Department of Sociology and Criminology

Associate Professors: Alison Cares (chairperson), Steven Farough; *Assistant Professors*: Robert Biggert, Angela Kaufman-Parks, Francis Prior.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Sociology and Criminology seeks to educate students about the richness and diversity of social life and prepare them for professional careers. Department faculty offer students opportunities to cultivate the development of sociological and criminological perspectives, which link the individual to history, society and culture. We accomplish this through a variety of pedagogical practices both inside and outside of the classroom, enhancing critical intelligence (independent thinking), fostering compassionate service, and encouraging students to become informed, deliberative and engaged citizens.

Drawing on the theoretical and analytical tools of sociology and criminology, students are taught to use the results of empirical investigation to look under the surface of social phenomena and to probe the taken-for-granted social world in which they live. Developing the requisite skills to accomplish this also prepares students to compete successfully in the 21st century global economy where critical thinking, writing, and oral communication are at a premium.

The Department of Sociology and Criminology contributes to a liberal arts education within the context of Catholic intellectual traditions by encouraging self-discovery and promoting social justice. The department educates students to understand their world and encourages them to work for social change.

LEARNING GOALS

The Department of Sociology and Criminology has identified the following specific learning goals for our students:

1) To develop an understanding of sociological and criminological approaches to analyzing and addressing the complex interactions between individuals and societal, historical and cultural forces;

2) To appreciate the diverse ways of being human and understand the need for multicultural awareness;

3) To better understand how social inequality is based upon divisions of class, race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation;

4) To gain specific competencies in social research;

5) To acquire the essential skills for successful careers and post-graduate education.

MINOR IN CRIMINOLOGY (6)

The minor in Criminology, anchored in the discipline of sociology, provides students with a sophisticated understanding of crime as a social phenomenon. Students must take three required courses and three elective courses. Students majoring in Accounting, Chemistry, Data Analytics, Human Services and Rehabilitation Studies, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and other disciplines may find the Criminology minor particularly useful.

Required Courses (3):

SOC 121 Principles of Sociology OR SOC 122 Social Problems
CRM 130 Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
CRM 242 Criminology

Elective Courses (3):

Choose two from Deviance/Law and Society and one from Structural and Cultural Factors.

Law and Society (2)
>   CRM 243 Juvenile Delinquency
>   CRM 272 Deviant Behavior

CRM 275 Sociology of Law
CRM 325 Victimology
CRM 333 Prisoner Rehabilitation and Reentry
CRM 335 Family Violence
POL 316 Constitutional Law

Structural and Cultural Factors (1)
SOC 206 The Sociology of Urban Life
SOC 216 Racial and Ethnic Relations
SOC 224 Gender Issues in Society
SOC 232 Social Inequality in Society
SOC 234 Social Policy
SOC 250 Public Sociology
SOC 315 Masculinities

A NOTE ON PRE-LAW The American Bar Association confirms that majors and minors across the curriculum, combined with a strong liberal education, provide excellent preparation for law school. Assumption's Pre-Law Program provides personalized advising, co-curricular activities, and development opportunities for all students considering law school. See the "Pre-Law" section under "Pre-Professional Programs of Study." Above all, students considering law school should choose a major that interests them, pursue academic excellence in that field, and contact the pre-law advising coordinator, Prof. Carl Keyes, Department of History, ckeyes@assumption.edu or 508 767-7324.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS _____

CRIMINOLOGY (CRM)

CRM 130   INTRODUCTION TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
This survey level course introduces students to the purpose, structure, and function of the criminal justice system, which represents the government's official response to crime. Students will learn about the role of the various aspects of the criminal justice system (i.e., law enforcement, courts, and corrections) in responding to and controlling crime. A significant focus of the class will be on critical analysis of criminal justice policy and programs, such as mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, New York City's stop and frisk campaign, sex offender residency restrictions, mandatory arrest laws for domestic violence, day reporting centers for probationers and parolees, and victimless prosecution of domestic violence cases. The course will also force students to consider the challenges facing the criminal justice system, including an aging prison population, the impact of incarceration on families and communities, the pressure to efficiently process high caseloads, and protecting personal liberties while keeping citizens safe. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)
Kaufman-Parks/*Three credits*

CRM 242 CRIMINOLOGY
The course examines the patterns, causes, and consequences of crime, and the ways in which the criminal justice system attempts to deal with the crime problem in the United States. Specific substantive topics will include analyses of how laws are created; theories of crime causation; penology; the relationship between crime/criminal justice and social class, race/ethnicity and gender; fear of crime; the social construction of crime in the media; the growth of the prison system; and an assessment of the efficacy of alternative "crime-fighting" strategies, such as community policing. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)
Cares, Prior/*Three credits*

