



School of Behavioral and Social Sciences
Department of Sociology, Social Work and Family Sciences

SOCI 3010: Criminology
3 Units

Fall 2026

Meeting days/times:
MWF 12:15 - 1:10 pm

Meeting location:
Rohr 111

Final Exam: (Friday, December 14, 10:30 am - 1:00 pm)

Course Information	Specifics for the Course
Instructor title and name:	Annette Burkeen, J.D.
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Office location and hours:	Zoom Office Hours (Login Info on Canvas)

PLNU Mission✠

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course DescriptionⓈ

The study of crime and criminal behavior, the role of law, efforts at prevention and control.

Program and Course Learning OutcomesⓈ

This course is designed to introduce you to the study of crime and criminal behavior. We will explore a broad range of criminological theories that have influenced efforts at crime prevention and control. Legislators, law enforcement officers, judges and other criminal justice practitioners often rely on underlying assumptions about human behavior and society when addressing crime and formulating public policy. The study of criminological theory offers an opportunity to explore those assumptions and their implication for public policy.

We will cover classical and neoclassical criminological theories, biological and psychological approaches, sociological perspectives (such as social learning theory, control theories), structural approaches (such as social disorganization theory, anomie theory) and critical perspectives (such as Marxist approaches, feminist criminology, and critical race theory).

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Synthesize the historical, cultural and situational relativity of definitions of crime, criminality and delinquency;
- Connect the biological, psychological, social and structural forces influencing criminal behavior;
- Apply theoretical concepts to the study of crime and delinquency;
- Analyze the relationships between contemporary issues in the study of crime and various historical perspectives on crime.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources*

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

- Akers, R. L., Sellers, C. S., & Jennings, W. G. (2020) *Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation and Application* (8th edition), Oxford University Press. ISBN # 978-0190935252

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Course Schedule & Assignments

Over the course of the semester, students will complete the following assignments:

- **Learning Quizzes.** Students will complete thirteen (13) online learning quizzes. Each quiz is worth up to 10 points and will consist of multiple-choice and true-false questions.

Learning quizzes are open-book, open-note. Learning quizzes are designed to help students learn and master the course material, including the assigned reading. Students will be permitted to take each quiz up to two times. Your highest score will be entered into the gradebook. I will drop your lowest three quiz scores.

- **In-Class Discussions.** Students will work in groups to complete twelve (12) in-class discussions. Each discussion is worth up to 10 points. The discussion prompts are designed to help students think critically about the real-world application of the law. In-class discussions will usually occur during Friday lectures -- except as specifically indicated in Table 1 below. I will drop your lowest two discussion scores.
- **Exams.** Students will complete an in-person midterm exam and an in-person final exam. Each exam is worth 100 points and will consist of multiple-choice and true-false questions. Exams are closed-book, closed-note. The midterm will be administered on Wednesday, October 21, during our normal lecture time. The final exam will be administered on **Friday, December 14. from 10:30 am - 1:00 pm.**
- **Final Research Paper.** Students will write a 6 - 8 pp paper that analyzes a crime event, crime-related problem or a criminal justice policy from a theoretical perspective. Students will conduct research on (i) their chosen event, problem or policy as well as (ii) their chosen theory. As part of the process of developing the paper, students will submit:

Paper Proposal (25 points): Students will submit a one-paragraph description of the crime event, crime-related problem or criminal justice policy that they will research. The proposal is due on Monday, September 21 at the beginning of class.

Proposed Theoretical Perspective (25 points): Students must identify a theoretical perspective from which to analyze their proposed topic. Students will write 1-2 paragraphs that describes the connection between the student's proposed topic and the chosen theoretical perspective. The proposed theoretical perspective is due on Monday,

Final Paper (100 points): Students will explain how a theoretical perspective helps us better understand a criminal event, crime-related problem or criminal justice policy. The paper. The paper must be 6 - 8 pp (excluding title page and reference list). More details (including the grading rubric) will be posted on Canvas.

Table 1 will guide our coverage of course material. However, circumstances can change; so, I reserve the right to change the below Course Schedule as needed to ensure that we fulfill the objectives of this course. You will receive full and fair notice regarding any such changes.

TABLE 1 - COURSE SCHEDULE WITH DATE, ACTIVITY, AND ASSIGNMENT

Please note that, due to previously scheduled commitments, the instructor will post recorded lectures on Canvas in lieu of some in-person lectures. Such lectures are indicated in the course schedule below.

