

To Proposal 2/16/06

UWUCC Appr 2/14/06 05-39
Senate Info 2/28/06

Undergraduate Distance Education Review Form

(Required for all courses taught by distance education for more than one-third of teaching contact hours.)

Existing and Special Topics Course

Received

FEB 10 2006

Liberal Studies

Course: CRIM 400

Instructor(s) of Record: Robert Mutchnick

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Step One: Proposer

A. Provide a brief narrative rationale for each of the items, A1- A5.

1. How is/are the instructor(s) qualified in the distance education delivery method as well as the discipline?
Instructor has been a faculty member in the Department of Criminology at IUP for the past 23 years during which time he has taught not only this course in the traditional face-to-face format, but he has also taught numerous other courses in the curriculum. He holds a Ph.D. in criminology and has a vast array of experiences using technology in the classroom. The instructor is well versed in the use of WebCT and has taught distance education classes for the IUP for each of the last six summers.

2. How will each objective in the course be met using distance education technologies?
Objective # 1 - Students will be provided an opportunity to gain a historical understanding of the origins of theories of crime and justice systems.
How Objective # 1 will be met - Students will be assigned readings that relate to the historical development of theory. In fact, the course is set up using a chronology of material beginning with early Enlightenment theorists up till present day developments. Included will be materials that relate to the definition and identification of "good" theory. In addition, students will be directed to relevant URLs that incorporate material on the historical development of theory as it relates to crime and justice systems, not only in the United States, but around the world.

Objective # 2 - Students will be provided an opportunity to develop awareness of how socio-demographic characteristics impact the development of theories of crime and justice systems as well as policy.
How Objective # 2 will be met - There are various criminological theories (cartographic school, ecological school, for example) that lend themselves specifically to this objective. In addition specific readings that will provide the student with a base for understanding, they will engage in an interactive exercise that will require them to "map" many of the socio-demographic characteristics that are typically studied. Creating maps with these overlays will give the students a hand-one perspective with regards to the distribution of crime and how it relates to different socio-demographic variables.

Objective # 3 - Students will learn basic theoretical assumptions and dominant perspectives in criminology.
How Objective # 3 will be met - The readings cover a broad range of perspectives that include biological, sociological, psychological, economic, and bio-psycho-social approaches to understanding and explaining crime. The sample lesson that is attached provides an example of how the basic theoretical assumptions of theory are explained and the exercise requires students to be able to interactively participate in the development of a theoretical model.

Objective # 4 - Students will be provided with an opportunity to further develop their skills in writing and critical thinking.

How Objective # 4 will be met - a term paper designed to assess the critical and creative thinking of the student will be required. Attached to this submission are examples of the rubrics that will be used to guide the student in the development of their term papers. The students will initially react to the draft of other students, completing a rubric for the author to assist her/him in developing their final submission. The same

rubric will be used by the instructor to grade the final submission. In addition, students will participate in periodic on-line threaded discussions replying to a set of questions created by the instructor (based on assigned readings) and exchanging ideas with their colleagues.

3. How will instructor-student and student-student, if applicable, interaction take place?
Instructor/student interaction will be able to take place through the use of at least three different methods:
- A. email
 - B. threaded discussion
 - C. live, on-line office hours held throughout the week
- In addition, if there are specific problems/issues that cannot be addressed/resolved using the above three methods, telephone calls can be exchanged between the instructor and student(s)

Student-student interaction will be able to take place through the use of the following four methods:

- A. email
- B. threaded discussion
- C. chat rooms
- D. telephone calls if necessary

4. How will student achievement be evaluated?
Student achievement will be evaluated using four methods:
- A. objective exams graded by the instructor
 - B. threaded discussions graded by the instructor
 - C. draft review of student term papers graded by their colleagues
 - D. grading of final version of term paper by instructor

