

**SOC 423**  
**Crime and Public Policy**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Fridays, 9:00-11:50**  
**T B 117**

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Readings: Available for download through the University of Alberta library catalogue.

**Welcome to Crime and Public Policy!**

*About this course*

Social responses to criminal behaviour, including general public attitudes and government legislation. Topics include police strategies; sentencing options; prediction research, and social prevention.

Prerequisites: SOC 225 or consent of instructor.

In this class, we will use corporate and white collar crime as a lens to examine social responses to criminal behaviour. We will examine the representation of white collar crime in public discourse and the media, as well as attempts to control criminality through legal and regulatory means. We will use the topics of white collar and corporate crime to consider how crimes are framed as a public problem and thus how social institutions and actors in the legal system should respond to crime. The substantive focus in this course is on white collar crime and corporate crime; we will use this topic to explore themes and issues related to crime and public policy in Canada and the world.

**Course and University Policies**

Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

Please note: Students are expected to be aware of their academic responsibilities. This section contains important information but does not exhaust your responsibilities.

**Academic Integrity**

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> ) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

### **Learning and working environment**

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Student Ombuds Office: (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/> ). Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at

<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110>.

### **Academic Honesty:**

**All students** should consult the information provided by the [Office of Student Judicial Affairs](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

### **Recording of Lectures:**

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

### **Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:**

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [23.3\(1\)](#) and [23.5.6](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will

result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

### **Email**

Email is great for communicating simple information, but extended conversations should be conducted face to face. I generally reply to email inquiries from students within 48 hours, and do not reply on weekends. If you do not receive a reply within this period, please resubmit your question(s). Please note that some commercial servers can be unreliable in both sending and receiving messages. For a speedy response, you must use the university email address assigned to you. Please be sure that your email correspondence is professional.

### **Policy for Late Assignments:**

All assignments are due in class prior to the beginning of lecture. Any assignment that is not submitted in hard copy is subject to 10% deduction on the first day, and 5% each day thereafter, including weekends. No late assignments will be accepted after five days have elapsed.

### **Student Accessibility Services (SAS):**

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with SAS, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB [www.ssds.ualberta.ca](http://www.ssds.ualberta.ca)).

### **Absence from Term Work or Midterm Exams**

Approval for an excused absence from term work (e.g., class presentations, assignments, quizzes, papers, reports, or term examinations) is at the discretion of the instructor, per the Calendar §23.3.

As a student in this course, you are expected to complete all assignments as outlined in this syllabus.

Students are required to contact the instructor within two working days following the missed exam or term work (or as soon as the student is able, with regard to the circumstances) to apply for an excused absence. Excused absences are not automatic and are at the discretion of the instructor, who may request supporting documents as follows:

For incapacitating medical illness, students can present one of the following:

- “University of Alberta Medical Statement” signed by a doctor (this cannot be required, but must be accepted if provided in lieu of other documents).
- “Medical Declaration Form for Students” (for Faculty of Arts students).
- Statutory Declaration” (for students in Faculties other than Arts, to be obtained from home Faculty or the Office of the Registrar).

- For all other cases, such as domestic afflictions or religious convictions, the student should submit appropriate documentation to the situation. This could include the following:
  - For a death in the family – a copy of the death certificate
  - For a religious conflict – a letter from the church or pastor
  - For a car accident – a copy of the accident report
  - For other serious afflictions – consult with Instructor or Department about appropriate.

**Please note: no course materials will be posted on eClass.** In the case that a student should miss lecture, it is the student’s responsibility to obtain lecture notes from a classmate.

**General Expectations**

- Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off at all times during lectures and tests. Use of electronic devices other than laptops for taking notes is not allowed. Students using electronic media in a disruptive manner will be asked to turn their devices off and may be asked to leave class.
- Please be courteous to your classmates and avoid disruptive behaviours such as leaving early, arriving late, chatting during lecture, and so on.
- During tests, you must wait to leave until 30 minutes has elapsed.
- If you have a question, stick up your hand! The worst question is the one that goes unasked.
- You should feel free to see me or ask me any questions about the course. However, I will not reply to emails asking for information covered in the course syllabus, including requests for lecture notes, due dates, or other course policies.
- No grades will be sent via email, per University of Alberta policy. Grades will be posted on eClass *after* the relevant course work has been handed back to students.

**How Will I Earn My Grade?**

Item	Date	Value
Participation	Weekly	15%
Presentation	TBD	15%
Presentation outline	48 hours prior to presentation (9:00 AM, preceding Wednesday)	5%
Short writing assignment	September 25, 2015	10%
Midterm Test	October 2, 2015	20%
Take-home final	December 18, 2015, no later than 12:00 PM (email submission allowed).	35%

Please note: there are no bonus assignments available in this class.

### *Participation*

Your grade will be assessed at 15% of your final grade. For each lecture, you will submit a discussion of 2-3 pages (see “Assignment Submission Standards” below) that will encompass the readings assigned for that class. You must submit this at the beginning of class. This assignment will be graded on a 0-1-2 scale. This assignment should not simply summarize the readings, but rather discuss how they fit together and relate to the theme of the week.

