

SOCIOL 3410: Criminology Paper

Submission policy: This paper is due 11/13 at 12:45 p.m. You are to upload the paper to Carmen, as well as bring a hard copy to class. Be sure to put your name on your paper. *No extensions will be granted.* Beginning with a grade reduction at 12:45 p.m., grades will drop a third of a grade for every hour that passes, effectively giving you an “F” by the 12th hour. *We will use whichever is later, the Carmen timestamp or the hard copy, to determine your late penalty.* Assume the worst will happen, and start the paper as soon as possible.

Overview: For this paper, you can choose any topic in which you are interested, so long as it is related to crime, deviance, delinquency, or criminal justice in some way. I encourage you to choose a topic that excites you. You are to then explain that phenomena using the sociological theories that we have learned in class, with at least three lectures utilized in your explanation. You must then review what researchers have found on the topic. The paper should be at least 5 pages, double-spaced with 1 inch margins in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Specifics and grading: Below, you will find further instructions and how grading will work for the paper. The paper is graded out of 40 points and is worth 20% of your final grade.

1. **Choosing a topic (5 points):** So long as you choose an appropriate topic and describe why the topic is important and why you chose it, you will get these 5 points. As stated above, you can choose any topic that you like, so long as it can be explained well using the theories we have learned in class. To get you thinking, examples include specific types of crime (for example, homicide, assault, theft, embezzling, drug trafficking, stalking, etc.), crimes that occur in specific places (for example, white collar crime, college sexual assault, etc.), crimes with specific victims (for example, child abuse, spousal abuse, elderly abuse, etc.), victimless crimes (for example, specific types of substance use, gambling, etc.), groups of crimes (for example, terrorism, mass murder, etc.), topics in criminal justice (for example, racial discrimination, police use of force, recidivism, reintegration, etc.).
2. **Explaining your topic with theories (20 points):** You are to explain your topic through the theories we learned in class. You must use at least three theories *from three different lectures* (here, lectures are defined as unique sets of lecture slides). These must be the sociological theories, thus Lectures 4 to 10. You can use more than three theories, including different ones from the same lecture, as long as you reach the minimum of theories from three lectures. In this section, you should be specific about how the theory explains the topic. Merely stating the main premise of the theory is not enough: you must take us through the logic of the theories you are using and specifically describe how it can be used to explain your topic. You do not need to include citations for the theories, so long as the name of the theory and theorist is clearly stated.
3. **Summarize existing research on your topic (15 points):** Next, you must do a short review of what researchers have found on your topic. You must include at least 5 academic articles published since 2000, synthesizing what those articles have concluded on your topic of interest. Finally, in light of these articles, argue which of the theories you

reviewed apply best. Any articles will do, so long as they address the topic and are published in academic journals (anything that has “Book Review” in the title of the article, does not count). I include a how-to-find a scholarly article below. You must also include a references section, which does not count toward the 5-page minimum.

4. **Other ways to lose points:** You can lose points in other ways as well. This list is not exhaustive.
 - a. If there is any evidence of plagiarism, you will lose points and potentially be reported to the university. You should examine the TurnItIn score for your paper (it takes a minute to update after submission). We will examine anything that breaks 10%. In other words, everything should be in your own words.
 - b. If you do not properly cite the academic articles and/or include a references section, you will lose points. References should be formatted consistently and include authors, year, title, journal name, volume, and pages. (Not just links.)
 - c. If your articles are not from academic journals, you will lose points.
 - d. We will take off points for grammar if we cannot understand your paper.
 - e. If you do not meet the length requirement or take some shortcut to achieve it (e.g. mess with the margins), you will lose points.

Mike’s guide to finding articles easily

Here is a guide to find academic articles. If you need help finding articles, please begin with library staff before coming to the professor. Bring the assignment with you for the staff. If you still need help after that, feel free to talk to the professor or TA.

1. Go to <https://library.osu.edu/>
2. Click “Research Databases List” on the right
3. In the search box, type “web of science”
4. Select the link for the resource, which states “Web of Science Core Collection.” If you are off-campus, you may be prompted to enter you name.# at this point.
5. Under “TIMESPAN,” select 2000-2018
6. Under “Basic Search,” select “Topic” (should be the default) from the dropdown next to the search box on the right. Type into this search box keywords related to your topic. Now click “Search.”
7. Find an article you think fits and that interests you and click the big red box that says “Find It”
8. A new tab will pop up. At this point, there are three possibilities:
 - a. While highly unlikely, it is possible that the university does not have an article in full text because it does not have a subscription, in which case, try another article.
 - b. The article itself might pop up. There will be a link on the top left that says “PDF,” which you can click to see the full article, and at the top will be a link that says “Download PDF.”
 - c. The third possibility is that the window says, “Click this link to open the selected resource in a new window.” If that is the case, click that link, and proceed to the next step.
9. If you had to follow possibility c, a third tab will pop up. Somewhere on the page (the exact location on the page differs by publisher), it will say something like “Full text (PDF)” or just “PDF” that can be clicked to get the full article.