

LW5637: CRIMINOLOGY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Criminology

Subject Code

LW - Law

Course Number

5637

Academic Unit

School of Law (FL)

College/School

School of Law (FL)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

LW4637 Criminology

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Criminology is an inter-disciplinary field that draws on a number of different academic traditions - including law, psychology, economics, anthropology, psychiatry, sociology biology and statistics - to explain the causes and prevalence of

criminal behaviour, and to propose appropriate preventative, punitive and rehabilitative measures in dealing with crime, the communities in which crimes take place, and its convicted offenders. Criminology, in other words, is the social scientific study of the prevention, causation, and correction of crime.

While some scholars regard criminology purely as a social science discipline (a sub-division of sociology) distinct from law and legal practice, criminology can, and has, historically played an important role in reforming criminal law and the criminal justice system. Criminology is particularly valuable as an applied discipline which may inform the various decision-makers and stakeholders in the criminal justice system to better understand the causes and prevalence of criminal behaviour and to implement appropriate preventative, punitive and rehabilitative measures in dealing with its effects. Nonetheless, given the School of Law's parallel courses in criminal law and in criminal justice, this elective will focus on the causation and prevention of crime, rather than on criminalisation and government responses to crime through the criminal justice system. Moreover, note that this course is intended for JD students with no prior background in criminology during their undergraduate degree. Nor is it open to exchange students who have previously studied criminology.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Explain and critique the established criminological theories	25	x	x	
2	Interpret and critically evaluate empirical data and other sources of information that influence policy and public views on the causes, nature and the extent of crime	15	x	x	
3	Suggest how criminology can best assist the reform of criminal justice systems, particularly with regard to the causation, correction and prevention of crime and its effect on offenders, communities and victims	15	x	x	
4	Suggest and critique methods of preventing, explaining and responding to crime in Hong Kong and East Asia more generally	20		x	
5	Explain and critique the established criminological theories	25	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures and Class Discussions	Students will take notes during lectures on theoretical and empirical content. Each lecture topic covered will be followed by an in-class discussion based on previously assigned questions, and/or written exercises. Students may critique and clarify the course material during lectures.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3
2	Reading, Research and Writing Outside of Class Times	Students should prepare for lectures by completing and reflecting on the set readings, and by making notes addressing forthcoming discussion questions and exercises. The group presentation will involve substantial self-directed research, writing and speaking practice.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	c. 5
3	Field Trip	The course leader will escort students on a field trip during one of the three-hour seminar classes to a site or sites of interest for criminological research in Hong Kong.	2, 3, 5	0.25

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-Class Participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	Based upon contributions to in-class discussions and exercises, and oral critique of other students' group presentations	Yes

2	Group Presentation	4, 5	20	15-20 minute in-class presentation relaying and defending research assignment findings in randomly-allocated small groups within the cohort. Question focuses on a local or regional criminological topic	Yes
---	--------------------	------	----	---	-----

Continuous Assessment (%)

40

Examination (%)

60

Examination Duration (Hours)

3

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

40

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

40

Additional Information for ATs

3 hour unseen essay and/or short-answer-based examination testing knowledge and critical evaluation of lecture materials and readings. JD students will have to answer one more question than LLB students

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-Class Attendance and Participation (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Assessed on the basis of oral contributions to weekly in-class discussions and exercises, and oral critique of other groups' assignment presentations. Details of readings, discussion questions and exercises will be posted online the week before each lecture. Students are assessed based on active participation rather than purely on attendance, but it is impossible to score participation marks without attending classes.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Student demonstrates a strong interest in and critical engagement with all course material, a significant understanding of established criminological theory, an exceptional ability to relate theory to the local context, clearly and persuasively communicated written or oral responses, and an obvious ability to listen to, empathise and engage with fellow students' responses.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Student demonstrates some critical engagement with course material, a more limited understanding of established criminological theory, a reasonable ability to relate theory to the local context, somewhat clear and persuasive communication by written or oral responses, and some ability to listen to and engage with fellow students' responses.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Student demonstrates limited critical engagement with course material, little understanding of established criminological theory, a basic ability to relate theory to the local context, unclear written or oral responses that do not entirely persuade, and only an occasional ability to listen to and engage with fellow students' responses.

Marginal

(D) Despite otherwise participating in the teaching and learning activities, the student demonstrates no critical engagement with course material, little or no understanding of established criminological theory, infrequent ability to apply theory to the local context, provides written or oral responses devoid of persuasion, and shows little interest in engaging with fellow students' responses.