### *Presentation and Outline*

You and a small group of your classmates will facilitate class discussion on white collar and corporate crime law and policy. Students will sign up for presentations on the first day of class; any students who join the class will be assigned a slot thereafter. Each group will have the final hour of lecture to use for presentation and discussion time.

This presentation is not to be a summary of the articles, but rather, is designed to stimulate debate on a weekly topic. This is your chance to bring something new to the class. You might bring in a news article to provide us with a starting point to discuss the day’s topic; you might bring in a clip from a movie or share with us professional experience that can help us all talk about the ideas of the day. Your group’s presentation will last approximately one hour. Your grade will be based on the outline of your presentation, which is due 48 hours before your presentation (9:00 AM on the preceding Wednesday, via electronic submission) and on the execution of your presentation. While you are presenting in a group, you will be graded based on your specific contribution. Your presentation should draw on the theme of the lecture and stimulate discussion that links the week’s materials with your new information. The goal of this assignment is for you to share new knowledge with the class and to foster a lively discussion on issues related to the themes of the course. How you structure this is up to you: you may wish to play a game; you may wish to have breakout/small group discussions and then have a larger discussion involving the class; you may wish to directly ask discussion questions of the class.

Your outline should be 1-2 pages in length. You can submit this in point form if you wish; the purpose of this is to help me ensure that you are on the right track with your presentation.

### *Midterm Test*

This test will cover all material assigned until October 2, 2015. More details regarding the format of this test will be provided closer to the test date.

### *Take Home Test*

This test will cover all material assigned as of the midterm. No outside research will be required, and all required material will be provided to you. This test is open-book, but it

is not open-friend: do not consult anyone other than your instructor during the course of this test. The test will only require your focused attention over a 24-hour period, however, you will have one week to complete it. You may hand it in any time you like prior to December 18, 2015, at 12:00 PM. More details will be provided closer to the test date.

*Assignment submission standards*

All assignments must be submitted in hard copy at 9:00 AM on the due date. Late assignments are subject to a grade deduction as outlined above. Assignments must be double-spaced, printed single-sided, typed in Calibri or Times New Roman 12-point font. Margins must be standard (one inch). Students are responsible for retaining copies of their assignments. Assignments that diverge from this will be penalized 3%.

**Please do not submit any work with your name on it. Please use only your student number.** (Note: this does not apply to your outline.)

**Grading**

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below. The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

<b>Sociology Undergraduate Grading Scale</b>			
Description	Percentage	Grade	Grade Point Value
Excellent	90-100	A+	4.0
	86-89	A	4.0
	82-85	A-	3.7
Good	78-81	B+	3.3
	74-77	B	3.0
	70-73	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	66-69	C+	2.3
	62-65	C	2.0
	58-61	C-	1.7
Poor	54-57	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	50-53	D	1.0
Fail	0-49	F	0.0

*Request for Reevaluation of Assignments*

The professor is willing to reconsider grades for all components of the course **if there is sound basis for why the previous grade was in error.** Students must outline in writing the reason(s) they believe their work deserves a better grade. Requests for reevaluation of a grade must be submitted to the instructor no more than five days after the graded assignment was first made available to the class. Any resubmitted work must be submitted in its graded form (i.e., not a fresh copy). Any resubmitted work will be completely reevaluated, which means that there could be a reduction in the grade

assessed if it is determined that errors were made in the evaluation of that work in favour of other sections of the work.

The following are **not** acceptable reasons for requesting a reevaluation of your mark and will not be considered:

- A statement such as, “I think my paper deserved a higher grade” without further logical support.
- A statement such as, “I worked very hard.” It is expected that all students will work diligently to achieve their best.
- A statement such as, “I need a higher grade to go to graduate school/law school/retain my scholarship.”
- “Why did I receive a 70 when you said my work was good?” A 70 is defined as “good” in the grade scale above.

### Schedule of Topics

Date	Topic	Notes
Sept 4	Introduction to white collar and corporate crime and public policy	
Sept 11	Media, crime, and public policy	
Sept 18	Economic policy: Capitalism and crime	Presentations
Sept 25	Legal personhood	Presentations
Oct 2	Midterm Test	
Oct 9	Regulatory approaches	Presentations
Oct 16	Critical approaches to corporate crime	Presentations
Oct 23	Constructing offenders	
Oct 30	Problematizing ‘victimhood’	Presentations
Nov 6	Policing and prosecuting offenders	Presentations
Nov 13	Reading week	Reading Week
Nov 20	Transnational crime policy	
Nov 27	In-class workshop	
Dec 4	Take home Final	

This schedule is set at the discretion of the instructor, and may be subject to change. Every effort will be made to ensure that students are notified as early as possible.

## Schedule of Readings

### Sept 4 Introduction to white collar and corporate crime and public policy

Braithwaite, J. (1985). White collar crime. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1-25.

