus* 24:7-11.

Wednesday, February 22 - Disorder continued

Sidewalk, film and discussion

Monday, February 27 - Disorder continued

Guest speaker, Professor Andres Rengifo, Rutgers University-Newark.

Wednesday, February 29 - Midterm

III. DIFFERENTIAL PATTERNS

Monday, March 5 & Wednesday, March 7 - Racial Differences in Crime

Readings: Peterson, Ruth D. and Lauren J. Krivo. 2009. "Race, Residence, and Violent Crime: A Structure of Inequality." *Kansas Law Review* 57:903-933.

Monday, March 12 & Wednesday, March 14 - Spring Break, No Class

Monday, March 19 - Wednesday, March 21 - Gender and Violence

Readings: Jones, Nikki. 2010. *Between Good and Ghetto: African American Girls and Inner-City Violence*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Paper on Between Good and Ghetto due in class on Monday, March 19.

March 19 discussion will focus on the introduction - chapter 3.

March 21 discussion will focus on chapter 4 - conclusion.

Monday, March 26 - Gender and Violence in the Inner City

Guest speaker - to be announced.

Wednesday, March 28 - Immigration and Crime in Communities

Readings: Sampson, Robert J. 2008. "Rethinking Crime and Immigration." *Contexts* 7:28-33.

Decker, Scott H., Paul G. Lewis, Doris Marie Provine, Monica W. Varsanyi. 2009. "Immigration and Local Policing: Results from a National Survey of Law Enforcement Executives," Pp. 169-179 (Appendix G) in *The Role of Local Police: Striking a Balance between Immigration Enforcement and Civil Liberties*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.

III. CONNECTIONS OF COMMUNITIES WITH EXTERNAL ACTORS

Monday, April 2 - Neighborhood Investments, Disinvestments, and Crime

Readings: Vélez, María B. 2009. "Banks and the Racial Patterning of Crime: A Study of Chicago Neighborhoods." *The International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 3:154–171.

Guest speaker via skype , Professor María Vélez, University of New Mexico.

Wednesday, April 4 - Policing

Readings: Skogan, Wesley G., Lynn Steiner, Jill DuBois, J. Erik Gudell, and Aimee Fagan. 2002. "Taking Stock: Community Policing in Chicago." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 189909.

Weitzer, Ronald. 2000. "White, Black, or Blue Cops? Race and Citizen Assessments of Police Officers." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 28:313–324.

Monday, April 9 - Police and Youth in Communities

Readings: Brunson, Rod K. and Ronald Weitzer. 2009. "Police Relations with Black and White Youths in Different Urban Neighborhoods." *Urban Affairs Review* 44:858-885.

Solis, Carmen. Edwardo L. Portillos, and Rod K. Brunson. 2009. "Latino Youths' Experiences with and Perceptions of Involuntary Police Encounters." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 623:39-51.

Guest speaker, Professor Rod Brunson, Rutgers University-Newark.

Wednesday, April 11 - The Impact of Incarceration on Communities

Readings: Clear, Todd. 2007. "Chapter 4, Communities, Coercive Mobility, and Public Safety." Pp. 69-91 in *Imprisoning Communities: How Mass Incarceration Makes Disadvantaged Neighborhoods Worse*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sampson, Robert J. & Charles Loeffler. 2010. "Punishment's Place: the Local Concentration of Mass Incarceration." *Dædalus* Summer, 20-31.

Monday, April 16 - Guest speaker - to be announced.

Wednesday, April 18 - No class, Final Preparation time for Research Project Presentations

Monday, April 23 - Research Project Presentations

Wednesday, April 25 - Research Project Presentations

Monday, April 30 - Research Project Presentations and Review for Final Exam

FRIDAY MAY 4 FINAL EXAM - 4:00pm-7:00pm in the regular classroom