



**Sociology 499- 2015 Fall**  
 Field Placement in Criminology- Course Syllabus

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 Email: eklics@ualberta.ca  
 Seminar location: T 5-15  
 Seminar time: 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 Seminar Dates: Seminar #1- September 22  
 Seminar #2- October 6  
 Seminar #3- October 20  
 Seminar #4- November 3  
 Seminar #5- November 24  
 Seminar #6- December 8 (Optional Attendance)

Field placement start date: September 14  
 Field placement end date: November 27  
 Your field placement days will be on 2 days a week when you do not have classes.  
 Usually these are Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays.

This course has an **eClass Moodle** section. Use your CCID to access course page.  
[\(https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/portal/\)](https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/portal/)  
 This site contains important information and documents, and the journals are to be submitted here.  
 If for whatever reason you are unable to submit your journals through the course website, please email them to the instructor as an attachment by the due date.

**Evaluation**

Students must achieve successful completion of each of the course components in order to be recommended to the Dean for promotion. These components include: the field placement, the research paper, the professional seminars, and the weekly journals. Successful completion means that **you must obtain at least a grade of B- in each of the course components**. Failure (attaining less than a B- grade) in any portion of a placement is failure for the course as a whole.

Course component weights:

Field Placement Midterm Evaluation:	<b>(October 5)</b>	15%
Field Placement Final Evaluation:	<b>(December 14)</b>	35%
Research Paper	<b>(December 14)</b>	30%
Journals: (For due dates throughout the term, see below)		10%
Seminar Participation:		10%

## **Field Placements**

The field placement is a part-time work experience with a criminal justice system agency in which the student becomes a contributing member. It takes into account that learning occurs outside the formal classroom setting. The field placement focuses on the acquisition of knowledge, application of knowledge, skill development, and professional development. Your field placement will help you decide whether or not you are really interested in a career within the criminal justice system. It will allow your placement agency to assess you as a potential employee, and will allow you to make a variety of potentially helpful professional contacts that may assist you with future career endeavors. The placement itself, and the evaluation process, is intended to simulate what you might experience as an employee in the criminal justice field.

Midterm and Final Evaluations for the field placement are completed on the appropriate forms provided to each supervisor. It is your responsibility to make sure your supervisor receives the evaluation forms in due course. They are available on the course eClass page. A copy of the evaluation is retained on file. The course instructor, in consultation with the placement supervisor, assigns the grades for the placement on the basis of the assessment of the student's total performance.

## **Term Papers**

### Purpose

The Criminology Program term paper requirement serves as the primary academic component of the field placement. The paper, 13-15 pages in length, should reflect agency activity and integrate it with theoretical issues raised in course work and in the literature. You should develop the paper in close consultation with your academic supervisor.

### Academic Supervisors

Each student is assigned an academic supervisor. Each supervisor has a different teaching style, thus it is important that you become familiar with, and adapt to, your supervisor's teaching style. The role of the academic supervisor is to approve the term paper topic and to provide guidance and direction during the research and writing phases. Early and frequent student-advisor communication is suggested, the onus for which lies with the student.

### Format

The format of the term paper can follow three separate but related approaches:

1. Description - presenting activity in the agency around a particular question, issue or topic.
2. Research - presentation of research material related to the issue - based on library research including perusal of scholarly journals.
3. Synthesis - an integration of the activity observed in the agency and materials derived from research efforts.

The goal is to combine the power of research and the strength of observation. The resultant synthesis between academic work and practical activity creates greater insight into the agency, and is definitive of a superior paper.

### Grading

The term paper assignment is worth 30% of your overall grade. Your academic supervisor assigns the term paper grade.

### Due Date and Submission

**Due date:** December 14. Please submit both hard copies in the appropriate exam cabinet slots. Students must submit one hardcopy of the term paper directly to their academic supervisor and one hardcopy to the course instructor to be added to your file. You will be able to pick up the marked paper with comments from your academic supervisor.

### Late Term Paper Policy

No extension of the due date will be granted without prior approval of the instructor **and** the academic supervisor, and only for medical or similarly serious reasons.

### Suggested Timeline for the Placement Paper

Some supervisors may wish to meet with you less or more often than this outline suggests. Establish expectations related to your paper during the first meeting with your academic supervisor based on their preference.

### Conduct first meeting with your academic supervisor by September 30, 2015.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate early contact with the academic supervisor. Meet with your academic supervisor to discuss paper topics. Attend the meeting with broad topics in mind with support as to why it relates to your current field placement. Please remember this is an academic paper, not an extension of your weekly journals.

### Provide an outline and 10 references by October 31, 2015.

Submit a paper proposal of 500-750 words to your academic supervisor. By this point, it is important that you have decided on ONE topic; there is not enough time to be indecisive about your topic.

