

SYLLABUS: Crime Control and Prevention Research Issues CRMJ 5xx

Course Description: This seminar reviews the social, political and practical issues surrounding current efforts to evaluate crime control strategies, assess their net payoffs, and develop new strategies. Special attention is given to the need to measure what's important, rather than just what's measurable.

We will address three major questions during our weekly, three-hour sessions: 1) What are the cost savings achieved by preventing different types of crime – or even a criminal career? 2) What strategies for preventing crime work and which don't? and 3) What kind of evidence does it take to make these sorts of assessments with good confidence?

In large part, this seminar will focus on the work of the Campbell Collaboration, an group of distinguished international scholars who have taken a very rigorous approach to addressing these questions during the past five years (see www.campbellcollaboration.org). We will examine their position – and those of critics – very carefully.

In order to successfully complete this seminar you will have to participate in – and periodically lead – discussions, demonstrate an understanding of key theoretical and research issues, and produce a high-quality essay on a topic that will be assigned during the last month of the seminar.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Professor: Bryan Vila, Ph.D.; WSU – Spokane Campus, room 222, Phase I Classroom Building; voice: 358-7711; e-mail vila@wsu.edu; fax: 358-7900. Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., by appointment – and via email or telephone.

Policy Regarding Academic Dishonesty: Honesty and the search for truth are the bedrock of scholarship. Within the confines of University regulations, I will do my best to see that any student caught cheating on an exam or otherwise violating regulations regarding academic dishonesty receives a failing grade for the course. If you have *any* questions about cheating, plagiarism, or scholarly standards, please ask.

Two Required Texts and Assorted Readings:

1. Brandon C. Welsh, David Farrington and Larry Sherman. 2001. *Costs and Benefits of Preventing Crime*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press. ISBN 0-8133-9780-4

2. Lawrence W. Sherman, David Farrington, Brandon Welsh and Doris MacKenzie. 2002. *Evidence-Based Crime Prevention*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 0-415-27047-2
3. Assorted additional readings will be provided.

GRADING, EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Course preparation and participation (see “Attendance...” below) 40%
- Take-home midterm essay exam 20%
- Final essay 20%
- In-class final essay exam 20%

Days/Times/Locations: The course meets every Friday in SCLS 148 from 5:30 pm to 8:10 pm.

Decorum, Attendance, Participation, and Preparation:

- Courses such as this depend upon the active and thoughtful participation of each student. We will discuss many highly-charged topics in an honest, civil, and free manner that encourages critical thinking and respects the diversity of opinion and thought needed for a graduate education.
- **40%** of your grade will depend on course preparation and classroom participation. Half of this portion of your grade will be based on my perceptions from your participation in each week’s discussions. The other half will be based on how well you are prepared when it is your turn to lead the discussion on a reading. Almost all of the readings discussions will be led by students, and most of these discussions will last about half an hour. **Discussion leaders are expected to have mastered the material about which they will lead. It is recommended that you prepare a one-page handout summarizing the high points of your presentation and e-mail it to the class in advance.**
- Obviously, you must attend class in order to participate. Two percent of your course grade will be deducted for each class missed, up to a maximum of 30%.

Research Essay: You will develop and submit a written research essay on an assigned, course-related topic that is no longer than 2,500 words (roughly 10 pages). Your proposal must be neat, typewritten (double-spaced, 12 pt. type), free of spelling and grammatical errors, and follow the

style used in either *Criminology*, *Justice Quarterly* or by the American Psychological Association. Only the most extraordinary excuses (e.g., certifiable serious illness or death in immediate family) will be accepted for not turning in essay on time.

Schedule, Lecture Topics, & Reading Assignments

- Jan 13 Introduction, administrative details, goals, and discussion of a model for thinking about crime control and prevention.
- Jan 20 WF&S¹ Intro & 1 (WF&S, Cohen)
- Jan 27 WF&S 2 & 3 (Taxman & Yates, Welsh & Farrington)
- Feb 3 WF&S 4 & 5 (Greenwood et al., Aos et al.)
- Feb 10 WF&S 6 & 7 (Dhiri et al., Chisholm)
- Feb 17 WF&S 8 & 9 (Sansfaçon & Walker, Nagin)
- Feb 24 WF&S 10 & TBA on the “Gold Standard” (WFS & TBA) **GET TAKE HOME MID-TERM**
- Mar 3 Take-home Mid-term, no class meeting
- Mar 10 SFW&M² 1 & 2 (SFW&M, Farrington et al.)
- Mar 17 SPRING BREAK!
- Mar 24 SFW&M 3 & 4 (Farrington & Welsh, Gottfredson et al.)
- Mar 1 SFW&M 5 & 6 (Welsh & Hoshi, Bushway & Reuter)
- Apr 7 SFW&M 7 & 8 (Eck, Sherman & Eck)
- Apr 14 SFW&M 9 & 10 (MacKenzie, Welsh & Farrington)
- Apr 21 Vila 1997 and associated papers from *Politics and the Life Sciences* roundtable on crime control and prevention.
- Apr 28 Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform. 2001. U.K. Home Office. *Plus* Police Performance Assessments. 2004/05. U.K. Home Office.
- May 5 Final Exam, Essay Paper due at start of exam.

¹ Welsh, Farrington & Sherman, *Costs and Benefits of Preventing Crime* (2001)

² Sherman, Farrington, Welsh & MacKenzie, *Evidence-Based Crime Prevention* (2002)