

# SO255-15 Advanced Theory in Criminology and Social Justice

**22/23**

**Department**

Sociology

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Azrini Wahidin

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

Advanced Theory in Criminology and Social Justice aims to critically engage students with core theories and major advances in criminological theory. Key issues and advances within core areas of theoretical criminology will be explored, including: classicism and neo-classicism; feminist criminology; abolitionism, post-colonial criminology and queer criminology, for example.

[Module web page](#)

### Module aims

The course will explore the theoretical resources of criminology in order to think about the discipline not simply a practical activity (as something concerned with the process or administration of criminal justice) but as an activity comprising a distinct epistemology. The module covers the major theoretical developments within criminology and asks how criminological theory helps us to elucidate and interrogate criminal justice problems such as: punishment, incarceration, social control and social justice. Our concerns will be linked to existential and ethical questions about: crime, justice, poverty, welfare and social activism. Finally, the course will address the extent to which it is possible to create and sustain a 'progressive' agenda for the future of criminal

justice. In order to capture the realities of imprisonment, the socio-construction of deviance we will look films such as *Sur le Troits* and the writings of Jane Addams, John Dewey, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, George Orwell, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Emma Goldman, Charles Dickens and others.

We will be particularly interested in the movement of ideas across the Atlantic to the present culture wars around crime, poverty, immigration, refugees and role of the state. Students will develop their ability to understand and evaluate criminological theoretical perspectives in relation to social justice, law and human rights discourse.

Students will advance their skills at communicating the differences and potential areas of synthesis between theories of crime, social control and social justice. The content will draw on relevant policy material in this field.

Key aims include:

The intended learning outcomes and, as appropriate, their relationship to the Subject Benchmarks for Criminology and the programme learning outcomes.

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to show:

- Progression in ability to present arguments in oral form, through developing skills in seminar presentation. Group members will ask and respond to questions in a bid to facilitate discussion.
- Advancement of existing skills in regard to the organisation of information in a clear and coherent manner, through essay writing, and seminar-based group discussion of completed essays.
- Be able to gather, retrieve and synthesise data and information from different schools and disciplines of enquiry.
- Show progression in development of research skills through advanced library investigation, critical debate and essay writing.
- Develop enhanced research and organisational skills by using library e-journal and other on-line resources.

## **Outline syllabus**

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

### **Part 1: Context**

1. Classical criminology
2. Positivism
3. Critical Criminology

#### **Part 2:**

4. Marxist Criminologies
5. Feminist Criminologies
6. Reading Week
7. Queer Criminology

#### **Part 3:**

8. Post-Colonial Criminology

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Main learning outcomes: The module builds upon the knowledge and skills developed in Crime and Society (SO127) and in Criminology: Theories and concepts by: Demonstrating a developed knowledge and understanding of core criminological theory;
- To be able to critically evaluate the distinctiveness, strengths and weaknesses of a variety of theoretical approaches to crime and deviance;
- To be able to critically analyse how advances in theory are made;
- To be able to identify the ontological and epistemological basis of a variety of theoretical approaches and critically account for how philosophical foundations necessarily place limits on the explanatory potential of theory
- To be able to discuss and critically assess criminological explanations of crime ranging from pre-scientific approaches, classical and postclassical conceptions of crime and criminality, individual and sociological positivist theories, social process theories, critical theories, and more recent integrated theories.
- To be able to articulate the connection between criminological theory, public policy, and political ideology.
- To be able to critically evaluate criminological theory and related empirical research;
- To be able to summarize central criminological constructs and methodological approaches for operationalizing and testing these constructs to evaluate criminological theory;
- To be able to evaluate the implications of criminological theory and research for crime policy and practice.

## Indicative reading list

Agozino, B., ((1997) Black Women and the Criminal Justice System. Ashgate Publishing

Agozino, B (2006), The Rise of Post-Colonial Criminology in AJCJS, Vol. 2. No.1

Gelsthorpe, L. & Morris, A. (eds) (1990) Feminist Perspectives in Criminology, Milton Keynes: OUP.