You can follow guideline below:

1. Pose your central research question. Your question should be a "why" statement seeking an explanation of a social phenomenon, rather than a "how", "what", "when", or "where" statement that merely seeks a description of a phenomenon.  
-Your central research question should be such that it will enable you to marry theory with your experience at your field placement.
2. As background, briefly describe the agency where you're completing your field placement and why the topic you intend to pursue is relevant. It often helps the reader understand your personal interest in this topic so you may want to describe this briefly.
3. Describe your plan for finding evidence. What kind of evidence do you plan to collect? How are you going to assess the evidence you find, and decide what evidence is relevant assessing your central question, and what is irrelevant?
4. Provide a bibliography of at least 10 pertinent references (library, internet and other) using an appropriate citation style. For help with citations, please consult the University of Alberta library webpage (<http://www.library.ualberta.ca/>).

Provide a draft November 20, 2015.

Use this final check-in to ensure you are meeting the requirements set out by your academic supervisor.

Below is the research paper marking rubric used by the academic supervisors to evaluate your work.

SOC 399/499

Field placement research paper marking rubric

Content: 40 marks

Is the paper well-focused and appropriate in scope? Is factual material presented accurately? Is command of material demonstrated? Is sound and sufficient research demonstrated? Is a synthesis of the relevant literature demonstrated? Does the paper show the appropriate use of theoretical concepts? Are arguments clearly analyzed and conclusions justified? Is the paper interesting? Are ideas handled creatively?

Organization and structure: 30 marks

Is the paper clearly and logically organized? Does the organization demonstrate understanding of the topic? A well-organized paper consists of a concise introduction, a central thesis, a logical flow of ideas to support the central thesis and a concluding section. Is the writing high quality, using correct strength of prose, sentence structure, and clarity? Avoid ill-defined or convoluted paragraphs (for instance, one that runs a full page or more). A rule of thumb is to make one major point per paragraph.

Composition: 20 marks

Are spelling, grammar and punctuation correct? Are references complete and cited properly?

Use of feedback: 10 marks

Have suggestions/comments from the supervisor been integrated into the paper?

Final paper mark: \_\_\_\_\_/100

Description	Percentage	Grade	Value
Excellent	95-100	A+	4
	90-94	A	4
	85-89	A-	3.7
Good	80-84	B+	3.3
	75-79	B	3
	70-74	B-	2.7
Fail		C+	2.3
		C	2
		C-	1.7
		D+	1.3
		D	1
		F	0

## **Criminology Program Evening Seminars**

The field placement is a key component to the B.A. (Criminology) Program. While a good portion of academic learning can be pursued effectively in the classroom, exposure to agencies working in the criminal justice system will provide students with practical experience that will supplement their academic knowledge. The evening seminars are an opportunity for students to raise issues and concerns generated out of the field experience, and explore these topics with fellow students.

The evening seminars will form part of your final grade and are worth 10% of your overall grade. Attendance is mandatory. *Active participation* is crucial to attaining an ‘excellent’ grade. The course instructor assigns this portion of the overall grade.

### Format

There will be 6 evening seminars, roughly 60 minutes in duration each term. Students are expected to actively participate in discussions brought up in the evening seminars. The seminars are intended to be flexible in nature in order to deal effectively with issues as they arise. The format, however, will generally include the following components:

1. Placement issues and concerns – issues raised in the journals, through discussion with field supervisors and elsewhere. This is where you can get feedback on matters of concern and interest as they have surfaced in your placement situation.
2. Professional issues – here we deal with more specific issues and concerns related to working in the criminal justice system. Ethics and morality, values, report writing and like issues will be explored.
3. Agency speaker – representatives from various justice system agencies will make presentations on their agencies on subject matter related to their areas of expertise.
4. Current Events - students are given a chance to discuss important issues affecting the Canadian criminal justice system. Topics for discussion will be brought forth by the seminar facilitator, although students are welcome to suggest topics and issues to discuss.

### **Fall 2015 Seminar Schedule**

Seminar #1- September 22 2015 at 16:30 PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

Seminar #2- October 6 2015 at 6:30 PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

Seminar #3- October 20 2015 at 6:30PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

Seminar #4- November 3 2015 at 6:30PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

Seminar #5- November 24 2015 at 6:30PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

Seminar #6- December 8 2015 at 6:30PM in Tory 5-15

Topic: TBA Guest: TBA

## Journals

The journal serves as a vehicle for students to report their field placement activity and raise issues and concerns which they experience at their placement. Reflection, insight, observation, problems and a variety of comments can be reported in the journals. Students are to refer to the weekly discussion questions and answer them by using the experiences they have encountered throughout their placements.

