Policing and Society
Soc 4451F-001
Department of Sociology
Western University
Fall 2013

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Class: Tuesday 1:30-4:30; SSC 5406

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the sociology of policing through descriptive, empirical, and theoretical research. It offers a balanced overview of who the police are, what they do, and their interactions with different social institutions and groups. Special attention is given to problems and controversies related to policing.

This course is intended for students interested in policing from an academic perspective; it does not provide training in applied law-enforcement, criminal investigation, or forensics. The seminar involves significant work outside of class because of the heavy reading workload and preparation for discussion. Ultimately, my goal is that students taking this seminar will become better criminologists, theorists, and scientists.

Prerequisite(s): Enrolment in fourth year of the Honors program (old) or one of the Honors Specializations (new) offered in Sociology. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the history, the roles, and the responsibilities of the police in a free society
2. Understand the complex interactions between the police and other social institutions and groups
3. Differentiate theoretical perspectives related to policing
4. Understand the analytical strategy, methodological concerns, and theoretical relevance of empirical studies of policing; discuss their strengths and weaknesses
5. Understand the importance of science and empiricism for the sociological study of policing
Readings

3. Selected articles and book chapters (see pp. 7-8).

It is quite difficult to find a good textbook for an upper-level seminar on Canadian Policing. Griffiths’ textbook is a very easy read and we will use it as a descriptive summary of police work in Canada to set the stage for the more advanced readings. In contrast, Brodeur’s book is more complicated, scholarly, and focuses on historical and philosophical perspectives. Finally, selected articles and book chapters will be used to study more specific questions.

Course Requirements

Your final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

Research proposal (15%); due in class on October 15
Research paper (50%); due on December 6 at my office
Weekly reading summaries (20%)
Active participation during discussion (15%)

Because of University concerns regarding grade inflation, a grading curve will be used. This means that your final grade will depend on your performance in comparison with other students. The class average will be set at 78.

Class Attendance

Class attendance strongly recommended. Obviously, you will not receive credits for discussion participation if you are absent. This said, I consider the students in my class to be mature enough to make their own choices, and I will not monitor class attendance. Just attending classes is not considered participation.

Research paper

I will provide more details about the research paper during the semester. Basically, it will require students to write an analytical/critical research paper on a topic related to the sociology of policing. The research paper should be 18-20 pages (double-space), plus title page and references. Turnitin software will be used to check for plagiarism.

Students must submit a research proposal by October 15 that will serve as the “blueprint” for the research paper (3 pages). The research proposal should include the research question and its theoretical relevance, major references, a detailed breakdown of the sections expected in the final research papers, the analytical strategy, and a short description of the empirical data (if used). I encourage students to make a one-on-one appointment with me to discuss their research topic before submitting the proposal.
Discussion

Class time will mostly be used for discussion regarding the readings. In order to participate in discussion, students must study and understand very well the readings before the discussion. Discussion topics are closely related to the readings. I keep track of the individual participation of each student. Shyness is not an excuse for not participating. Students who disagree with my expectations regarding discussion (or any other aspect of the course) should consider registering for a different course instead.

For every reading, a student will be designated as the “discussion leader”. The discussion leader will initiate the discussion by reading his/her reading summary (see below) and comment on the text.

Reading Summaries

Each week, every student must write a one page single-space reading summary for one of the papers they found particularly interesting (in a positive or negative way – you can pick a paper because you want to criticize it). You can include a summary of the main points of the paper plus some analytical and critical comments. The grading will be very simple:

Check: You got credit for a job well done
Double-Checks: Amazing summary. I will only give double-checks to 1-2 students per week.
Zero: Poor scholarship or summary not submitted. Everybody is entitled to re-submit a summary to change a zero into a check – 1 time.