Hagan, J. (1994). White Collar Crime in a Global Economy, in *Crime and Disrepute*. Pine Forge Press: pp. 101-137.

How Stuff Works. 2012 July 24. "How White Collar Crime Works". <http://www.howstuffworks.com>. Podcast.

### Sept 11 Media, crime, and public policy

Ericson, R. (1998) "How Journalists Visualize Fact". AAPSS 560: 83.

Levi, M. (2006). The media construction of financial white-collar crimes. *British Journal of Criminology*, 46(6), 1037-1057.

Williams, J. W. (2008). The lessons of 'Enron' Media accounts, corporate crimes, and financial markets. *Theoretical Criminology*, 12(4), 471-499.

### Sept 18 Economic policy: Capitalism and crime

Friedrichs, David. 2009. "Exorbitant CEO compensation: just reward or grand theft?" *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 51(1), 45-72.

Spritzer, Steven. 1975. "Toward a Marxian theory of deviance." *Social Problems*. 22(5), 638- 651.

Snider, L. (2001). Crimes against capital: Discovering theft of time. *Social Justice*, 105-120.

### Sept 25 Legal personhood

Walt, S., & Laufer, W. S. (1990). Why Personhood Doesn't Matter: Corporate Criminal Liability and Sanctions. *Am. J. Crim. L.*, 18, 263.

Thoennes, K. J. (2004). Frankenstein incorporated: The rise of corporate power and personhood in the United States. *Hamline L. Rev.*, 28, 203.

Stuff You Should Know. 2008 November 20. "How Corporate Personhood Works". <http://www.howstuffworks.com>. Podcast.

**Oct 2            Midterm Test**

**Oct 9            Regulation**

Bakan, J. (2004). "Business as Usual" in *The Corporation*. Penguin: pp.28-59.

Clinard, M. & P. Yeager (2006). *The Failure of Business Ethics in Corporate Crime*. Transaction Publishers: pp. 213-237.

Rockness, H. & Rockness, J. (2005). Legislated ethics: From Enron to Sarbanes-Oxley, the impact on corporate America. *Journal of Business Ethics* 57(1): 31-54.

**Oct 16            Critical approaches to corporate crime**

Hagan, J., & Parker, P. (1985). White-collar crime and punishment: The class structure and legal sanctioning of securities violations. *American Sociological Review*, 302-316.

Snider, Lauren. 2004. "Poisoned water, environmental regulation and crime: constituting the nonculpable subject in Walkerton, Ontario." Pp. 155-184 in *What is Crime? Defining Criminal Conduct in Contemporary Society* edited by Law Commission of Canada. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Snider, L. (2000). The sociology of corporate crime: An obituary (or: Whose knowledge claims have legs?). *Theoretical Criminology*, 4(2), 169-206.

**Oct 23            Constructing offenders**

Benson, M. L., & Moore, E. (1992). Are white-collar and common offenders the same? An empirical and theoretical critique of a recently proposed general theory of crime. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 29(3), 251-272.

Glasbeek, H. J. (1984). Why Corporate Deviance is Not Treated as a Crime: The Need to Make "Profits" a Dirty Word. *Osgoode Hall LJ*, 22, 393.

Holtfreter, K. (2005). Is occupational fraud "typical" white-collar crime? A comparison of individual and organizational characteristics. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 33(4): 353-365.

**Oct 30            Problematizing 'victimhood'**

Kruttschnitt, C. (1985). Are Businesses Treated Differently? A Comparison of the Individual Victim and the Corporate Victim in the Criminal Courtroom. *Sociological Inquiry* 55(3): 225-238.

Michaels, A. C. (2003). Fastow and Arthur Andersen: some reflections on corporate criminality, victim status, and retribution. *Ohio St. J. Crim. L.*, 1, 551.

Hagan, J. (1982). The corporate advantage: A study of the involvement of corporate and individual victims in a criminal justice system. *Social Forces*, 60(4), 993-1022.

**Nov 6 Policing and prosecuting offenders**

Geis, G. & J. Dimento. Should We Prosecute Corporations and/or Individuals? in F. Pearce & L. Snider (eds) *Corporate Crime: Contemporary Debates*. UTP: 1995. pp 72-87.

Green, S. P. (2004). Moral ambiguity in white collar criminal law. *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy*, 18, 501.

**Nov 13 Reading week**

**Nov 20 Transnational crime policy**

Alldrige, P. (2008). Money laundering and globalization. *Journal of law and society*, 35(4), 437-463.

Iafolla, V. (2012). Policing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing: The Identification and Reporting of Suspicious Transactions. *Annual Review of Interdisciplinary Justice Research* 3, 62-87.

**Nov 27 In class workshop**

In this workshop, we will explore one current major white collar crime event. As a class, we will situate this event within the social and legal contexts we have explored this semester, and tie key course themes together as we critique the role of law and policy with regard to this problem. This workshop is not individually graded, but will count toward your participation grade.

**Dec 4 Take home exam made available**