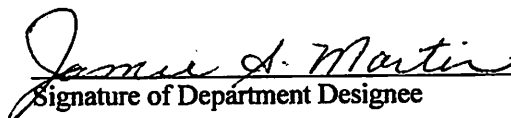
5. How will academic honesty for tests and assignments be addressed?
For the past 6 years, I have been testing students with on-line exams using both objective and subjective types of questions. While it is not possible to guarantee that students cannot/will-not be dishonest, there are a number of techniques I employ to try to reduce/contain the amount of dishonesty. The techniques include, but are not limited to the following:
- A. timed exams
 - B. large test bank to allow for randomized questions
 - C. early identification of term paper topic and submission of list of sources and draft of paper
 - D. use of Google advanced search to aid with detecting plagiarism
 - E. use of Turn It In when deemed necessary/appropriate (instructor has taken workshop on using Turn It In)
 - F. use of "honor code" style statement to inform students about dishonesty and how it will be addressed
 - G. in some instances, exam is opened at a set time so all students have to take exam at same time

- B. Submit to the department or its curriculum committee the responses to items A1-A5, the current official syllabus of record, along with the instructor developed online version of the syllabus, and the sample lesson. This lesson should clearly demonstrate how the distance education instructional format adequately assists students to meet a course objective(s) using online or distance technology. It should relate to one concrete topic area indicated on the syllabus.

Step Two: Departmental/Dean Approval

Recommendation: Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

Negative


Signature of Department Designee

2/07/06
Date

SYLLABUS OF RECORD

I. Catalog Description

CRIM 400 Theoretical Criminology
Prerequisite: CRIM 102

3 Credits

A review and critical analysis of the major criminological theories beginning with the Classic School; psychological, sociological, economic, biological, and political theories of crime and its causes will be included.

II. Course Objectives

1. Students will be provided an opportunity to gain a historical understanding of the origins and development of theories of crime and justice systems.
2. Students will be provided an opportunity to develop awareness of how socio-demographic characteristics impact the development of theories of crime and justice systems as well as policy.
3. Students will learn basic theoretical assumptions and dominant perspectives in criminology.
4. Students will be provided an opportunity to further develop their skills in writing and critical thinking.

III. Course Outline

A. Introduction to Theory:

1. Purposes of Theory
2. Levels of Analysis: Micro (Processes) & Macro (Structures & Institutions)
3. Relationship between Theory and Research

B. Major Criminological Schools of Thought

1. Free Will versus Determinism
 - A. Rationality
 - B. Individual Determinism
 - C. Social Determinism
2. Major Criminological Paradigms
 - A. Structural-Functionalism
 - B. Conflict Theory
 - C. Symbolic Interactionism
 - D. Critical Theory

C. Micro-Criminological Theory

1. Deterrence & Rational Theory—Elements and Role:
 - A. Biological and Psychological Theories
 - B. Malum in Se & Malum Prohibitum
2. Symbolic Interactionism

D. Macro-Criminological Theory

1. The Chicago School: Social Disorganization Theory & Revisions Structure, Environment and Crime
2. Social Stratification and Crime
3. Community Dynamics, Economic Resources and Crime

E. Feminist Criminological Theory

1. Social Deconstructionists Theories
2. Strain Theories
3. Victimology: Routine Activities & Lifestyles Theories

F. Integrated Theories: Micro-Macro Link

1. Theories of Crime-Fear & Defensible Space
2. Social Learning Theory: Differential Association and Opportunity Theory
3. Social Control Theory
4. Dramaturgical Theory
5. Labeling Theory

G. Linking Theory and Research

1. Social Policy Implications
2. Criminal Justice Reform
 - a. Police
 - b. Courts
 - c. Law
 - d. Prisons
3. Community-Oriented Policy

IV. Evaluation Methods

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

40% A class project that will include writing.

This project may be based on students' integration of theory, class discussion, and peer/group discussions whereby students will examine social problems and/or issues related to the criminal justice system.

30% In-class or take-home essay examinations that require students' to write their responses in a thorough manner addressing the substantive issues.

30% In-Class & Out-of-Class Exercises. Students will engage in several group exercises that involve short, in-class writing assignments (1-2 pages) in an effort to further apply what they learn. These assignments may occur in a group setting or individual papers;

they may be developed as part of an oral presentation, or reactions to films, readings or other applied materials on crime and/or justice systems.