The journals are an important component of the practicum experience. They serve as a record of your progress and the learning that takes place throughout the term. They are not meant to be labor-intensive (500 words are plenty), but are meant to capture your impressions, observations and activities on a daily basis, in three to four paragraphs (minimum). Journals should be submitted via eClass and are due bi-weekly Monday (before midnight), unless stated otherwise. It is recommended that you keep a copy of your journal entries, both as a record of your agency activity - you may wish to refer back to document a client contact, for example – or as a reference for your term paper. The journals are confidential and will only be read and marked by the program coordinator. The journals will not be shared with other students or the agency with which the student is placed.

The journal entries will form part of your final grade and are worth 10% of your overall placement mark. As such, the writing style should be indicative of your professionalism and desire to present your ideas and thoughts in a coherent manner. The course instructor assigns this portion of your overall grade.

**PLEASE NOTE** the journals are not intended to include client names or agency material of a confidential nature.

This course has an **eClass Moodle** section. Use your CCID to access course page.

(<https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/portal/>)

This site contains important information and documents, and the journals are to be submitted here. If for whatever reason you are unable to submit your journals through the course website, please email them to the instructor as an attachment by the due date.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**These questions are intended as a guide.** You may deviate from them at any point to discuss relevant events or concerns during your placement.

### SEPTEMBER 29 - JOURNAL 1

1. What are your expectations for your placement?
  - What do you think the primary objective of the agency you're placed with is?
  - What are you most concerned/worried about? Most excited about? Include 5 expectations.
2. What are your goals?
  - What is it that you're hoping to extract from this placement?
  - What skill sets are you hoping to improve on or develop? Include at least 3 goals.
3. How have you prepared for your 1st days at your field placement (did you read the website, meet with your placement supervisor prior, buy a new outfit, etc.)?

4. (If Applicable) What have your first days on the job been like? Are you feeling comfortable at the workplace?
5. (If Applicable) Have you sensed your role yet? If so, what is it?
6. (If Applicable) Have you sensed what your direct supervisor's role is? If so, what is it?
7. Indicate two sociological concepts/theories that sound interesting for you to examine while at your placement.

EXAMPLE: I am going to be at \_\_\_\_\_, and would like to look at the concepts of groupthink and group conformity as they may or may not apply at \_\_\_\_\_. I will be looking to see if I can observe these theories in terms of the individuals this organization serves as well, if I can observe these and any other group dynamics at my office site.

### **OCTOBER 13 - JOURNAL 2**

1. What personal needs is your practicum fulfilling? (intellectual, social, psychological (eg. esteem, physical, spiritual, etc.)
2. What is helping/hindering your practicum success so far? Who are you looking to for support and debriefing?
3. Can you describe a situation where you went out of your way in attempt to a part of the "team" at your field placement agency? If not, do you feel this is something you could challenge yourself to do? If not, why not?
4. What is making you feel most motivated in your practicum right now?
5. Have your objectives changed or taken on new meaning? Is this okay?
6. How is your practicum work relating to your broader career goals?
7. What specific strategies are you using to manage your time effectively? What approaches do you see your colleagues using?

### **OCTOBER 27 - JOURNAL 3**

1. Consider the concept of you being "supervised".
  - a. Are you using your supervisor's time and expertise effectively?
  - b. Are you getting enough contact with your supervisor? If not, how might you get what you need?
2. Describe a 'typical' day at your placement site.
3. If this is your 2nd placement, can you identify differences in how you conduct yourself at your placement as a result of the learning/growing you did during your 1st placement?
4. Can you identify based on your placement experience what a "good" co-worker is? Elaborate on this. Why would you make a good co-worker?
5. What, if anything, have you learned about professional work at your practicum site? Anything you've become enlightened about? (ie. rules & roles, work priorities, processes & procedures, clients, self)
6. What values/philosophies do you have in common with your placement organization?
7. What values/philosophies differ from that of your placement organization?
8. Who benefits from what the organization you've been placed with? Is anyone harmed by its efforts? How and why?
9. Can you envision a society in which this agency is unnecessary? What would such a society look like? Is it achievable?

#### **NOVEMBER 17 - JOURNAL 4**

1. In terms of personal growth:
  - a. What has been your greatest challenge?
  - b. Do you feel you have grown as a professional? How do you know? (ie. what are the indicators of this growth?) If not, elaborate on why not.
2. What is something about your field placement that you find frustrating or dissatisfying? How can you proactively go about making a change in the situation?
3. Have you experienced any self-disclosure or boundary issues?
4. Have you experienced any ethical/moral dilemmas? If yes, how have you dealt with these issues?
5. What conflicts have you solved at your placement?
  - a. How have you solved them?
  - b. Has solving conflicts in a professional setting been different from solving problems in class?
6. How have the many theories you learned in class fit with the many realities you have seen during your practicum?
7. What have you made happen in your practicum that wouldn't have happened without your effort?
8. If you could make a recommendation (as drastic or as minimal as you see fit) to the agency you've been placed with, without there being any repercussions, what would it be?