Carrabine, E. (2016) Changing Fortunes: Criminology and Sociological Condition, Sociology 50 (5): 847-62

Cain, M. (1990) Towards Transgression: New directions in Feminist Criminology. International Journal of a Sociology of Law, 18 1-18.

Chambliss, W.J. (1976) The State and Criminal Law in Whose Law? What Order in W.J Chambliss and M. Mandoff (eds) Conflict Approach to Criminology. New York: Wiley and Sons.

Cohen, S. (1991) Alternatives to punishment: The abolitionist case. Israel Law Review 25 729–739. (1991).

De Folter, R. (1986). On the methodological foundation of the abolitionist approach to the criminal justice system: A comparison of the ideas of Hulsman, Mathiesen, and Foucault. *Contemporary Crises* 1039–62.

Dwyer, A., Ball, M., and Crofts, T (2016) *Queering Criminology*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Ferrell, J. (1998) Against the law: Anarchist criminology. *Social Anarchism* 251–14.

Goldman, E. (1969) *Anarchism and other essays*. New York: Dover.

Knopp, F. H., Boward, B., & Morris, M. O. (1976) *Instead of prisons: A handbook for abolitionists*. Syracuse, NY: Prison Research Education Action Project.

Kropotkin, P. (1975). Law and authority in E.C apouya, & K. Tompkins (Eds.), *The essential Kropotkin* (pp. 27–43). New York: Liveright. (Original work published 1886)

Mathiesen, T. (1974) *The politics of abolition*. London: Martin Robertson.

Mathiesen, T. (1986) The politics of abolition. *Crime, Law and Social Change* 1081–94. Miller, J & Mullins, Christopher. (2006). *The Status of Feminist Theories in Criminology.. Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory, Advances in Criminological Theory* 15. 217-249.

Pepinsky, H. (1978), Communist anarchism as an alternative to the rule of criminal law. *Contemporary Crises* 2315–327.

Tiftt, L., & Sullivan, D. (1980). *The struggle to be human: Crime, criminology, and anarchism*. Orkney, UK: Cienfuegos Press.

Smart, C. (1995), *Law, Crime and Sexuality: Essays in Feminism*. London: Sage.

## **Subject specific skills**

Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of criminological theory and social justice.

To apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context

To be able to examine a range of key concepts and theoretical approaches within criminology, and to evaluate their application.

To have an understanding of the key concepts and theoretical approaches that have developed in relation to crime, victimisation and responses to crime and deviance.

## **Transferable skills**

- Develop skills in policy evaluation, cross-comparison and critique across different jurisdictions and cultural contexts.
- Identify and apply key skills necessary to access relevant literature, and other sources necessary for analysis and evaluation in the area of gender, crime and justice.
- Develop skills in orally presenting academic material in an effective manner.
- Evaluate approaches with the use of empirical evidence and research-led learning.

- Demonstrate effective time management skills.
- Work effectively both independently and as part of a team.
- Manage complex information and demonstrate critical analytical skills.
- Develop skills in policy evaluation, cross-comparison and critique across different jurisdictions and cultural contexts.
- Develop skills in orally presenting academic material in an effective manner.
- Express points of view clearly , respectively and effectively in class discussions.
- Understand the process of knowledge production and engage in a reflexive approach and a critical awareness about one's own values by using sociological and criminological knowledge.
- Understand the relevance of social context to one's social location and personal bias in approaching specific social and criminological issues.
- Demonstrate an ability to work independently, collaboratively and to follow deadlines.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the importance of group discussions, team work and interaction when developing a sociological imagination concerning crime and criminal justice.

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

Reading for seminars.

Preparation for seminars.

Preparation of presentations.

Presentation and writing of formative work.

Presentation and writing of summative work.

### Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

---

## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

## Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Assessed essays/coursework 3,000 Words Essay	100%	

## Feedback on assessment

The last seminar of the module will be skills-based and students will be asked to bring to class a one-page essay outline so that they can get informal feedback on it before the submission of their essay. \r\n\r\nThe aim of the assessment is to give students the opportunity to review consolidate and reflect on their learning and to demonstrate the extent to which they have acquired knowledge, understanding and key skills

---

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 3 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Optional for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
- Year 2 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Option list A for:

- ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)