



O.P. Jindal Global University
A Private University Promoting Public Service



THEORIES OF CRIME

Course Instructor: Prof. (Dr.) Caroline Agboola

Jindal Institute of Behavioral Sciences (JIBS)

4 Credit Course

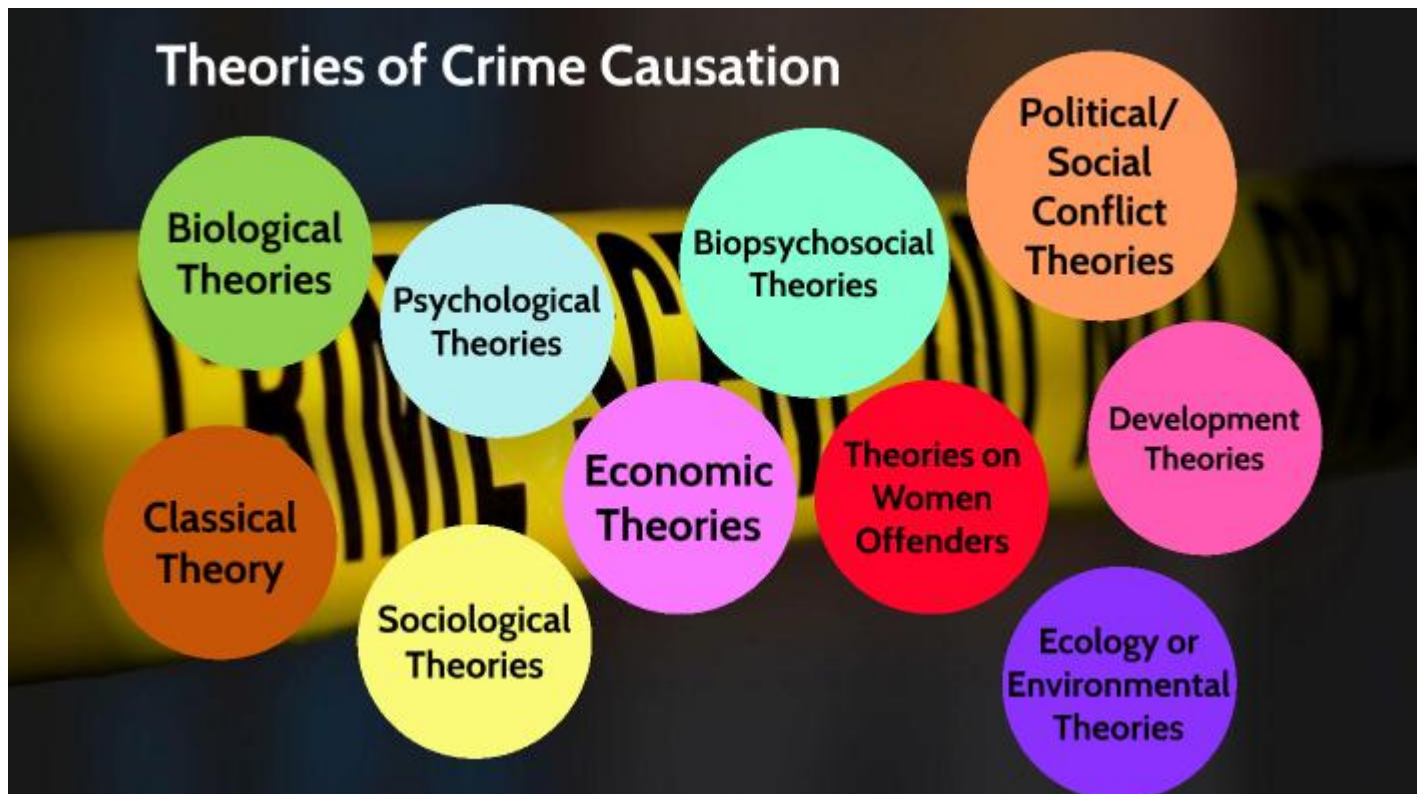


Image culled from <https://prezi.com/p/9zjpg414qnvf/crime-causation-theories/>

SPRING SEMESTER 2026

Faculty Contact: Prof. (Dr.) Caroline Agboola.

Email: caroline.agboola@jgu.edu.in

Office Hours: By prior appointment, 1-2pm on Tuesdays, and 1-2 on Wednesdays.

Classroom: To be determined.

The information provided herein is by the Course Coordinator. The following information contains the official record of the details of the course.

PART I

Course Title: Theories of crime.		
Course Code	BE-E-0101	
Course Duration	1 Semester	
No. of Credit Units	4	
Level	UG	
Pre-Requisites	Nil	
Pre-Cursors	Nil	
Equivalent Courses	Nil	
Exclusive Courses	Nil	
Class Timing	To be determined	

PART II

Course Description

Stories of crimes are shown and told to people by the mass media and social media regularly. This course will go beyond these stories and delve into the causes of crime and criminal behaviour, as well as provide insights into crime prevention measures; all these will be done from the perspective of criminology. The course will enable students to understand the evolution of crime and punishment, assist students with developing problem-solving skills regarding crime, acquaint students with various theories of crime, and teach students how to apply theories of crime to present-day criminal realities. Also, this course will provide knowledge on the explanations of crime, focusing on criminological theories. An emphasis will be placed on the application of the theories to the Indian and international contexts. The course seeks to develop students' analytical skills, particularly in establishing linkages between crimes in society and theoretical explanations for them.