V. Required Textbooks, supplemental books and readings

Textbook: Moyer, Imogene. (2001). Criminological Theories: Traditional and Nontraditional Voices and Themes. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stylistic Manual: Johnson, William A., Jr., Richard P. Rettig, Greg M. Scott and Stephen M. Garrison. (2002). The Criminal Justice Student Writer's Manual. 2nd Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Sample supplemental book: Gabbidon, Shaun L., Helen T. Greene, and Vernetta D. Young, Eds. (2002). African American Classics in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Supplemental readings: A packet of additional readings may be required; they will be available for purchase at *Copies Now*.

VI. Special resources requirements

No special resources are required by the course.

VII. Bibliography

Becker, Howard S. (1963). Outsiders. New York: The Free Press.

Chesney-Lind, Meda and Randall G. Shelden. (1998). girls, delinquency, and juvenile justice. 2nd Ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Collins, Patricia Hill. (1990). Black Feminist Thought. New York: Routledge.

Conrad, Peter and Joseph W. Schneider. (1985). Deviance and Medicalization. Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishing Company.

Durkheim, Emile. (1984). The Division of Labor in Society. New York: The Free Press.

_____. (1973). On Morality and Society. Edited by Robert Bellah. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Erikson, Kai T. (1966). Wayward Puritans. New York: Macmillan.

- Goffman, Erving. (1967). Interaction Ritual. New York: Pantheon Books.
- _____. (1959). The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. New York: Anchor.
- Kasler, Dirk. (1988). Max Weber: An Introduction to his Life and Work. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Kolakowski, Leszek. (1978). Main Currents of Marxism: 1-The Founders. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Loufland, John and Lyn H. Loufland. (1984). Analyzing Social Settings. 2nd Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Mills, C. Wright. (1959). The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Simmel, Georg. (1971). On Individuality and Social Forms. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Tobolowsky, Peggy M. (2000). Understanding Victimology: Selected Readings. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.
- West, Cornell. (1993). Race Matters. New York: Vintage Books.
- Williams, Frank P. III and Marilyn D. McShane. (1999). Criminological Theory. 3rd Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

CR 400 - Theoretical Criminology

Instructor: Dr. Robert Mutchnick

Course Information

Course Description: A review and critical analysis of the major criminological theories beginning with the Classical School, Psychological, Sociological, Economic, Biological, and Political theories of crime and its causes will be included.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be provided an opportunity to gain a historical understanding of the origins and development of theories of crime and justice systems
2. Students will be provided an opportunity to develop awareness of how socio-demographic characteristics impact the development of theories of crime and justice systems as well as policy
3. Students will learn basic theoretical assumptions and dominant perspectives in criminology
4. Students will be provided with an opportunity to further develop their skills in writing and critical thinking

Prerequisites and Co-requisites: Prerequisites: CR 102

Course Topics: Gouldner Article – “Coming Crisis in Western Sociology”
Walsh and Ellis Article – “Ideology: Criminology's Achilles' Heel?”
What is Theory?
Enlightenment Theorists
Classical School
Positive School
Cartographic School
Physical Appearance
Chicago School
Symbolic Interaction
Differential Association
Anomie
Subcultural
Labeling
Conflict/Gender Based
Social Control
Social Learning
Rational Theory
Self-Control

Theories of Complexity

Specific Course Requirements: Tests: (Total Value = 300 points)
There will be six (6) objective tests during the semester. The five tests will not be cumulative.

Threaded Discussions: (Total Value = 300 points)
Three threaded discussions during which students will have the opportunity to post replies to questions listed related to articles assigned for reading.

Term Paper: (Total Value = 400 points)
A ten (10) page term paper is required. Students can choose between two topics for the paper: 1) hate crimes; or 2) victimless crimes. Students are required to select at least one theory from the theories covered in this course and develop a term paper that follows the section guidelines of the rubric as attached. A typed draft of the paper must be submitted by the halfway point of the class. The typed draft is worth a maximum of 50 points. The final version of the paper the last day of class. The final version of the paper is worth a maximum of 350 points.

