

**Common Course Outline**  
**CRJU 202/SOCL 202**  
**Criminology**  
**3 Credits**

**Community College of Baltimore County**

**Description**

CRJU 202 – 3 credits - Criminology introduces the student to the basic theories, fundamental facts and problems associated with the science of criminology. Emphasis is placed on providing a systematic basis for the study of criminals and criminal behavior as related to the criminal justice system.

**3 Credits**

**Pre-requisites:** ACLT 052 ACLT 053

**Overall Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. define the fundamental principles of criminology and the methods used in criminological research and the application of criminological research its application;
2. compare and contrast the functions and definitions of criminal law and civil law;
3. analyze crime data in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic status, derived from the Uniform Crime Report (UCR), National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), and self-report surveys;
4. assess the diverse needs and problems of victims of crime;
5. distinguish between the application of classical and choice theories of crime;
6. evaluate the components of trait theories;
7. analyze the components of social structure theories and relate their importance to the development of policies that address the needs of a diverse society;
8. differentiate between the components of social process theories and relate their importance to policies that support traditional institutions of social control;
9. compare the multifactor theories of crime with the more traditional approaches that focus on singular explanations of criminal behavior;
10. summarize the basis of social conflict theories and their relationship to the development of policies that impact minorities in the criminal justice system;
11. synthesize the issues related to violent and property crime in society with the theoretical approaches discussed in this course;
12. compare and contrast white collar and organized crime and their impact on all strata of society;
13. analyze the convergence of individuals, ideas, values, social institutions and economics that results in the creation of public order crimes in this country, and
14. research and evaluate criminological theories finding, using, evaluating, and citing appropriate academic resources.

## **Major Topics**

- I. Define criminology as a component of the criminal justice system
  - A. Historical perspective
  - B. Origins and functions of law
- II. Crime trends and patterns
  - A. Uniform Crime Reports & Victimization Survey
  - B. Impact of crime on victims
- III. Sociological theories
  - A. Fundamental principles of sociological theory
  - B. Application of sociological theories to social policy
- IV. Theories of the causes of criminal behavior
  - A. Classical
  - B. Choice
- V. Trait theories
  - A. Biological
  - B. Psychological
- VI. Social structure theory
  - A. Social disorganization
  - B. Strain theory
  - C. Cultural deviance
- VII. Social process theory
  - A. Social learning
  - B. Social control
  - C. Labeling
- VIII. Conflict theory
  - A. Modern conflict theorists
  - B. Peacemaking criminology
- IX. Multifactor theories of crime
  - A. Latent trait approach
  - B. Life course theories
- X. Violent crime
- XI. Property crimes
- XIII. White collar and organized crime
- XIV. Public order crimes: sex and substance abuse
- XV. Diversity
  - A. Trends and patterns among victims and perpetrators
  - B. Trends and patterns among theories
  - C. Trends and patterns among criminal acts

## **Course Requirements**

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

Exams: A minimum of two exams

Writing: A writing assignment is required that directs students to apply criminological theories to an assigned popular movie. Students are required to utilize appropriate academic resources. This assignment will count for a minimum of 10% of the overall course grade and will demonstrate at least 5 of the 7 General Education Program Outcomes.

At least one other writing assignment is required and suggestions are as follows:

- Summaries of current events and their relation to course material;
- Evaluation of a theories as they apply to a specific criminal activity;
- Develop a crime causation theory;
- Overview of ways in which this class changed students' perception about the criminal element and/or myths that were dispelled as a result of taking this class.

Collaboration: At least one class assignment will be given that requires collaboration between students. Examples of this activity are:

- Class discussion on course-related topics and current events;
- Examination of ethical decisions routinely faced by criminological researchers;
- Distinction between criminal vs. civil law;
- Evaluation of statistics found in the Uniform Crime Report, National Crime Victimization Surveys and self-report surveys;
- Debate about imposition of death penalty and morality of execution;
- Development of the victim's rights in Maryland and impact on the federal level;
- Causes of disproportionate representation of minorities in all stages of the justice system;
- Relationship of U.S. to other countries in sentencing and incarceration practices;
- Application of criminological theories to current events, song lyrics, news articles, etc.

### **Course Information**

This course is an approved General Education course in the Social and Behavioral Sciences category. This course is a Criminal Justice core course and a Sociology elective. Credit may be received for CRJU 202 or SOCL 202 but will not be given for both.