SO 3510-01, Criminal Violence

Instructor: Dr. Lee
Meeting Time and Place: Fall 2009, T, TH 1:30-3:00 pm, 120 Tureaud Hall
Office: 106c Stubbs Hall
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Office Hours: T, TH 9:00-10:30 and by appointment. To schedule an appointment, see me before class, after class, or send an email.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

Whether we are cognizant of it or not, violence affects every one of us either directly or indirectly. It can affect us directly when we are the perpetrator or the victim of violent actions. It can affect us indirectly when someone we know or care about is the victim of a violent act, or when we alter our daily behavior patterns because of fear of being the victim of violence. This course, Criminal Violence, is intended to provide an in-depth introduction to the major issues surrounding the study of criminal violence in American society. We will focus on the following issues.

Learning Objectives

1. Definitions of violence, common myths surrounding violence, the social construction of violence as a public problem, and the varieties of violent behavior.

2. The prevalence of violent index crimes (homicide, robbery, rape, and assault), and their temporal and spatial variation.

3. Issues surrounding the context of violence, such as family violence, workplace violence, relational distance and violence, drug markets and violence, and the role of firearms in violence.

4. Theoretical explanations of violence.

Course Materials

The following materials are required for this class. They are available at the University bookstore located in the Student Union. They may also be available through independent off-campus bookstores and through web based outlets.


**Please note that selected readings may also be required from time to time. You will be notified in advance of these readings and where to secure them.

Format

The classroom format for this course will consist of a mix of lecture and classroom discussion. We may also engage in class projects that require your attendance, and watch some videos on relevant topics. Students are expected to come to class having read the relevant
material for that day, and be prepared to contribute to class discussions. Note that this is also a highly recommendable learning tactic. Your mastery and retention of class material will be significantly enhanced if you 1) read the material and take good notes on it before you come to class, 2) come to class and take good notes, and 3) after class, spend even a few minutes reviewing the material most recently covered. This strategy will prepare you for the examinations much more efficiently than cramming the material the evening before the test.

Tests
There will be two in-class essay style exams. Each test is worth 42.5% of your final grade.

Quizzes
Unannounced quizzes will also be given at the beginning of some classes. These will sum to a total of 15% percentage points for your final grade. The content of the quizzes will be information from the previous class. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

Attendance and Other Issues
It is generally expected that students attend class. When attending class it is not acceptable to bring people who are not officially enrolled in class with you (i.e. children, spouses, friends, cousins, aunts and uncles, grandparents, etc.). Pets are also not allowed in the classroom. The University has an attendance policy with which you should be familiar.

Laptop computers, cell phones, text messaging devices, and other electronic media that make noise or have the potential to distract me or your classmates must be turned off and put away during class. The only exception to this is emergency personnel, such as EMT’s, fire or police professionals, etc. Students who fall into this category should notify me at the beginning of the semester. Failure to comply will result in dismissal from class, and multiple infractions may result in referral to the dean of students. Chronic tardiness is not acceptable.

Makeup Tests
If you miss a test, documentation of a legitimate excuse must be provided. Legitimate excuses are outlined in the student handbook, and are generally related to death (your own or an immediate family member), or serious illness (your own), severe weather, or athletic obligations. Proper documentation must be provided. In order to qualify for a makeup exam you must notify me within 24 hours after the beginning of the test period. Failure to do so may disqualify you from taking a makeup. It is your responsibility to arrange this with me.

Grading Scale
The grading scale for this class is as follows:
A=91-100
B=81-90
C=71-80
D=61-70
F=0-60
Tentative Coursework and Reading Schedule
Below is tentative reading schedule to help keep you on track. By way of your classroom attendance it should be fairly clear to you where we are in the readings at any given time. It may be the case that I assign additional readings. You will be notified of these. Also, you can expect the lectures to be a mix of information from the textbook and from additional sources, so it is really necessary to make sure you attend class.

Week 1: Chapter 1
Week 2: Chapter 2
Week 3: Chapter 3
Week 4: Chapter 4
Week 5: Chapter 4
Week 6: Chapter 4/5
Week 7: Chapter 5
Week 8: Chapter 6 and Mid Term Exam
Week 9: Chapter 7, 8
Week 10: Chapter 9
Week 11: Chapter 9
Week 12: Chapter 10, 11
Week 13: Chapter 12, 13
Week 14: Chapter 14
Week 15: Chapter 14/17

Examination Schedule
Mid-Term Examination: Tentatively Scheduled for October 15th,
Final Examination: Wednesday December 9th, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Extra Credit
There are no extra credit points available for this class.