The rubrics for grading of the paper is attached, along with a point value for both the draft and final version of the paper. The graded rubric for the draft version will be returned to the student, once completed, to help inform the student as s/he develops their final version.

*****NOTE*** Only those materials graded/scored by the Instructor will count towards the students final grade in the class.**

Textbooks, Supplementary Materials, Hardware and Software Requirements

Required Textbooks: Criminological Theory, Williams and McShane, 4th Edition, Prentice Hall, Inc.

Supplementary Materials: All supplemental materials are also contained within the WebCT program.

Hardware Requirements: A minimum of a Pentium II with 64 Mgs of Memory and a modem with a minimum speed of 28.8 Kbps

Software Requirements: None

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Robert Mutchnick

Instructor Contact Information: **Email Address:** rjmutch@iup.edu

Office Phone: 724.357.5604

Fax: 724.349.5879

Dept. Phone: 724.357.2720

Office and Office Hours: **Office:** 105 Wilson Hall

Office Hours:

The nature of this course reduces the opportunity for face-to-face meetings. To replace the traditional office hours, the instructor will be available on line for three hours per week at the following times:

Monday 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Tuesday 8:00 – 9:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Additional times by Appointment

During office hours, instructor can be reached via the “chat room” which will be designated for office hours. If confidentiality is a factor, student and faculty can participate in a private “chat” on-line.

In addition to regular office hours, the instructor will respond to e-mails from students who use the e-mail package in the WebCT course. Please do NOT use the IUP campus email program to communicate issues related to the class.

Instructor Response Time: Instructor will make every attempt to respond to course e-mail within 24 hours during the work week, though it may not be possible in all cases.

Assessment and Grading

Testing Procedures: During the course of the semester there will be six (6) exams that students will take on-line. Each exam will be taken once the student has completed the assignments for the respective Unit. Total points = 300.

Threaded Discussions: There will be 3 threaded discussions spaced throughout the course. Each threaded discussion will be based on one or two current articles that are either about theory, or relate theory to some practical application or policy. Total points = 300

Term Paper:

A ten (10) page term paper that is a theoretical explanation of either hate crimes or victimless crimes. The theory used to explain hate crime or victimless crime must be one of the theories covered in this course (See Specific Course Requirements above for more information). Total points = 400

Grading Procedure: Grades will be based on a straight percentage of the total points of the class, and represents scores earned on exams, and the draft and final version of the term paper.

Grading Scale: Total possible points for class = 1000 (300 hundred from exams, 300 from threaded discussions and 400 from the term paper [50 for draft, 350 for final version])

90.0% or more	= 900 or more points	---A
80.0% - 89.9%	= 800 - 899 points	---B
70.0% - 79.9%	= 700 - 799 points	---C
60.0% - 69.9%	= 600 - 699 points	---D
59.0% or less	= 599 points or less	---F

Assignments and Participation

Assignments and Projects: There will be no extra credit assignments or projects allowed.

Class Participation: For the class to be successful, each student will need to contribute as we exchange ideas related to articles we read for threaded discussions. The better the quality of your contributions, the better the class.

Police On Awarding Incomplete Grades

The grade of "I" will only be awarded to students of record whose work, which so far as it has progressed, is of passing grade, but, is incomplete because of accident, illness, pregnancy, or extreme emotional disturbance.

Guidelines for Communications

Email: Examples:

Always include a subject line.

Remember without facial expressions some comments may be taken the wrong way. Be careful in wording your emails. Use of emoticons might be helpful in some cases.

Use standard fonts.

Do not send large attachments without permission.

Special formatting such as centering, audio messages, tables, html, etc. should be avoided unless necessary to complete an assignment or other communication.

Respect the privacy of other class members.

Discussion Groups: Examples:

Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion. Be a lurker then a discussant. Try to maintain threads by using the "Reply" button rather than starting a new topic.

Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group. Be respectful of other's ideas.

Be patient and read the comments of other group members thoroughly before entering your remarks.

Be cooperative with group leaders in completing assigned tasks.

Be positive and constructive in group discussions.

Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner.

Chat: Examples:

Introduce yourself to the other learners in the chat session. Be polite. Choose your words carefully. Do not use derogatory statements.

