

CRM 216-02  
WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

Jim Messerschmidt  
Fall 2007

OFFICE: 1 Chamberlain  
PHONE: 780-4753/ e-mail: mschmidt@usm.maine.edu  
Departmental Office: 780-4105  
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

CLASS: 4:10-6:40pm, LB 303

## **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will concentrate on the broad criminological area commonly known as "white-collar crime." I have some specific goals we will aim to accomplish in this course: we will explore the question, "what is white-collar crime?" as well as read and think about, argue about, and make some decisions about specific areas of white-collar crime: namely, occupational crime, syndicated crime, corporate crime, and political crime. Finally, we will discuss and analyze what can be done in society to curb white-collar crime.

## **II. REQUIRED READINGS**

### **Books**

Friedrichs *Trusted Criminals*  
Cohn *Cowboy Republic*  
Hillyard et.al., *Criminal Obsessions*  
[http://www.crimeandsociety.org.uk/opus40/monograph1\\_17Oct05.pdf](http://www.crimeandsociety.org.uk/opus40/monograph1_17Oct05.pdf)

### **Articles and Chapters** (obtained online)

Bohm, Robert M., "Social Relationships that Arguably Should be Criminal Although They are Not: On the Political Economy of Crime"  
Aulette, Judy Root & Raymond Michalowski, "Fire in Hamlet: A Case Study of State-Corporate Crime"  
Kramer, Ronald C., "The Space Shuttle Challenger Explosion"  
Greenberg, Jerald, "The Steal Motive: Managing the Social Determinants of Employee Theft."  
Punch, Maurice, "Suite Violence: Why Mangers Murder and Corporations Kill."  
Kramer, Ronald, Raymond Michalowski, and Dawn Rothe, "'The Supreme Internacional Crime': How the U.S. War in Iraq Threatens the Rule of Law."

## **III. COURSE WORK**

We will be engaged in a variety of tasks in our efforts to achieve the goals I outlined earlier: reading the texts and articles; class participation; and taking exams. Let's look closer at each of these so you will know what I expect of you in this course.

### **Reading Assignments**

You will find the reading schedule further below in this syllabus. However, do not just read the assignments; react to them, write comments and questions, and list what you consider to be the main points. Do not take everything the authors say at face value. I have purposely chosen materials to challenge you; make the authors prove what they say. All of this will help you prepare for

class, for the exams, and for the argument paper. You will be expected to read the assignments before coming to class (reading assignments are clearly indicated in the course outline), and come prepared to engage in discussion. This class preparation will make everything easier and more interesting for you, other students, and me.

### **Class Participation**

All students are responsible for active class participation. Do not just listen to others talk! Class participation refers to physical attendance, asking questions, reacting to what others say (including me!), and expressing your own opinions. Evaluation of class participation is based on attendance and consistency and quality (not quantity) of engagement in class discussions. I will lower or raise your grade (e.g. "B+" to "C+") based on your class participation.

### **Exams (90 points)**

An exam will be given on October 17th, November 14th, and December 12th. These exams (which may consist of any combination of essay, multiple choice and true/false questions) will cover all class discussions and assigned reading material up to the time of each particular exam. Each exam will be worth 30 points for a maximum number of combined exam points of 90.

### **Make-ups**

Only documented emergencies or approved arrangements made with me well in advance of an exam or class attendance will be accepted. Students who do not show up for class without prior approval or documentation of an emergency will receive 0 points for the exam.

### **OPTIONAL Review Paper (10 points)**

Each member of the class will have the option to write a REVIEW paper that critically examines the book, *Criminal Obsessions*. This paper is intended to help you synthesize and integrate ideas from different course readings to support an argument. The paper must be no longer than five typed pages (double-spaced, in a standard font size). Optional Review papers are due on December 5th at the time of class. This is a strict deadline and no excuses, such as a computer malfunction, will be allowed. The paper must be properly referenced (with a bibliography) and be structured in the following way:

- I. Summary: Thoroughly summarize the book for the reader, discussing specifically what you consider to be the main points and conclusions that the authors present. Show me that you actually read the book!
- II. Your Review: A presentation of your argument about the book which must be supported by at least FIVE sources from the required reading list. In other words, your review of the book will be constructed in light of the required readings for the class.
- III. Conclusion: A summarization of what was presented in the paper and any conclusions you can draw from it.

To receive the maximum number of points on this essay your review and argument must be clear, persuasive, well-documented, and imaginative. There should be no misspelled words or grammatical errors.

Your letter grade for the course will be determined by the number of points you have accumulated by the end of the semester and your class participation. The total number of possible points are:

Exams	90 points
Review Paper (optional)	<u>10 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

The following scale is the number of points necessary for each letter grade.

A	-	90-100 points
B	-	80- 89 points
C	-	70- 79 points
D	-	60- 69 points
F	-	< 60 points

**Incompletes** If you need to obtain an incomplete for the course, simply contact me in person, by phone, or in writing, as soon as possible.

I look forward to a challenging and stimulating semester. Get involved, express your opinions, and do your work.

**MINIMUM GRADE REQUIREMENT:** A grade of C or better is required in order to use this course for Criminology major credit. If you have questions, see your advisor.

**ACADEMIC SUPPORT INFORMATION:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. At any point in the semester, if you encounter difficulty with the course or feel you could be performing at a higher level, consult with me. Students experience difficulty in courses for a variety of reasons. For problems with writing skills or time management, make an appointment to see a student tutor at the Academic Support Center, 242 Luther Bonney (780-4470). Help is also available through the Counseling Center, 106 Payson Smith (780-4050) and the Disabled Student Services, 237 Luther Bonney Hall. (780-4706).

**IV. COURSE OUTLINE****September 5 - No Class****September 12 - Introduction****September 19-26 - What is White-Collar Crime?**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapter 1  
Bohm

**October 3-10 - Occupational Crime**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapter 4  
Greenberg

**October 17 - EXAM #1****October 24-31 - Corporate Crime**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapter 3  
Punch

**November 7 - Social Control**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapters 10 and 11

**November 14 - EXAM #2****November 21 - No Class****November 28 - Political Crime**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapter 5  
Cohn (Whole Book)

**December 5 - State-Corporate Crime and Globalization**

Readings:  
Friedrichs, Chapter 6  
Aulette & Michalowski  
Kramer

**December 12 - EXAM #3**