

## Department of Sociology

SOCI 3630: Drugs, Crime and Society

Monday/Wednesday 2:00-3:20 pm

Life Sciences Building Rm A106

Instructor: Kevin McCaffree, PhD

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**Office**: 288b Sycamore Hall

**Office Hours**: Monday/Wednesday 3:30-4:30pm (Zoom by appt)

In this course you will learn about cutting edge and controversial issues within the field of criminology, with a special focus on the issues of drugs use, drug-related crime and incarceration. More specifically, the objectives of this course are to introduce you to:

* the criminological theories most widely used by researchers.
* current national data trends around drug use
* controversies and debates about drug classification, drug use, drug-related crime and drug policy.
* real-world application of theory

**Books for the course:**

1. Ronald Akers, Christine Sellers and Wesley Jennings. 2021. Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application. 8th Edition.
   * To save money, any addition 2016 or after is fine, but if you are going this route, remember: chapter numbers differ from edition to edition, so adhere to chapter titles/content, not chapter numbers)
2. Michael L. Birzer and Paul Cromwell. 2016. In Their Own Words: Criminals on Crime. Oxford University Press.
3. Carl Hart. 2021. Drug Use for Grownups. Penguin press.
4. Patrick Keefe. 2021. Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty. ISBN: 978-0385545686. Doubleday Press.

Grading:

Attendance and Participation:

Around half of the exam questions will be drawn from lecture material, and half will be drawn from assigned readings. I will in some instances cover readings in class, but for the most part, lectures will cover new material.

Attendance is not required, because I don’t want you to come if you don’t want to come. But I’ll eventually learn who comes and who doesn’t, who participates and who doesn’t. Regular participation in class can positively influence the final grade you receive at the end of the semester.

Powerpoints will not/cannot be posted on Canvas (copyright).

Exams:

There will be two exams in this course, a midterm and a final.

Both your midterm and final will be a combination of multiple choice and short-answer questions which will require you to reflect on and synthesize material from class lecture and assigned readings.

These exams are open-book, and given their difficulty, study group collaboration is encouraged.

The midterm will be administered onlinevia the CANVAS course site (visit [https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)), during the date and time we would normally meet for class (see course calendar below).

The midterm and final exam are worth 100 points each for a total of 200 points possible.

To be as fair as possible to everyone, NO makeup exams will be available without verifiable evidence of a documented medical emergency.

Grading Scale:

A = 90 to 100% of 200 possible points (+ possible extra credit for attendance and participation)

B = 80 to 89%

C = 70 to 79%

D = 60 to 69%

F = Below 60%

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with UNT’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism, copying, cheating, or giving assistance to other students during examinations is a violation of academic integrity. Cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. Note that any and all work submitted in order to meet the requirements of this course must be originally created for this course. In other words, you may not turn in anything submitted for another course and/or section of this course you have previously taken.

University Policy 06.003 states, “UNT promotes the integrity of learning processed and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the university. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the university’s actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.”

For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, as well as tips on citing your resources, visit [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org/). If you require clarification on what counts as academic dishonesty, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor of the course.

Academic Accommodations:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu/).

Course Schedule\*:

**Week 1:** 8/21, 8/23 **Topic:** Introduction and Overview

* Introduction
* Overview of the course (Q & A)
* General Discussion: addiction, crime and incarceration

**Week 2:** 8/28, 8/30 **Topic:** “Bonding/Control” Theories of Crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapter 6

**Week 3:** 9/4, 9/6 **Topic:** “Social Disorganization”/ “Strain” Theories of Crime

* Class Canceled Monday for Labor Day
* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapters 8 and 9

**Week 4:** 9/11, 9/13 **Topic:** “Deterrence”/ “Social Learning” Theories of Crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapters, 2 and 5

**Week 5:** 9/18, 9/20 **Topic:** “Labeling” Theories of crime

* Akers, Sellers and Jennings, Chapter 7
* Birzer and Cromwell, Chapter 7

**Week 6:** 9/25, 9/27 **Topic:** The Social Psychology of Identity and Addiction

* Birzer and Cromwell, Chapter 22, Chapter 23

**Week 7:** 10/2, 10/4 **Topic:** Selling Drugs as a Business

* Birzer and Cromwell Chapter 14-15, Chapter 17, Chapter 21

**Week 8:** 10/9, 10/11 **Topic:** Selling Drugs as a Business

* Birzer and Cromwell Chapter 11, Chapter 13, Chapter 20
* **Midterm 10/11**

**Week 9:** 10/16, 10/18 **Topic:** The “War” on Drugs

* Hart, Chapters 3-6

**Week 10:** 10/23, 10/25 **Topic:** The “War” on Drugs

* Hart, Chapters 7-9

**Week 11:** 10/30, 11/1 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic

* Keefe, pgs. 143-204

**Week 12:** 11/6, 11/8 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic

* Keefe, pgs. 205-288

**Week 13:** 11/13, 11/15 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic and a Crisis of Meaning?

* Keefe, pgs. 289-362

**Week 14:** 11/20, 11/22 **Topic:** Thanksgiving Break—Classes Canceled

**Week 15:** 11/27, 11/29 **Topic:** The Opioid Epidemic and a Crisis of Meaning?

* Keefe, pgs. 363-434

**Week 16:** 12/4, 12/6 **Topic:** Open (Q&A; Final Exam Review)

* Hart, Chapter 10

**Week 17 (Finals Week, 12/11-12/15)**

**December 11th 1:30-3:30pm**

\*This syllabus, with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications posted on the CANVAS site ([https://unt.instructure.com](https://unt.instructure.com/)) for this course.