Be concise in responding to others in the chat session.

Be prepared to open the chat session at the scheduled time.

Be constructive in your comments and suggestions.

Web Resources: Examples:

Columbia Guide to Online Style by Janice R. Walker and

Todd Taylor

Citation Styles Online

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/cite6.html>

Course Outline

Unit 1 – Introduction to Theory

Gouldner Article

Walsh and Ellis Article

What is Theory?

Unit 2 – Early Theories/Theorists

Enlightenment Theorists

Classical School

Positive School

Unit 3 – Chicago School and Developments Leading to Subcultural Theory

Symbolic Interaction

Differential Association

Anomie

Subcultural

Unit 4 – Theories of the 1960s and 1970s

Labeling

Conflict/Gender Based

Social Control

Social Learning

Unit 5 – Theories of the 1980 and 1990s

Rational Theory

Self-Control

New Strain/Development

Theories of Complexity

Syllabus Changes

Any **necessary** changes to the course syllabus will be sent to the student via e-mail.

Review for: _____

Rubric For Draft Version of Term Paper (50 points)

Section I: Factual Information Related to Hate Crime or Victimless Crime

7 to 10 points	4 to 6 points	0 to 3 points
Includes detailed explanation of the major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime with complete information to establish a full understanding of hate crime or victimless crime	Includes an adequate explanation of the major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime with minimal information to understand hate crime or victimless crime	Omits some important major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime or presents incorrect information so that one cannot fully understand hate crime or victimless crime

Comments:

Points for Section I: _____

Section II: Development of Selected Theory

7 to 10 points	4 to 6 points	0 to 3 points
Presents a clear articulation and insightful analysis of the important concepts or elements of the theory selected	Adequately analyses the important concepts or elements of the theory selected	Provides a superficial presentation that contains little or no evidence of the important concepts or elements of the theory selected

Comments:

Points for Section II: _____

Section III: Application of Theory to Explain Hate Crime of Victimless Crime

7 to 10 points	4 to 6 points	0 to 3 points
Application is creative and insightful. Ideas are soundly grounded in the elements of the theory selected	Presents an adequate application of the elements of the theory to explain the crime or criminal case	Contains little or no evidence of critical application of elements of theory to explain the crime or criminal case.

Comments:

Points for Section III: _____

Section IV: Correctional Policy Implications

7 to 10 points	4 to 6 points	0 to 3 points
Presents an insightful treatment/punishment plan based on an understanding of the causes of hate crime or victimless crime	Suggests an adequate treatment/punishment plan for hate crime or victimless crime; may not be specific to the theory selected.	Punishment/treatment plan is less than adequate; is not appropriate given the theory selected to explain hate crime or victimless crime.

Comments:

Points for Section IV: _____

Section V: Bibliography

4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	0 to 1 point
Bibliography includes at least ten different sources that represent scholarly refereed journals, government monographs and texts published by legitimate publishing houses.	Includes at least ten different sources most, but not all, of which are from scholarly refereed journals, government monographs and texts published by legitimate publishing houses.	Bibliography includes less than 10 different sources. The sources may or may not be from acceptable sources.

Comments:

Points for Section V: _____

Section VI: Written Communication

4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	0 to 1 points
Language is clear, concise and easy to understand. Uses terminology appropriately and is well organized	Is adequately written, but may use some terms incorrectly; may need to be read two or more times to be understood.	Poorly written; terms are used incorrectly; cannot comprehend learner's ideas after repeated readings.

