Advanced Criminological Theory Seminar: Biosocial Criminology
The University of Texas at Dallas
CRIM 7351
Fall 2013
Tuesday 7pm – 9:45pm
FO 2.410

Professor: J.C. Barnes, Ph.D.
Email: jcbarnes@utdallas.edu
Phone: (972) 883-2046
Office: GR 2.206
Office hours: Tuesday 12:00pm – 1pm and by appointment

It is easiest to reach me via email. I do not always check my office voicemail but I do check email daily.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Criminology has traditionally been dominated by sociologically oriented theories of crime causation. This focus has underscored the importance of environmental factors while, at the same time, dismissing the importance of biological and genetic factors. Indeed, most criminology textbooks give only a cursory overview of biological research into antisocial behavior, suggesting that these factors are unimportant. This conclusion, however, stands in contrast to a large body of research that identifies biological and genetic factors to be important in the etiology of criminal behavior.

This course will introduce the student to biosocial criminology, an emerging paradigm in the criminological discipline. Biosocial criminology encompasses several perspectives/categories that seek to unpack the association between genes, biology, the brain, the environment, and different types of antisocial behaviors. The course will unfold in three interrelated sections. The first part of the course will present an overview of some of the more popular criminological theories. During this portion of the class, we will discuss some of the reasons mainstream theorists have overlooked biosocial criminology. The second portion of the course will introduce students to concepts, findings, and theories germane to the biosocial focus. This part of the course presents research that will be new to most students. The final section of the course will consider the myriad ways in which biosocial research can and does inform theory and practice. In other words, we will discuss how biosocial research can be used to generate better theories and policies.

REQUIRED TEXTS

2) Research articles (see Course Schedule below)


**RECOMMENDED TEXTS (by subject)**

**Biosocial Criminology**


**Evolutionary Psychology**


**Genetics (Molecular and Behavioral Genetics)**


### GRADING

Your grade will be determined based on your performance on two (2) examinations, a research paper, and an in-class presentation of your paper. The exams will consist entirely of essay questions and will be worth 25 points each (50 points combined). Your research paper will be worth 30 points and the in-class presentation will be worth 20 points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>In-class Presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 - 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COURSE POLICIES

Attendance is mandatory. If you miss a class I strongly encourage you to borrow one of your classmate’s notes and then talk with me if you need additional clarification. I do not provide students with my notes nor will I post notes/slides to the Internet.

If you must miss an exam you will need to: (1) notify me within 24 hours AND (2) provide me with an acceptable excuse. Note that I may request written documentation. If you do not follow this procedure you will receive a zero on the examination.

Any student who is found responsible for committing an act of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of F or 0 on that project.
TECHNICAL SUPPORT & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

University policies can be viewed at: http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies
COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Review of popular criminological theories, aversion to biosocial criminology, and the complementary nature of biosocial research
8/27 & 9/3


Behavioral genetics
9/10

Beaver, K.M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 2

Plomin, R. et al. (2013). *Behavioral Genetics*, chapters 6 and 7


**Molecular genetics: Candidate genes and GWAS**

**9/17 & 9/24**

Beaver, K.M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 2

Plomin, R. et al. (2013). *Behavioral Genetics*, chapters 2-6


**Gene-environment interplay part 1:**
**Gene X Environment Interaction & Epigenetics**
10/1 & 10/8

*Ridley video, Moffitt/Caspi lecture, Nova video*

Beaver, K.M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 3

Plomin, R. et al. (2013). *Behavioral Genetics*, chapter 8


***EXAM 1 DUE: 10/15***

**Gene-environment interplay part 2:**
**Gene X Environment Correlations (rGE)**

10/15

Beaver, K.M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 3

Plomin, R. et al. (2013). *Behavioral Genetics*, chapter 8


Methodologies


Plomin, R. et al. (2013). **Behavioral Genetics**, chapter 9


Biosocial Interactions


**The Brain**

11/5

Beaver, K. M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 4

Plomin, R. et al. (2013). *Behavioral Genetics*, chapter 10


Ikram et al. (2012). Common variants at 6q22 and 17q21 are associated with intracranial volume. *Nature Genetics*.


Taal et al. (2012). Common variants at 12q15 and 12q24 are associated with infant head circumference. *Nature Genetics*.


**Environmental Influences**

11/12


**Evolutionary Psychology**

***NO IN-CLASS MEETING—ASC CONFERENCE***

11/19


***THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS***

11/26

**Applications to Criminological Theory & Policy**

12/3

Beaver, K. M. (2013). *Biosocial Criminology: A Primer*, chapter 6 and chapter 8


***EXAM 2 DUE & PAPER PRESENTATIONS***

12/10

***FINAL PAPER DUE***

12/18

Notes: Articles will be posted to eLearning. This schedule is not a binding contract. I reserve the right to make changes at any time and it is your job to stay abreast of these changes.