Course Aims:

The course seeks to:

- a. Enable students to gain an understanding of the history of crime and punishment,
- b. Acquaint students with the key criminological theories, and
- c. Assist students with the development of problem-solving skills about the evaluation of criminal behaviour and its theoretical explanations.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes:

After the completion of the course, the students will be able to:

- a. Identify the causes of crime in society, its prevention measures, and solutions by using insights from criminological theories.
- b. Describe the nature of crime, and punishment of criminal behaviour.
- c. Discuss the evolution of crime and punishment.
- d. Explain criminal behaviour in line with the explanations of criminological theories.
- e. Assess theories of crime.
- f. Develop crime problem-solving skills based on the theories of crime.

Assessment Process:

The course will be majorly taught using class discussions, anecdotes, presentations, readings, and experiential exercises. The evaluations will include in-class activities, individual and group presentations, written assignments, quizzes, and projects.

Percentage breakdown of Grade

70% Internal Assessment (Divided into 3 components of Assignments 1-3).

Assignment 1: In-class assessment. This assignment is linked to learning objectives a, d, e, and f. Maximum marks = 20.

This assessment is designed to evaluate students' understanding of some of the concepts taught in class. This written assessment will require students to recall knowledge of a criminological theory and apply it to explain specific criminal behaviour.

Assignment 2: Quiz. This assignment is linked to all the learning objectives. Maximum marks = 25.

This assignment will assess students' knowledge on some of the topics that they taught in the course. Here, questions will be asked about selected topics that were taught on the course.

Assignment 3: Class presentations. This assignment is linked to learning objectives a, b, c, d, and e. Maximum marks = 25.

In this assignment, a topic will be given to the students, and they will be required to give a presentation on it in class.

30% End Semester Exam (Closed book and timed).

Note that clear instructions and rubrics will be provided for each assignment

Please note that absenteeism on day of assessment will not be entertained and no assessments shall be re-scheduled

Grading of Student Assessment

Letter Grade	Percentage of Marks	Grade Points	Interpretation
O	80 and above	8	Outstanding: Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability.
A+	75 - 79	7.5	Excellent: Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability.
A	70 - 74	7	Very Good: Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyse existing material and originality in thinking and presentation.
A-	65 -69	6	Good: Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills.
B+	60 - 64	5	Fair: Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B	55 - 59	4	Acceptable: Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of the study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B-	50 - 54	3	Marginal: Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials, and poor critical and analytical skills.
P1	45 - 49	2	Pass 1: Pass with Basic understanding of the subject matter.
P2	40 - 44	1	Pass 2: Pass with Rudimentary understanding of the subject matter.
F	Below 40	0	Fail: Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course.

Course Outline:

Unit I: (Week 1-2) The rational choice theory: **The classical school.**
The contemporary rational choice theories.

Unit II: (Week 3-5) The predestined actor model: **The positivist school of thought.**
Biological positivism.
Psychological positivism.

Unit III: (Week 6-7) Social structure theories: **Social disorganization theories.**
Strain theory.
Cultural deviance theory

Unit IV: (Week 8-9) Gender and crime: **Feminism.**
Feminist criminology.
Female criminality.

Unit V: (Week 10-13) Social positivism: **Social process theories 1 (Differential association theory, Aker's social learning theory and Hirschi's social bonding theory).**

Social positivism: Social process theories 2 (The victimized actor theories - Labelling theory and conflict theory.

Week 14 **Class presentations.**

Week 15 **Revision.**

Readings:

The readings are not exhaustive

Agboola, C. A. (2014). *A qualitative analysis of women's experiences before, during and after imprisonment in South Africa*. PhD thesis. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Akers, R. L. (1990). Rational choice, deterrence, and social learning theory in criminology: The path not taken. *The Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 81(3), 653-676.

Akers, R. L., Sellers, C. S., & Jennings, W. G. (2020). *Criminological theories: introduction, evaluation and application*. 8TH edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Belknap, J. (2007). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime and justice*. 3rd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Burke, R. H. (2005). *An introduction to criminological theory*. 2nd edition. Devon, UK: Willan.

Burke, R. H. (2018). *An introduction to Criminological theory*. London: Routledge.

Burke, R. H. (2019). *An introduction to criminological theory*. 5th edition. New York: Routledge.

Chambliss, W. J., & Hass, A. Y. (2019). *Criminology: Connecting theory, research and practice*. New Delhi: Taylor and Francis.