Date	Lecture/Activity	Assignments
Aug. 31 - Sept. 4	Course Introduction What is Crime?	Introduce Yourself! video (extra-credit) Learning Quiz 1 In-Class Discussion 1
Sept. 7 - 11	What is criminological theory? (No class on Sept. 7/Labor Day)	Atkins, Ch. 1 Learning Quiz 2 In-Class Discussion 2
Sept. 14 - 18	Classical and Neoclassical Theories	Atkins, Ch. 2 Learning Quiz 3 In-Class Discussion 3 Paper Proposal (due 9/21)
Sept. 21 - 25	Biological & Biosocial Approaches (Recorded lecture on Sept. 25)	Atkins, Ch 3 Learning Quiz 4 In-Class Discussion 4 (9/23)
Sept. 28 - Oct. 2	Psychological Approaches (Recorded lecture on Sept. 28)	Atkins, Ch 4 Learning Quiz 5 In-Class Discussion 5 Proposed Theory (due Oct. 5)
Oct. 5 - 9	Social Learning Theory	Atkins, Ch 5 Learning Quiz 6 In-Class Discussion 6
Oct. 12 - 16	Control Theories, Labeling Theories	Atkins, Ch. 6-7 Learning Quiz 7 In-Class Discussion 7
Oct. 19 - 23	Exam Q&A (Oct. 19) Midterm Exam (Oct. 21) (No class on Oct. 23/Fall Break)	
Oct. 26 - 30	Social Disorganization Theory (Recorded Lecture on Oct. 30)	Atkins, Ch 8 Learning Quiz 8 In-Class Discussion 8 (10/26)
Nov. 2 - 6	Anomie & Strain Theories (Recorded Lecture on Nov. 2)	Atkins, Ch 9 Learning Quiz 9 In-Class Discussion 9
Nov. 9 - 13	Conflict Theory (Recorded Lecture on Nov. 13)	Atkins, Ch.10 Learning Quiz 10 In-Class Discussion 10 (11/11)

Date	Lecture/Activity	Assignments
Nov. 16 - 20	Marxist Theories (Recorded Lectures on Nov. 16, 18, 20)	Atkins, Ch. 11 Learning Quiz 11
Nov. 23 - 27	Nov. 23: Paper Q&A via Zoom (No class on Nov. 25-27/ Thanksgiving Break)	
Nov. 30 - Dec. 4	Radical & Critical Theories; Feminist Theories	Atkins, Ch 12-13 Learning Quiz 12 In-Class Discussion 11 Final Paper (due Dec. 6 at 11:59 pm)
Dec. 7 - 11	Developmental & Life Course Theories;	Atkins, Ch. 14-15 Learning Quiz 13 In-Class Discussion 12
Dec. 14	Final Exam	10:30 am - 1:00 pm

Assessment and Grading⊕

The point values and due dates for assignments are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Assignments with Point Values and Due Dates

Assignment Description	Points	Due Dates
Introduce Yourself! video (Canvas)	5 extra-credit points	Sept. 6
13 Learning Quizzes (Canvas).	10 @ 10 points each	~almost weekly basis
12 In-Class Discussions	10 @ 10 points each	~almost weekly basis
Midterm Exam (MC/TF)	100 points	Oct. 21
Final Exam	100 points	Dec. 14
Paper Proposal	25 points	Sept. 21
Proposed Theoretical Perspective	25 points	Oct. 5
Final Paper	100 points	Dec. 6
Total Points	550 points	

Your final grade will be determined by how many points you earn out of the maximum of 500 points. For example, suppose that a student earns a total of 450 points on all of his or her assignments. The student's grade will be calculated as follows:

$$495 \text{ out of } 550 \text{ points} = 450/550 = 0.90 \text{ or } 90\% = A-$$

Table 3. Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

When a student's percentage falls between the designated ranges in Table 3, the instructor will use conventional rounding rules to determine the student's final grade. For instance, if a student's final percentage is 92.1, the student's grade will be rounded down to an A-. If a student's final percentage is 92.6, the student's grade will be rounded up to an A.

Midterm and Final Examination PolicyⓈ

Successful completion of this class requires taking the midterm and final examinations on their scheduled days. The midterm is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for *one* of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of criminal justice and sociology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

General Course Concerns*

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

The instructor's policy of dropping the lowest three quiz and lowest two discussion scores is a form of leniency that applies to all students regardless of specific circumstances. Therefore, the instructor will not excuse or accept late work. Nor will the instructor extend the windows for online learning quizzes.

Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care*

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State AuthorizationⓈ

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online

course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright PolicyⓈ

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording NotificationⓈ

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty PolicyⓈ

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. Please consult the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Behavior PolicyⓈ

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

PLNU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Any reliance on AI tools in this course is subject to an academic honesty violation.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center, [by email](#) or phone at 619-849-2533. Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging*

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice-free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the

religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination*

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the [Title IX Office](#).

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact [Counseling Services](#) or [consult the list of campus pastors](#).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

PLNU Attendance and Participation PolicyⓈ

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

PLNU Course Modality Definitions*

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction are fully online.
 - a. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
 - b. Asynchronous Courses: All class meetings are asynchronous.
2. Hybrid Courses: These are courses with class meetings that take place both in the classroom and online synchronously and/or asynchronously.
3. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qualified class interactions through a Learning Management System (such as Canvas).

In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered asynchronously, and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. More information on credit hours can be found in the [Academic Policies](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

Use of Technology⊗

Note: Include this section if teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

Loma Writing Center

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar, and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Email](#)