#### **DECEMBER 1 - JOURNAL 5**

1. When it is time to go to your practicum how do you usually feel? Has this changed over the course of the term?
2. What strategies are making you more confident, independent and effective in your practicum so far?
3. What has given you a sense of fulfillment in your practicum?
4. What are the advantages of community service learning (doing a placement)? Do you feel you'd be as successful in your placement had you not taken the classes you have?
5. Have you experienced anything "profound" so far? Have you been exposed to an event that took place that made you question our criminal justice system?
6. How important are communication skills at the agency you're placed with? Explain.
7. How has your relationship with your supervisor changed over the course of your practicum?
8. What in your practicum has gone well? What does it say about who you are? Could one of your experiences be turned into an effective job interview story?

#### **DECEMBER 14 - JOURNAL 6**

1. Did you discover capacities you didn't know you had or discover gaps in knowledge/training that you are eager to fill?
2. Will saying goodbye be easy or hard? Why? How will you mark your goodbye?
3. Do you feel you'll leave your placement having completed what you set out to?
4. Write about the reality of the expectations you had prior to the commencement of your placement.
  - Did your expectations align with reality? What differed?
  - Knowing what you know now, would you change how you prepared for your placement?

- If you had to assign your placement (not the agency or your supervisor per se) a letter grade, what would it be? Justify this grade.

### RESUME AND COVER LETTER

At the end of the term, please submit an updated resume (including your recent placement experience) and a cover letter tailored as if you were applying for a position at your field placement agency. This portion is not graded. The idea is that you should develop a habit of updating your resume regularly and add to the record all activities that you have been involved with. Furthermore, you should practice producing cover letters as soon you will be applying for jobs.

### Final Grades

Final grades will be assigned by the course instructor in consultation with the Program Director. The University of Alberta follows no pre-determined quota of letter grades and grade distribution. There is no curving of class grades.

Grades will be assigned following the grade scale below:

Description	Grade	Value
Excellent Student achievement in field placement is beyond expectations, shows high degree of competence and professionalism. Student receives excellent grades in other components of the course.	A+	4
	A	4
	A-	3.7
Good Student achievement in field placement shows competence and professionalism. Student receives good to excellent grades in other components of the course.	B+	3.3
	B	3
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory Student achievement in field placement shows some competence and professionalism. Student receives satisfactory to good grades in other components of the course.	C+	2.3
	C	2
	C-	1.7
Poor Student achievement in field placement shows poor competence and professionalism. Student receives poor to satisfactory grades in other components of the course.	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	D	1
Fail	F	0

## **Term Checklist**

- Complete and submit midterm evaluation (Form Available on eClass)
- Complete and submit your evaluation of the field placement (Form Available on eClass)
- Complete and submit final evaluation (Form Available on eClass)
- Submit research paper
- Make contact with academic supervisor by September 30
- Attend Seminar #1
- Attend Seminar #2
- Attend Seminar #3
- Attend Seminar #4
- Attend Seminar #5
- Attend Seminar #6

## **JOURNALS**

- Week 1  Week 2  Week 3  Week 4  Week 5  Week 6

## **Important General Information**

- Policy about course outlines can be found in 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.
- 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 ([www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour which 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.

In particular, please note the following sections from the University's Code of Student Behaviour:

30.3.2(2)c No Student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as the Student's own work.

30.3.2(2)d No Student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course Instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project, assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has previously been obtained by the Student or which has been or is being submitted by the Student in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

30.3.2(2)e No Student shall submit in any course or program of study any academic writing, essay, thesis, report, project, assignment, presentation or poster containing a statement of fact known by the Student to be false or a reference to a source the Student

knows to contain fabricated claims (unless acknowledged by the Student), or a fabricated references to a source.

- 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 materials are 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 instructor.
- Re-writing papers, submitting extra work or any other option to increase grades will not be considered under any circumstances.
- This will be a classroom in which we all feel free to express our opinions and points of view. When you have the floor, it is expected that you will express your views politely. The classroom atmosphere at the same time will allow us all to question each other and the world around us in a respectful manner. Students who monopolize class discussions are also disruptive to the discussion process. Students who do this will be penalized for this behaviour.
- The official class list is produced by the third week of term. Instructors are forbidden to add student names to grade sheets. Students not on grade sheets are not deemed to be properly registered and may not submit exams or assignments. It is your responsibility to check with the instructor to ensure your name is on this list.
- Students requiring assistance for a variety of needs are encouraged to refer to the following website: [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/student-services](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/student-services) which lists support services available to undergraduate students. For example, for concerns regarding exam anxiety and concerns of an academic nature, the Academic Support Centre is available for assistance (780-492-2682); Student Counseling Services (780-492-5205) provides support of a more personal nature.