Chesney-Lind, M. (2006). 'Patriarchy, crime and justice: Feminist criminology in an era of backlash'. *Feminist Criminology*, 1(1), 6–26.

Chesney-Lind, M., & Pasko, L. (2013). *The female offender: Girls, women and crime*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Cullen, F. T., & Agnew, R. (1999). *Criminological theory: Past to present (essential readings)*. Los Angeles: Roxbury.

Daly, K., & Chesney-Lind, M. (1988). 'Feminism and criminology'. *Justice Quarterly*, 5(4), 497–538.

Gelsthorpe, L. (2020). "Feminist perspectives in criminology: Early feminist perspectives", Walkate, S., Fitz-Gibbon, K., Maher, J. and McCulloh, J. (Ed.) *The Emerald handbook of feminism, criminology and social change (Emerald studies in criminology, feminism and social change)*, Bingley: Emerald, pp.17-33.

Hagan, F. E. (2010). *Crime types and criminals*. California: Sage.

Jeffrey, C. R. (1959). Pioneers in criminology: The historical development of criminology. *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*. 50(1), 3-19.

Jones, S. (2021). *Criminology*. 7th edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lily, J. R., Cullen, F. T., & Ball, R. A. (2019). *Criminological theory: Context and consequences*. 7th edition. California: Sage.

Mallicoat, S. L. (2012). *Women and crime: A text/reader*. California: Sage.

Moloney, C., Chambliss, W. J., & Hass, A. Y. (2019). *Criminology: Connecting theory, research and practice*. New Delhi: Taylor and Francis.

Newburn, T. (2013). *Criminology*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge.

Newburn, T. (2017). *Criminology*. New York: Routledge.

Shah, A., Chaddha, P., & Kamdar, R. (2019). Feminist criminology: Flowers are committing sins. *Supremo Amicus*, 11, 124-133.

Tripathi, B. (2014). Feminist criminology: Some reflections. *Vidhigya*, 9(1), 1-6.

Slabbert, M. (1987). The development of criminology: From traditional to contemporary views on crime and crime causation. *Kronos*, 12, 3-7.

Tibbetts, S. G., & Hemmens, C. (2019). *Criminological theory: A text/ reader*. 3rd edition. California: Sage.

Professional Conduct in Classroom

You are expected to arrive on time in the classroom and follow the classroom decorum. It is expected that you are punctual in class and be seated immediately within the first two minutes so that the class can start on time. Students arriving after a ten-minute window from the designated start time will be refused entry/attendance. You are expected to participate in the classroom discussions, activities, and presentation. Participation is essential in this class. You are also expected to be respectful when the instructor is teaching. Furthermore, you are welcome to share your thoughts in the class, but you are expected to do that respectfully and be welcoming of other perspectives in the class even if you disagree with the same.

Notes on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not acceptable! Please refrain from copying and pasting paragraphs and sentences from your reading materials. This includes copying someone's words, structure, grammar, ideas, thoughts, and phrases and passing them as your own. Too many quotes are not acceptable!

What is acceptable? Using one quote which is not more than 40 words with proper citation. Use citation! It's a must! Present the content you read from your reading materials in your own words! Think and critically analyse the content! The source should always be acknowledged in your written material and presentation. All papers in this class will be checked electronically for plagiarism.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance in classes is strongly recommended. There could be components of internal assessment based on class participation. A student who fails to attend a class is expected to inform the Course Instructor of the reason for their absence. Any medical leave for missing classes will be granted with prior approval from the respective school only and upon submission of a valid medical certificate. Students are required to contact the Academic Office of their respective School to recommend any such requests. A minimum of 75% attendance is mandatory. Please note that in case students are found to be below the 75% attendance marks even after attempting the end term examination. They will still be held debarred due to shortage in attendance and the answer scripts will be considered null and void and will not be evaluated. Parents email/appeals or any other request will not be considered in case of debarment due to shortage of attendance.

Safe Space Pledge

Some parts of this course may discuss a range of issues that might result in distress for some students. Discussions and images in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel troubled due to either the contents of the course, or the conduct of the discussions, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. This does not mean that you need to feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say. Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibition and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students, but also the instructor.

Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements

JGU endeavors to make all its courses accessible to students. All students with a known disability needing academic accommodations are required to register with the Disability Support Committee dsc@jgu.edu.in. The Committee has so far identified the following conditions that could possibly hinder student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties; visual impairment; hearing impairment; medical conditions; specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia; mental health.

The Disability Support Committee maintains strict confidentiality in its discussions. The students should preferably register with the Committee in the first week of the semester as disability accommodation requires early planning. DSC will approve and coordinate all the disability related services such as appointment of academic mentors, specialized interventions, and course related requirements such as accessible classrooms for lectures, tutorials and examinations.

All faculty members are required to refer students with any of the above-mentioned conditions to the Disability Support Committee for addressing disability-related accommodation requirements.

Centre for Wellness and Counseling Services:

Contact: Email ID: cwcs@jgu.edu.in

Mobile: +91 8396907312.