

**SOCI2116/UGEC2983: Criminals and the Law**  
**2021/22 Second Term**  
**ELB LT4**  
**Thursday 3:30pm-6:15pm**

Course Instructor: Prof. ZHONG Hua (Sara)  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Students enrolled in this cross-disciplinary course will address three basic questions: “why people become criminals”, “who makes criminal law”, and “how criminal law is enforced”. Specifically, this course will include topics such as the social causes of criminal behavior, the role of criminal law in social control, and the operation of the criminal justice system (their internal interaction and external interaction with other social organizations). Comparative and local empirical research will also be drawn to explore the crime problems and the development of criminal law and criminal justice system in PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States. In addition, to strengthen the students’ understandings on the “injustice” of current criminal justice system, students will be given one field opportunity to directly experience police departments, courts or prisons in Hong Kong. Several guest lectures conducted by legal practitioners will also be arranged.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Gain an understanding of major data sources, methodological approaches and issues in the study of crime, law and criminal justice;
2. Gain familiarity with diverse patterns and types of crime in the United States, mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and their connection to processes of stratification and social control in the larger society;
3. Gain an understanding of the major theories of crime, law and criminal justice and be able to apply them in the student’s “hometown” community.
4. Develop analytical and critical-thinking skills through the application of concepts and theories, as well as a broadened and more appreciative view of self and the society in which we live.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via the plagiarism detection engine VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students’ uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

Akers, Ronald L, Christine S. Sellers and Wesley G. Jennings. 2017. *Criminological Theories* (7th ed.). NY: Oxford University Press.

Vago, Steven and Steven Barkan. 2017. *Law and Society* (11th edition). New York, NY: Routledge.

## **RECOMMENDED READINGS**

### *On Crime:*

Steffensmeier, Darrell, Hua Zhong & Yunmei Lu. 2017. "Age and its relation to crime in Taiwan and the United States: invariant, or does cultural context matter?" *Criminology* 55(2): 377-404.

Wells, J., Armstrong, T., Boisvert, D., Lewis, R., Gangitano, D., & Hughes-Stamm, S. 2017. "Stress, genes, and generalizability across gender: Effects of MAOA and stress sensitivity on crime and delinquency". *Criminology* 55(3): 548-574.

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives (Chapter 3)*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Broadhurst, Roderic G. 2004. "Crime Trends in Hong Kong: Another Look at the Safe City". In Broadhurst, Roderic G. (Ed.) *Crime and its Control in PR China: Proceedings of the Annual Symposium 2000-2002*: 133-149. Hong Kong: Centre for Criminology, University of Hong Kong. [http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5386/1/5386\\_1.pdf](http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5386/1/5386_1.pdf)

Steven F. Messner, Jianhong Liu, and Susanne Karstedt. 2008. "Economic Reform and Crime in Contemporary China: Paradoxes of a Planned Transition." Pp. 271-293 in *Urban China in Transition*, edited by John R. Logan. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Steffensmeier, Darrell and Jeffery T. Ulmer. 2004. *Confessions of a dying thief: understanding criminal careers and illegal enterprise (Chapter 1&19)*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Zhang, Sheldon and Ko-Lin Chin. 2002. "Enter the dragon: Inside Chinese human smuggling organizations." *Criminology* 40: 737-767.

### *On Law and Criminal Justice:*

Kurlychek, Megan C., and Brian D. Johnson. 2019. "Cumulative disadvantage in the American criminal justice system." *Annual Review of Criminology* 2: 291-319.

Kuo, S., Cuvelier, S. J., Sheu, C., & Chang, K. 2012. Crime reporting behavior and black's behavior of law. *International Sociology* 27(1): 51-71.

Reiman, Jeffrey and Paul Leighton. 2016 (11th ed.). *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison* (Chapter 4). Routledge.

Unger, Roberto Mangabeira. 1976. *Law in modern society: toward a criticism of social theory (Chapter 2)*. New York: Free Press.

Craig, Susan Clark. 2014. "Rehabilitation versus control: An organizational theory of prison management." *The Prison Journal* 84.4 suppl: 92S-114S.

Feeley, Malcolm M., and Simon, Jonathan. 1992. "The new penology: notes on the emerging

strategy of corrections and its implications”. *Criminology* 39 (4): 449-474.

Klinger, David A. 1997. “Negotiating order in patrol work: an ecological theory of police response to deviance”. *Criminology* 35: 277-306.

Sun, Ivan, Wu, Yuning, Hu, Rong, & Farmer, Ashley. 2017. “Procedural justice, legitimacy, and public cooperation with police: Does Western wisdom hold in China?” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 54: 454-478.

Ulmer, J. T., & Johnson, B. 2004. “Sentencing in Context: a multilevel analysis”. *Criminology* 42(1): 137-177.

Posner, Richard A. 2010. *How Judges Think* (pages 19-56). Harvard University Press.

## **TEACHING SCHEDULE**

### **Topic 1 (Jan 13): Introduction to Criminology, Sociology of Law, and Criminal Justice—subject matters and research questions**

*Corresponding Reading:*  
Vago Chapter 9

Zoom: <https://cuhk.zoom.us/j/96262239655?pwd=amM5MzUxOTJJYmowQ1IGRVZzZmZBOz09>

### **Topic 2 (Jan 20): Types of crime, crime patterns, and crime statistics (official data, self-report data, and victimization data)**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Wells, J., Armstrong, T., Boisvert, D., Lewis, R., Gangitano, D., & Hughes-Stamm, S. 2017. “Stress, genes, and generalizability across gender: Effects of MAOA and stress sensitivity on crime and delinquency”. *Criminology* 55(3): 548-574.

