

Graduate Program in Criminology and Deviance

Department of Sociology
Bowling Green State University

The purpose of the Graduate Program in Criminology and Deviance is to prepare students for professional employment in universities or government agencies. Reaching this goal requires a program with both breadth and depth, and one that emphasizes productive scholarship. This last requirement is facilitated by a maximum degree of student involvement in the research activities of the faculty members responsible for this program.

Program Requirements

Students choosing a major or minor in this program are responsible for meeting the general degree requirements described in the Graduate Catalog and those set forth in the Department of Sociology's Graduate Student Handbook. In addition, students in the Graduate Program in Criminology and Deviance must satisfy the following specific requirements:

1. All M.A. and Ph.D. students in the area must satisfactorily complete one core course, Sociology 6460 -- Theories of Criminality.
2. Students also must complete a number of additional elective courses from the list below:
 - a. M.A. students must complete two additional Criminology/Deviance courses
 - b. Ph.D. students minoring in the area must complete three additional courses
 - c. Ph.D. students majoring in the area must complete four additional courses

Exceptions to these requirements will be made only when a course is not taught during a student's enrollment in the program, or if unavoidable scheduling conflicts preclude a student from taking a course. Requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing to the Graduate Committee, which will consult with the faculty members responsible for the program. If a request is approved by a majority of those faculty members, an appropriate substitute course within the program may be used to satisfy the requirement.

Course Descriptions:

SOC 6440. Deviant Behavior (3). A general introduction to the field of criminology/deviance. Topics include an overview of major theories of deviant behavior, a primary focus on major types of deviance, and societal efforts to define and control deviant behavior.

SOC 6450. Juvenile Delinquency (3). A comprehensive review and evaluation of major theories, methods and current research in the field of juvenile delinquency. Topics include the juvenile justice system, the extent and nature of delinquent behavior, developmental processes in adolescence, and demographic correlates of delinquency.

SOC 6460. Theories of Criminality (3). A comprehensive review and evaluation of major theories, methods, and current research in crime and criminality. Topics include classical and contemporary criminal theories, empirical evaluations of theories, and methodological and policy issues involved in the study of crime.

SOC 6800. Topics in Sociology. (3) Systematic study of selected topics in several areas in sociology.

SOC 7430. Sociology of Violence (3). A comprehensive evaluation of theory, research and policy on serious interpersonal violence. Topics include crime trends, demographic variation in victimization and offending and the consequences and societal reactions to violence.

SOC 7450. Sociology of Law (3). Empirical and theoretical analysis of models of law, the creation and application of both civil and criminal law, the behavior of legal actors, the use of law to solve social problems, and the use of law across cultures.

3. Comprehensive Examination

a. M.A. Students: Thesis Option (Plan I)

M.A. students who write a thesis are not required to take comprehensive examinations in criminology and deviance

b. M.A. Students: Non-Thesis Option (Plan II)

M.A. students who select the non-thesis option will take a four-hour general examination on the basic theoretical models in criminology and deviant behavior, contemporary research findings, and the major issues confronting the field. Examinations must be taken during the examination periods scheduled by the Department of Sociology each year. Non-thesis students also are required to take two-hour examinations in Sociological Theory and in Methods/Statistics.

c. Ph.D. Students: Minor Area of Concentration

No minor area comprehensive examination is required.

d. Ph.D. Students: Major Area of Concentration

Doctoral students majoring in criminology and deviance must satisfactorily complete an eight-hour written examination. The exam consists of two four-hour sections. The first section is similar to the general examination required for non-thesis M.A. students; however, for Ph.D. students the quality of answers must exceed the minimum expectations for M.A. students. At the student's option the second four-hour section will either: (a) have the same broad scope as the first section, covering the entire field of criminology and deviant behavior, or (b) focus on a subfield appropriate to the student's interests. While this portion of the examination will be adjusted to specific interests, overly narrow choices, or topics that are completely outside the interests of departmental faculty will not be allowed. Examples of acceptable interests include: sociology of law, social

responses to crime, juvenile delinquency, violence, criminological theory, communities and crime, and crime across the life course. Examples of overly narrow areas include sexual deviance, subcultural theories of crime and delinquency, alcoholism, and Marxian perspectives on crime.

These course and examination requirements, in conjunction with requirements specified by the Graduate College and the Department of Sociology, are the minimal formal expectations. Beyond these, students are expected to construct a study plan to maximize the likelihood of becoming productive professionals in a competitive discipline. To facilitate this goal, faculty members responsible for the Graduate Program in Criminology and Deviance offer numerous topical seminars. Examples of topical seminars include Neighborhoods and Crime, Crime across the Life Course, and Social Responses to Crime. In addition, students are encouraged to pursue their interests by enrolling in Sociology 6850 and 7850, Readings in Sociology. This is an excellent way to explore topics not covered in regular seminars (for example, possible thesis or dissertation problems and work on papers intended for presentation at professional meetings). Some limitations on independent study courses should be kept in mind, however. First, these courses may not substitute for the required core courses. Second, they may not be taken in areas covered by regularly scheduled seminars. Finally, only a limited number of credit hours of independent study work can apply to the minimum degree requirements.

Summary

The Graduate Program in Criminology and Deviance has two important goals. First, its core curriculum requirements and examination policies are designed to insure that the student will acquire a thorough knowledge of the major issues and theories of criminology and deviance. Second, its diversified seminar offerings and flexible courses of independent study are designed to encourage the student to develop several areas of expertise within criminology or the sociology of deviance. Attaining both goals is essential for becoming a productive professional.

Criminology and Deviance Faculty

Jorge Chavez, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., 2006--University at Albany SUNY
Criminology; Violent Behavior; Crime across the Life Course; Mental Health; Childhood Maltreatment.

Stephen Demuth, Associate Professor
Ph.D., 2000--Pennsylvania State University
Social Responses to Crime; Criminology; Race and Ethnicity; Research Methods

Peggy C. Giordano, Distinguished Research Professor
Ph.D., 1974--University of Minnesota
Juvenile Delinquency; Criminology; Sociology of Deviance; Adolescence

Danielle Kuhl, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., 2007--Ohio State University
Criminological Theory; Juvenile Delinquency; Substance Use; Neighborhood Effects

Rekha Mirchandani, Associate Professor
Ph.D., 1998--University of North Carolina
Sociological theory; Law and Society; Sex and Gender

Raymond Swisher, Associate Professor
Ph.D., 1999--University of North Carolina
Violent Behavior; Incarceration; Family and Life Course; Neighborhood Effects

Matthew VanEseltine, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., 2011--Pennsylvania State University
Crime and the Life Course; Criminological Theory; Social Theory; Trends in Violence