Comments:

Points for Section VI: _____

Total Points:

Section I: _____

Section II: _____

Section III: _____

Section IV: _____

Section V: _____

Section VI: _____

Total Points: _____

Reviewer: _____

Date of Review: _____

Review for: _____

Rubric For Final Version of Term Paper (250 points)

Section I: Factual Information Related to Hate Crime or Victimless Crime

54 to 80 points	27 to 53 points	0 to 26 points
Includes detailed explanation of the major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime with complete information to establish a full understanding of hate crime or victimless crime	Includes an adequate explanation of the major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime with minimal information to understand hate crime or victimless crime	Omits some important major facts related to hate crime or victimless crime or presents incorrect information so that one cannot fully understand hate crime or victimless crime

Comments:

Points for Section I: _____

Section II: Development of Selected Theory

54 to 80 points	27 to 53 points	0 to 26 points
Presents a clear articulation and insightful analysis of the important concepts or elements of the theory selected	Adequately analyses the important concepts or elements of the theory selected	Provides a superficial presentation that contains little or no evidence of the important concepts or elements of the theory selected

Comments:

Points for Section II: _____

Section III: Application of Theory to Explain Hate Crime of Victimless Crime

54 to 80 points	27 to 53 points	0 to 26 points
Application is creative and insightful. Ideas are soundly grounded in the elements of the theory selected	Presents an adequate application of the elements of the theory to explain the crime or criminal case	Contains little or no evidence of critical application of elements of theory to explain the crime or criminal case.

Comments:

Points for Section III: _____

Section IV: Correctional Policy Implications

54 to 80 points	27 to 53 points	0 to 26 points
Presents an insightful treatment/punishment plan based on an understanding of the causes of hate crime or victimless crime	Suggests an adequate treatment/punishment plan for hate crime or victimless crime; may not be specific to the theory selected.	Punishment/treatment plan is less than adequate; is not appropriate given the theory selected to explain hate crime or victimless crime.

Comments:

Points for Section IV: _____

Section V: Bibliography

27 to 40 points	14 to 26 points	0 to 13 point
Bibliography includes at least ten different sources that represent scholarly refereed journals, government monographs and texts published by legitimate publishing houses.	Includes at least ten different sources most, but not all, of which are from scholarly refereed journals, government monographs and texts published by legitimate publishing houses.	Bibliography includes less than 10 different sources. The sources may or may not be from acceptable sources.

Comments:

Points for Section V: _____

Section VI: Written Communication

27 to 40 points	14 to 26 points	0 to 13 points
Language is clear, concise and easy to understand. Uses terminology appropriately and is well organized	Is adequately written, but may use some terms incorrectly; may need to be read two or more times to be understood.	Poorly written; terms are used incorrectly; cannot comprehend learner's ideas after repeated readings.

Comments:

Points for Section VI: _____

Total Points:

Section I: _____

Section II: _____

Section III: _____

Section IV: _____

Section V: _____

Section VI: _____

Total Points: _____

Reviewed By Instructor: _____

Date of Review: _____

Lesson # 1 – What is Theory?

Readings:

1. Chapter 1- What is Theory? (Williams and McShane, 4th edition)
2. Outline Notes – Unit 1, Chapter 1 (posted on WebCT)
3. Course Content – What is Theory (supplemental material posted on WebCT)

Unit 1 - Introduction to Theory and Early Theories

Chapter 1 - Understanding Theory

Overview:

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the concept of theory. Many textbooks start right in with the first theory without ever making sure that the student knows what the nature of theory is, or the characteristics of good theory. It is important to understand how theories are generated, tested and evaluated. Some of the issues to focus on are definitions of theory, the importance of theory, the types of theory, assumptions behind theories, the effect of time and place on theory creation and acceptance, determining what “good” theory is, and the various ways that theories can be classified.

Learning Objectives:

After you have read this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Provide a number of ways to classify as well as compare and contrast criminological theories
2. Provide an understanding of the proper ways to test and evaluate theories
3. Explain the role of theory in science and to give insight into using theory in everyday life

Key Terms and Phrases

bridging theories
conflict theories

consensus theories
macrotheories
metatheories
microtheories
process theories
structure theories
unit theories

Unit 1 - Web Sites (will be a link to URLs related to subject)

Chapter Outline: (The following 4 Parts will all be linked for access)

- Part 1 - What is Theory and What is Good Theory?
- Part 2 - General Forms of Theory and Types of Theory
- Part 3 - Levels of Explanation and Classification of Theory
- Part 4 - Context of Theory Construction and Early "Theories"

Part 1 – What is Theory and What is Good Theory?