Failure

(F) Almost no participation in teaching and learning activities. The student cannot demonstrate that he or she has read or understands the course material, or that he or she understands any of the major criminological theories. The student does not attempt to apply these theories to the local context, does not contribute written or oral responses when prompted, and demonstrates no engagement with the views of fellow students on the course material.

Assessment Task

Group Presentation (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

15-20 minute in-class presentation relaying group research assignment findings. Each group member must speak. Assessed on the basis of oral presentation skills, visual aids if appropriate, timekeeping, and ability to defend findings against class and course leader critique. All group members receive the same mark, absent exceptional circumstances.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) As above

Good

(B+, B, B-) As above

Fair

(C+, C, C-) As above

Marginal

(D) As above

Failure

(F) As above

Assessment Task

Examination (60%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

3 hour unseen essay and/or short-answer-based examination testing description, critical evaluation and ability to relay, discuss and compare lecture materials and readings on criminological theories and concepts.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) As above

Good

(B+, B, B-) As above

Fair

(C+, C, C-) As above

Marginal

(D) As above

Failure

(F) As above

Assessment Task

In-Class Attendance and Participation (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Assessed on the basis of oral contributions to weekly in-class discussions and exercises, and oral critique of other groups' assignment presentations. Details of readings, discussion questions and exercises will be posted online the week before each lecture. Students are assessed based on active participation rather than purely on attendance, but it is impossible to score participation marks without attending classes.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Student demonstrates a strong interest in and critical engagement with all course material, a significant understanding of established criminological theory, an above-average ability to relate theory to the local context, clearly and persuasively communicated written or oral responses, and an obvious ability to listen to, empathise and engage with fellow students' responses.

Good

(B+, B) Student demonstrates some critical engagement with course material, a more limited understanding of established criminological theory, a reasonable ability to relate theory to the local context, somewhat clear and persuasive communication by written or oral responses, and some ability to listen to and engage with fellow students' responses.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Student demonstrates limited critical engagement with course material, little understanding of established criminological theory, a basic ability to relate theory to the local context, unclear written or oral responses that do not entirely persuade, and only an occasional ability to listen to and engage with fellow students' responses.

Failure

(F) Little or no participation in teaching and learning activities. The student cannot demonstrate that he or she has read or understands the course material, or that he or she understands any of the major criminological theories. The student does not attempt to apply these theories to the local context, does not contribute written or oral responses when prompted, and demonstrates no engagement with the views of fellow students on the course material.

Assessment Task

Group Presentation (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

15-20 minute in-class presentation relaying group research assignment findings. Each group member must speak. Assessed on the basis of oral presentation skills, visual aids if appropriate, timekeeping, and ability to defend findings against class and course leader critique. All group members receive the same mark, absent exceptional circumstances.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) As above

Good

(B+, B) As above

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) As above

Failure

(F) As above

Assessment Task

Examination (60%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

3 hour unseen essay and/or short-answer-based examination testing description, critical evaluation and ability to relay, discuss and compare lecture materials and readings on criminological theories and concepts.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) As above

Good

(B+, B) As above

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) As above

Failure

(F) As above

Additional Information for AR

Grading of Student Achievement: Standard (A+, A, A-...F).

Further details of the assessment scheme will be provided during the first lecture. Students will need to pay careful attention to their time management skills, and to the university's Academic Honesty policy: <https://www.cityu.edu.hk/pvdp/ah/ah-rules.htm>

To pass the course, JD students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 and thereafter must achieve an overall mark of 40% or above, and a mark of 40% in each of the course components (i.e. coursework and examination).

To pass the course, JD students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024 must achieve an overall mark of 50% or above, and a mark of 50% in each of the components of the course (i.e. coursework and the final examination).