CRM 243 JUVENILE DELINQUENCY
This course examines the history of "juvenile delinquency" as a societal category and as a social problem. While the main focus is on competing theories of delinquent behavior and the relative effectiveness of various policy responses to juvenile crime, the course will also focus extensively on media portrayals of juvenile criminals and the broader topic of the social construction of the

juvenile crime problem. Specific topics include: decriminalization; deinstitutionalization; court diversion; radical nonintervention; community arbitration; and community-based corrections.

Kaufman-Parks/*Three credits*

CRM 255 SELECTED TOPICS IN CRIMINOLOGY

This course will permit the study of a selected topic within Criminology. The topic may change each time the course is offered.

Staff/*Three credits*

CRM 272 DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

This course examines how particular acts, beliefs, and conditions come to be defined as deviant; who confers the label of "deviant" upon whom; and how a deviant identity is managed by those persons successfully labeled "deviant." The main theoretical approach employed in this course, social constructionism, argues that deviant behavior cannot be understood in isolation from differentials in social power that permit some groups in society to define their lifestyles, beliefs, and status as superior and preferred. Specific topics to be covered include crime and delinquency; mental illness; drug and alcohol addiction; "alternative" lifestyles; the social organization of deviant subcultures; and elite deviance (white-collar crime).

Prior/*Three credits*

CRM 275 SOCIOLOGY OF LAW

This course examines the interrelationship between law and society by focusing on the "law in action" versus the law "on the books." It will offer a broad introduction to the law as a social institution, and it will analyze how the law shapes the form and function of other key social institutions such as the family, the economy, and the state (politics). Specific substantive topics to be covered include: theories of legal creation; types of legal systems; theories of social control and punishment; how laws are used to effect social change (the controversy over "judicial activism"); how racial and class inequalities in society affect the creation and administration of law; and how the work of key theorists in the discipline of sociology (primarily Marx, Weber, and Durkheim) have contributed to the field. There will be less emphasis on the content of law (i.e., legal doctrine and case law) than on the study of how laws represent and shape core societal values.

Staff/*Three credits*

CRM 325 VICTIMOLOGY

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the complexity of criminal victimization from multiple perspectives: the victim's, society's, and the criminal justice and other response system's. The course begins by exploring the nature and extent of the problem. Then, it moves on to explore theoretical frameworks used to explain criminal victimization. Next, it examines the consequences of victimization for victims, their loved ones, and society at large. The course concludes with a selection of special topics. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Cares/*Three credits*

CRM 333 PRISONER REHABILITATION AND REENTRY

This course combines classroom and experiential community learning to examine prisoner rehabilitation and reentry programs in the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the reasons for and against prisoner rehabilitation, the various types of rehabilitation services which may be offered, and how rehabilitation and reentry programs have an effect on continuing crime rates in the country. This course also entails a critical analysis of how the availability of rehabilitation programs impacts families, communities, and the safety of society overall. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Kaufman-Parks/*Three credits*

CRM 335 FAMILY VIOLENCE

This course combines classroom and experiential community learning to examine the phenomenon of family violence in the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the prevalence, risk factors and consequences of child maltreatment, intimate partner violence and elder abuse specifically. This course also entails a critical analysis of how definitions of and responses to family violence impacts individuals, families, communities, and the safety of society overall. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Kaufman-Parks/*Three credits*

CRM 485 INTERNSHIP SEMINAR I

This seminar provides interns with the opportunity to examine the internship experience along with other student interns. Students also examine related issues: social policy development; program planning, evaluation, and research; the social scientist's responsibilities for the use of her or his research; the political role of the social scientist; the "value-free" debate

among social scientists; applied versus pure sociology; the role of the social scientist within private and public organizations; management of human service agencies; and career options for social scientists. (Fall)
Prior/*Three credits*

CRM 486 INTERNSHIP SEMINAR II
This seminar provides interns with the opportunity to examine the internship experience along with other student interns. Students also examine related issues: social policy development; program planning, evaluation, and research; the social scientist's responsibilities for the use of her or his research; the political role of the social scientist; the "value-free" debate among social scientists; applied versus pure sociology; the role of the social scientist within private and public organizations; management of human service agencies; and career options for social scientists. Prerequisite: CRM365. (Spring)
Cares/*Three credits*