- I. What is Theory?
 - A. theory is an explanation of the relationship between two or more events
 1. some would maintain that a theory also has to convey more than just explanation (which is akin to a "description")
 - a. must advance *understanding* of a relationship
 - b. generalization of some natural phenomenon
 - B. examples of definitions of theory
 1. Talcott Parsons (1949): "a theoretical system in the present sense is a body of logically interdependent generalized concepts of empirical reference"
 - a. Parsons often slips at the lower or empirical levels
 - b. at the higher levels, his theories seem to consist largely of conceptual schemes
 - c. Parsons presents his theory as a "general" theory that he intends to explain all behavior
 - d. it seems that what is lacking from Parsons approach are contingent propositions about their relationship
 2. Robert K. Merton (1957):
 - a. "the term...theory refers to logically interconnected conceptions which are limited and modest in scope rather than all embracing and grandiose"
 - b. Merton is concerned with theories of the "middle range" rather than "general" theories
 3. Jonathan Turner (1974):

- a. theory is a means by which science realizes its three main goals:
 - 1. clarify and organize events
 - 2. explain and predict
 - 3. demonstrate understanding
 - b. Turner defines theory in terms of what it intends to accomplish rather than what a theory is made up of
 - 4. Braithwaite (1953): theory is an explanation of phenomenon by means of a deductive system (scientific explanation)
- C. general characteristics of a theory
 - 1. theories are built from concepts
 - a. most generally, concepts are “names” for abstract phenomena in the real world
 - b. concepts isolate features of the world which are considered for the moment important
 - 1. examples in physics are atoms, protons, neutrons and the like
 - 2. examples of criminological concepts include group, norm, role, and status
 - 2. a set of concepts can be called a conceptual scheme
 - a. when used to build a theory, two general types of concepts can be distinguished:
 - 1. descriptive concepts: simply label phenomena and allow us to distinguish properties; they serve to show what a theory is attempting to explain
 - a. examples are concepts like crime, suicide, religiosity, or social class
 - 2. operative concepts: focus on properties of descriptive concepts and are less abstract; in particular they allows us to distinguish different properties
 - a. examples are concepts like burglary, suicide rate, church attendance, or income
 - b. a conceptual scheme alone is insufficient to constitute a theory
 - 3. statements are organized sets of concepts
 - a. concepts can be organized into groups of statements
 - 1. existence statements
 - a. indicate when and where in the world instances of a particular concept can be found
 - 2. relational statements
 - a. represent a critical feature of theory; only by stating the relationships between or among concepts is prediction, explanation, and understanding of events in the world possible
 - b. bring together concepts and denote the different properties of phenomena, and help to visualize

how one phenomenon may be "caused" by another

- c. types of relational statements:
 - 1. associational: relational statements that stop short of proclaiming that variations in one phenomena "cause" variations in another
 - 2. causal: relational statements that specify that the variations in one phenomena are responsible for the occurrence of variations in another

- d. relational statements are frequently referred to as hypotheses or propositions

- b. theories are considered more "powerful" if a wide variety of relational statements can be derived from them

D. theories can be:

- 1. concrete
 - a. use very specific concepts to explain a relationship
 - b. usually simple theories
- 2. abstract
 - a. use broader, more vague and, often, untestable concepts to explain one or more relationships
 - b. usually complex theories

E. theories should reflect:

- 1. systematic observation
 - a. careful and "by the rules" way of observing natural phenomena
 - b. opposed to seeing what one wants to see
- 2. careful logic
 - a. system of moving progressively from one thoughtful point to another in order to analyze a phenomenon
 - b. opposed to illogical, speculative, belief systems

II. What is *Good Theory*?

A. the most frequently used criteria is testability, which is a quantitative Approach

- 1. the ability of a theory to be expressed in a manner that can lead to scientific measurement and testing
- 2. best fit to the research evidence
 - a. best matches the current scientific research evidence
 - b. on whatever phenomena the theory purports to explain

B. other important criteria are qualitative ones:

- 1. logical soundness
 - a. ability of a theory to exhibit internal consistency
 - b. in the logic used in its construction
- 2. ability to make sense of conflicting positions
 - a. uniting opposing facts
 - b. reducing two, or more, previous theories to one