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

1. Introduction to Criminology
2. Criminological Theory (3 Lectures)
3. Crime Statistics, Crime and the Media
4. Race, Gender and Crime
5. Criminology Field Trip
6. Violent Offences, Sexual Offences and Property Offences
7. Drugs, Alcohol and Sex Work
8. Organised Crime and Corporate Crime

9. Crime Victims

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Course Textbook
2	Tim Newburn, <i>Criminology</i> (3rd ed, Routledge 2017)
3	Students may purchase the course textbook from the campus bookshop or from online retailers. Copies of the course textbook are also available in the library's reserve section for short-term borrowing. Although there is an unofficial full-text version of the textbook available online, students may not use this version during the examination.
4	Readings will be set from the course textbook for each of the nine course topics. Additional readings will be set from sources not limited to those below, and distributed to students at least one week before the next class.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Books, Chapters and Articles
2	Jones S, <i>Criminology</i> (6th ed, Oxford University Press 2017; 7th ed 2021)
3	Liebling A et al (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Criminology</i> (7th ed, Oxford University Press 2023)
4	Chui EWH and T Wing Lo (eds), <i>Understanding Criminal Justice in Hong Kong</i> (2nd ed, Routledge 2016; 1st ed, Willian Publishing 2008)
5	Liu J et al (eds), <i>Handbook of Asian Criminology</i> (Springer 2013)
6	Liu J et al (eds), <i>Comparative Criminology in Asia</i> (Springer 2017)
7	Bosworth M and C Hoyle (eds), <i>What is Criminology</i> (Oxford University Press 2012)
8	Cao L et al (eds), <i>The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Criminology</i> (Routledge 2014)
9	Sheptycki J and Wardak A (eds), <i>Transnational and Comparative Criminology</i> (GlassHouse Press 2005)
10	Bakken B (ed), <i>Crime and the Chinese Dream</i> (Hong Kong University Press 2018)
11	Wong KC, <i>Policing in Hong Kong</i> (Routledge 2016)
12	Wang P, <i>The Chinese Mafia: Organized Crime, Corruption, and Extra-legal Protection</i> (Oxford University Press 2017)
13	Smith CJ et al (eds), <i>Routledge Handbook of International Criminology</i> (Routledge 2011)
14	Jones C and J Vagg, <i>Criminal Justice in Hong Kong</i> (Taylor and Francis 2017)
15	Gaylord MS et al, <i>Introduction to Crime, Law and Justice in Hong Kong</i> (Hong Kong University Press 2009)
16	McConville M and E Pils (eds), <i>Comparative Perspectives on Criminal Justice in China</i> (Edward Elgar 2013)
17	Pakes F, 'Comparative Criminology' in DS Clark (ed), <i>Comparative Law and Society</i> (Edward Elgar 2012)
18	Bottomley AK and K Pease, <i>Crime and punishment: Interpreting the data</i> (Open University Press 1986)
19	Jupp V, <i>Methods of Criminological Research</i> (Unwin Hyman 1989)
20	Lo SSH 'The Politics of Crime in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao' (2008) 39(2) <i>Asian Affairs</i> 251
21	Garland D and R Sparks, <i>Criminology and Social Theory</i> (Oxford University Press 2000)
22	Zhang J and J Liu, 'Asian Criminology: Its Contribution in Linking Global North and South' (2023) 61 <i>International Annals of Criminology</i> 223
23	Carrington K et al, <i>Southern Criminology</i> (Routledge 2019)
24	Liu J, 'Asian Criminology and Non Western Criminology: Challenges, Strategies and Directions' (2021) 59 <i>International Annals of Criminology</i> 103
25	Goyes D et al, 'Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue "Southern Criminologies: Methods, Theories and Indigenous Issues" (2021) 29 <i>Critical Criminology</i> 423

26	Braithwaite, J, 'Crime in Asia: Toward a Better Future' (2014) 9 AJC 65
27	Yu P and J Liu, 'The Theoretical Contributions of Asian Criminology in Reconstructing Criminology' (2023) 13 International Journal for Crime, Journal and Social Democracy 33
28	Belknap J, 'Asian Criminology's Expansion and Advancement of Research and Crime Control Practices' (2016) 11 Asian Journal of Criminology 249
29	Cavalcanti RP et al (eds), The Palgrave Handbook of Criminology and the Global South (Palgrave MacMillan 2025)
30	Burke RH, An Introduction to Criminological Theory (6th ed, Routledge 2025)
31	Government Websites
32	Narcotics Division, Security Bureau: https://www.nd.gov.hk/en/
33	Judiciary: https://www.judiciary.hk/en/home/index.html
34	Social Welfare Department: https://www.swd.gov.hk/en
35	Department of Justice: https://www.doj.gov.hk/eng/index.html
36	Census and Statistics Department: https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp
37	Hong Kong Police Force: https://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/
38	ICAC: https://www.icac.org.hk/en/home/index.html
39	Hong Kong Correctional Services: https://www.csd.gov.hk/english/home/home.html