Sociology 368Y: Violence in America  
Summer B 2016

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office hours: Tuesday 2:50-4:00, Thursday 10:30-11:30, and by appointment.  
I am also available on a daily basis via e-mail and by appointment via Skype (amie.nielsen2).

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this class, issues relevant to the study of violence in the United States will be covered. While the emphasis throughout will be on street violence (i.e., homicide, robbery, rape, and aggravated assault), other forms (e.g., corporate violence, intimate partner violence) will also be covered. In particular, we will: Examine violence in historical, international, and situational contexts, examine the major explanations of violence, and examine the factors associated with violent crime. We will also consider how we seek to control violence in the U.S.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course, students will be knowledgeable about:
- the extent, nature, and trends in violence in the U.S. as well as how violence in America compares to other countries  
- how and what we know about violence in the U.S.  
- the situational and contextual elements involved in many forms of violence  
- major theoretical explanations for violence  
- major correlates of violence, especially at the macro level  
- other forms of violence, such as intimate partner violence and terrorism  
- how the U.S. seeks to control violence

REQUIRED TEXTS  


Both of the books should be purchased (e.g., through Amazon). Additional course readings (chapters and articles) are available through links in each of the modules. The full citations for these readings are listed on the last two pages of this document.
GRADING

There are two components that comprise the final grade in this course. These include four exams (40% total; each is worth 10%; 400 total points) and assignments, discussions, and essays (60% total; 600 total points). For the assignments, discussions and essays, the point value of each is indicated in Blackboard. Late materials submitted (i.e., not within the timeframe of each module) will have 20% of possible points deducted before being graded.

There are four exams in this course. The exams include the material covered in that section of the course. The exams are both multiple choice and essay questions; questions are derived approximately equally from the readings and from lecture/text. Exams must be taken by the last day of the module; failure to do so results in the grade of 0 on the exam. With the exception of having a documented, University-approved reason students MUST be submit the exam by the end of the module unless extreme, documented circumstances prevent it. I determine whether a situation meets the standard of “extreme.” Unless circumstances completely preclude this, students MUST contact me within 24 hours of a missed exam to earn consideration for a make-up exam to be administered. In the event of a University-approved reason for missing an exam, the make-up exam must be taken within two school days of your return.

The approximate grading ranges are as follows: A=900-1000, B=800-899, C=700-799, D=600-699, F=below 600. The range includes pluses and minuses as well as the full letter grade (e.g., A- begins at 900). Pluses and minuses are used for the final grade. No curve will be used on the individual exams. A curve may be applied to the final course grade.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Any student who engages in academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty), as defined and discussed in the Student Honor Code, will face the most severe penalty possible. At a minimum, students will fail the course and will face prosecution under the Honor Code.

TOPICS/READINGS

All readings should be completed during the module. RR indicates that the reading is available through Blackboard and/or Reserve Readings, and text refers to a book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: Violence in Comparative Perspective</td>
<td>RR: Brown;</td>
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June 27 – July 1
Module 2: Measuring Street Violence in the Contemporary U.S.

July 2 – 6

Extent and Nature of Violence

Discussion of Rodriguez

EXAM 1 (by 11:59 p.m. on 7/6)

Module 3: Situational Context of Violence

July 7 – 11

Street Violence in Social Context

EXAM 2 (by 11:59 p.m. on 7/16)

Module 4: Sociological Theoretical Explanations for Violence

July 12 – 16

Module 5: Correlates of Violence

July 17 – 21

Economic Factors

Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Drugs and Alcohol

EXAM 1 (by 11:59 p.m. on 7/6)
Module 6: Other Types of Violence (1)

July 22 – 26

Gender Issues (including intimate partner violence and rape)  RR: Martin & Hummer


EXAM 3 (by 11:59 p.m. on 7/26)

Module 7: Other Types of Violence (2)

July 27 – 31

Corporate Violence  RR: Lee & Ermann

Terrorism  RR: LaFree & Ackerman

Module 8: Societal Responses to Violence

Aug. 1 - Aug. 5

Criminal Justice and Violence  RR: Morenoff & Harding  RR: Ackerman et al.

EXAM 4 (by 11:59 p.m. on 8/5)**

Note: ** The last quarter of the course is shorter in length than the other three quarters.

RESERVE READINGS


Decker, Scott H., Chris Melde, and David C. Pyrooz. 2013. What Do We Know About Gangs and Gang Members and Where Do We Go From Here? *Justice Quarterly* 30: 369-402.


