

## **SOCI 317 ♦ SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR**

**Spring 2009**  
**Dr. Jesse W. James**

### **Course Preview**

The notion of social deviance or rule-breaking is one that is seen quite often in society. We see examples of deviant behavior and its consequences on television news, and in programming (♦Cops♦, ♦C.S.I.♦, ♦Cold Case♦, and so on.). We also read of instances of rule-breaking behavior in newspapers, and on the internet; people hear about it and talk about it in conversations with others. Moreover, some deviance is clearly criminal (assaults, murder robbery, kidnapping, rape); yet in other cases, some behavior may be seen as deviant or wrong, but may not necessarily be criminal at all ( cross-dressing, cheating on one ♦s mate, excessive alcohol consumption, etc.). So, how do we make sense of what exactly constitutes deviance??

### **Nature and Scope of the Course**

This is an upper-level course which examines the nature of and explanations for social behaviors that are considered violations of social norms. Beginning with definitions of "deviance", the course will progress to discussions of the extent of deviant behaviors, theories of the causes of and the role of social control of deviant behavior. There will be a broad range of specific behaviors considered with an aim of providing students with a distinctly sociological frame of reference through which a fuller understanding of deviance may be gained, although other perspectives will be considered as well. ♦ Policy implications will also be discussed.

### **Course Format**

This is a web-based using WebCT and will be based on assigned readings, and online discussions. It should be noted that student -to- student discussions are meant to enhance the understanding of the subject matter. There will also be opportunities for students to individually get in touch with the instructor (and vice-versa) as the need arises.

### **Requirements**

Students are expected to complete and assignments within the posted time limits; this includes readings, submit all exercises (yes, there are some), and exams on time. Some exercises are group discussions, some may be individual. Use your judgement about appropriate length.

### **Grading**

Grades will be based on the following formula:

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ 10 points for each exercise; 10 points for each discussion (whether group or individual), 100 points for each exam (there are two exams).

**Text**

Clinard and Meier, **Sociology of Deviant Behavior**, 13th edition.