

SOCI 434 A01¹

Issues in Deviance, Crime, Law, and/or Social Control

Instructor: Dr. Tamara Humphrey

Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the development of crime over the life course. We will consider the factors that impact offending over the life span and consider such questions as: Why do people begin committing crimes? Can we predict with any certainty who will start offending and when? Can we distinguish between offenders who commit violent offenses and those who commit non-violent crimes? Do individuals ever stop committing crimes? Why might lifelong “criminals” stop offending? These questions will be examined using major theoretical perspectives in criminology such as developmental and life course theories of crime, low self-control theory, general strain theory as well as criminal justice system responses to offending.

Empirical research along with case studies of individuals who have committed serious offenses over a lengthy period of time will also be used in this course as a way to engage with various theories and assess how well theories of crime fit the reality of offending. This course may also incorporate a community engaged learning component through a partnership with a community organization. By the end of the course, students will gain an understanding of the development of crime over the life span. Students will also be able to critically assess theoretical arguments and illustrate whether empirical research and real life examples support key claims that have been made within the field of criminology.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

Minimum third-year standing; and declared Honours or Major in Sociology; or permission of the Department.

Required Textbook

There is no assigned textbook for this class. Readings will be comprised primarily of peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

¹ This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.