Adding things up (20 pts.)
Full series of check: 16/20
Full series of check with some double checks: 17/20 or more.
Some zeros: Below 16/20

Missed Exams and Late Assignments

You should understand that academic accommodation will not be granted automatically on request. If, due to medical illness, you cannot write a test or exam, or submit an assignment by the due date, it is your responsibility to follow the University’s new “Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness”. This policy can be accessed at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf

Compassionate Grounds

Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member's physician to your home faculty’s Academic Counselling office.
In Case of a Death: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty’s Academic Counselling office.

**Academic Integrity**

UWO promotes the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect of other students, and help maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Violations of academic integrity will be treated very seriously.

**Plagiarism**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

**Overview of topics and readings**

**Class 1 - Introduction**
Presentation of the course and the instructor
Information about the research paper
How to do a critical analysis
Discussion of some epistemological aspects about this course

**Class 2 - Brief history of the police**
Origins and evolution of police work (Griffiths Chap. 1)
History of Policing (Brodeur Chap. 2)
Social control (Black 1983)
Class 3 - The industry of modern policing
Canadian policing institutions (Griffiths Chap. 2)
Police governance (Griffiths Chap. 3)
The police assemblage (Brodeur Chap. 1)

Class 4 - The practice of policing
Policing as a career (Griffiths Chap. 4)
Patrol and everyday police work (Griffiths Chap. 5)
Police powers and the right to use force (Griffiths Chap. 6)
Police in Uniform (Brodeur Chap. 5)

Class 5 - Research Day
I will be meeting one-on-one with students to discuss their progress and difficulties with their research project.

Class 6 - Theories of policing
Elements of a theory of policing (Brodeur Chap. 4)
Policing and security networks (Dupont 2004)
Canadian policing in a post 9/11 world (Murphy 2007)
Policing and cyberspace (Wall 2007)

Class 7 – Sociology of police organizations
Canadian police organizations and diversity (Griffiths Chap. 11)
“High” and “Low” Policing (Brodeur Chap. 7)
The militarization of police organizations (Kraska 2007)
The impact of COMPSTAT on police organizations (Willis et al. 2007)

Class 8 - Sociology of police investigation
Overview of police investigation (Griffiths Chap. 10)
Critical analysis of police investigation (Brodeur Chap. 6)
Why some investigations become “high profile?” (Corsianos 2003)
Case characteristics and suspect behaviour during questioning (Moston et al. 1992)
Community characteristics and crime clearance (Pare et al. 2007)

Class 9 - Policing and crime / Policing strategies / Crime Prevention
Models of policing strategies (Griffiths Chap. 8)
Police crime prevention and responses (Griffiths Chap. 9)
“Hot spots” policing (Braga and Bond 2008)
A review of policing strategies and their effectiveness (Weisburd & Eck 2004)
Class 10 - Police deviance and violence
A “Mertonian” analysis of police deviance (Parnaby & Leyden 2011)
Career-ending police misconducts (Kane & White 2009)
Police use of force: A transactional approach (Terrill 2005)
Case study: Predatory policing in Russia (Gerber & Mendelson 2008)

Class 11 - Critical criminology, racial profiling, and policing
Limits of policing and crime control (Garland 1996)
Pro-police biases in newspapers (Hirschfield & Simon 2010)
Case study: Racial profiling in Toronto (Wortley & Tanner 2005)
Racial context and police force size (Stults & Baumer 2007)
Case study: Over-policing the homeless in Montreal (Sylvestre 2010)

Class 12 - Other policing topics
Policing functions outside the police: Huey (2008)
Policing terrorism: the Canadian model (Monaghan & Walby 2012)
Policing terrorism: the Israeli model (Weisburd et al. 2009)

Class 13 - Conclusion
Finish previous material
Personal conclusion: Paul’s view of the world

Accessibility Statement
Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Outline Disclaimer
To the best of my knowledge, this course outline provides a good overview of what students should expect from my class. The outline, however, is not a legal contract between the instructor and the students. It is possible that I will make minor changes to the course during the semester. Announcements of changes, if any, will be made in class and students are responsible for adjusting to these changes.

Please check Department of Sociology web site (www.sociology.uwo.ca) for class cancellations or changes
SELECTED ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS