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives* (Chapter 3). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Steffensmeier, Darrell, Hua Zhong & Yunmei Lu. 2017. “Age and its relation to crime in Taiwan and the United States: invariant, or does cultural context matter?” *Criminology* 55(2): 377-404.

### **Topic 3 (Jan 27): Organization of crime**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Steffensmeier, Darrell and Jeffery T. Ulmer. 2004. *Confessions of a dying thief: understanding criminal careers and illegal enterprise (Chapter 1&19)*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Zhang, Sheldon and Ko-Lin Chin. 2002. “Enter the dragon: Inside Chinese human smuggling organizations” *Criminology* 40: 737-767.

### **Topic 4 (Feb 10): Social change and crime trends**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Steven F. Messner, Jianhong Liu, and Susanne Karstedt. 2008. “Economic Reform and Crime in Contemporary China: Paradoxes of a Planned Transition.” Pp. 271-293 in *Urban China in Transition*, edited by John R. Logan. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Broadhurst, Roderic G. 2004. “Crime Trends in Hong Kong: Another Look at the Safe City”. In Broadhurst, Roderic G. (Ed.) *Crime and its Control in PR China: Proceedings of the Annual Symposium 2000-2002*: 133-149. Hong Kong: Centre for Criminology, University of Hong Kong. [http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5386/1/5386\\_1.pdf](http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5386/1/5386_1.pdf)

**Topic 5 (Feb 17 & Feb 24): Theories to explain crime and criminals**

*Corresponding Reading:* Akers and Sellers Chapter 5-8

**Topic 6 (March 3): Classical Thoughts on Law and Society**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Vago Chapter 1 & 2

Unger, Roberto Mangabeira. 1976. *Law in modern society: toward a criticism of social theory* (Chapter 2). New York: Free Press.

**Topic 7 (March 10): Law-Making and Law-Processing**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Vago Chapter 7

Reiman, Jeffrey and Paul Leighton. 2016 (11th ed.). *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison* (Chapter 4). Routledge.

Kuo, S., Cuvelier, S. J., Sheu, C., & Chang, K. 2012. Crime reporting behavior and black's behavior of law. *International Sociology* 27(1): 51-71.

Kurlychek, Megan C., and Brian D. Johnson. 2019. "Cumulative disadvantage in the American criminal justice system." *Annual Review of Criminology* 2: 291-319.

**Topic 8 (March 17): Police--operation, theories and research**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Klinger, David A. 1997. "Negotiating order in patrol work: an ecological theory of police response to deviance". *Criminology* 35: 277-306.

Sun, Ivan, Wu, Yuning, Hu, Rong, & Farmer, Ashley. 2017. "Procedural justice, legitimacy, and public cooperation with police: Does Western wisdom hold in China?" *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 54: 454-478.

**Topic 9 (March 24 & March 31): Courts—operation, theories and research**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Ulmer, J. T., & Johnson, B. 2004. "Sentencing in Context: a multilevel analysis". *Criminology* 42(1): 137-177.

Posner, Richard A. 2010. *How Judges Think* (pages 19-56). Harvard University Press.

(the week of March 24 would be used for our court visit; no class)

**Topic 10 (April 14th): Correction--operation, theories and research**

*Corresponding Reading:*

Craig, Susan Clark. 2014. "Rehabilitation versus control: An organizational theory of prison management." *The Prison Journal* 84.4 suppl: 92S-114S.

Feeley, Malcolm M., and Simon, Jonathan. 1992. "The new penology: notes on the emerging strategy of corrections and its implications". *Criminology* 39 (4): 449-474.

**In-Class Exam: April 21**

**COURSE REQUIREMENT**

(1) About six class discussions (after watching some video clips or doing some other class activities

relevant to recent class materials) will be conducted in class. Students are required to turn in their answers on discussion questions. One field trip (tentatively) and one guest lecture (tentatively) will be arranged. Students also need to answer corresponding questions after the field trip and the guest lecture.

(2) Students should choose two of the recommended readings (one is about crime/criminals and the other is about law or criminal justice system); then briefly summarize and evaluate the readings. The first article/book critique will due on March 3rd, 2022 (before midnight) and the deadline for the second one is April 17, 2022 (before midnight). For instance, you could compare/contrast this reading with the required reading; or you could identify at least one theoretical, methodological, or ideological point you want to make or question for the reading. These should be **not less than two and not more than four typed pages in length (double space and font size 12)**. A **soft copy** with the VeriGuide receipt should be submitted to Blackboard on time. Late submission will receive grade deduction (one point per day). The goal of the assignment is to provide an incentive for students to read and critically think about more materials.

(3) There will be one closed-book in-class exam on April 21, including MC questions and essay questions. It would last for two hours. The content of the required readings and lecture notes will be included in the exam.

### **GRADING POLICY**

Discussion Questions, 20% (2 points for each discussion, plus 2 points for the field visit **participation**)

Article/Book Critiques, 40% (20 points each)

In-Class Exam, 40% (100 points)

*The grade descriptors for this course are as follows:*

Grade A: Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.

Grade A-: Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.

Grade B: Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.

Grade C: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.

Grade D: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.

Grade F: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirement.

### **REMARKS**

1. Weekly lecture notes and discussion summaries will be uploaded to Blackboard on every Wednesday (since the third week).
2. All Books would be reserved at CC and/or UL. All Articles can be found online.