3. sensitizing quality
 - a. reminding us of forgotten ways of viewing a phenomenon
 - b. new way of looking at and interpreting facts
4. popularity
 - a. the number, or perceived number, of people who agree with and support a theory
 - b. does not require the theory to have strong research evidence to back it up

Part 2 – General Forms of Theory and Types of Theory

III. General Forms of Theory

A. metatheory:

1. “theories about theories”
2. represent ways of looking at the world and reality
3. tell us what things are worth looking at and how we should look at them
 - a. what concepts are important and should be used
 - b. general approach to using those concepts
 - c. how theories should be constructed
 - d. what evidence is appropriate

B. unit theory:

1. attempts to explain specific phenomena
2. what people usually mean when they word “theory”
 - a. focus on particular forms of behavior
 - b. make testable assertions

IV. Three General Types/Kinds of Theory

A. macrotheory

1. explains social structure and its effects on crime
2. focuses on *rates* of criminal behavior in society.

B. bridging theory (also called middle-range theory)

1. explains how social structure comes about
2. explains how social structure affects individual criminal behavior
3. uses both macro and micro concepts

C. microtheory

1. explains the process of how people become criminal
2. focuses on *individual* behavior

Part 3 – Levels of Explanation and Classification of Theory

V. Levels of Explanation

A. theories may explain criminality in:

- 1. social structure in general**
- 2. classes, or very large-sized groups of people in society**
- 3. small-sized groups of people**
- 4. individuals**
- 5. sometimes, a combination of those above**

B. theories may also attempt to explain either:

- 1. crime (either as crime rates or as the making of criminal law)**
- 2. criminality (the behavior of people)**

VI. Classification of Theory

A. theories can be classified in many ways

B. there are three generally accepted approaches

1. classical and positive

a. classical focuses on

- 1. crime**
- 2. legal statutes**
- 3. governmental structures**
- 4. the rights of people**

b. positive focuses on

- 1. criminality**
- 2. behavioral pathology**
- 3. treatment (rehabilitation)**
- 4. correction**

2. structure and process

a. structure focuses on how crime rates vary with changes in social organization

b. looks at:

- 1. the way society is organized**
- 2. effect on group behavior**
- 3. normally, rates of behavior (crime rates)**

c. process focuses on

- 1. the way in which a person becomes a deviant or criminal**
- 2. individuals or small groups**
- 3. criminality**

3. consensus and conflict

a. consensus assumes

- 1. agreement about the basic values in society**

- 2. people naturally get along with each other
- b. conflict assumes
 - 1. little agreement about basic values of society
 - 2. people naturally are in conflict with each other

Part 4 – Context of Theory Construction and Early “Theories”

VII. The Context of Theory Construction

- A. theories are not created in isolation
- B. each theorist has been influenced by a number of events and persons
 - 1. social context
 - a. popular fads and fashions of the moment
 - b. social movements, or longer-term social trends or attitudes
 - c. current events, or happenings of the moment
 - d. social thought, or the currently proper way to understand social phenomena
 - e. social structure, or the way society is constructed
 - 2. Intellectual Context
 - a. personal influences, or the way one is brought up
 - b. readings, or the combination of information and ways to think about it
 - c. teachers, or those individuals who have influence the way a person thinks
 - d. intellectual traditions, or the dominant mode of thinking in which one is trained or finds oneself during a course of study
 - e. current research findings or methodology, or the contemporary presumed evidence of the field

VIII. Early “Theories” of Criminality

- A. the earliest theories of criminality were mostly the same as those used for any other behavior that people had difficulty understanding, such as mental illness or alcoholism
- B. common explanations for criminal behavior were:
 - 1. spirit
 - a. behavior was against prevailing morality
 - b. usually assumed to be caused by evil or malicious deities (like the devil or bad spirits)

2. natural, but unobservable
 - a. behavior otherwise unexplainable
 - b. frequently ascribed to:
 1. "something being wrong" with a person
 2. the person was "crazy"

Summary and Overview

I. What Is Theory?

A. Definitions

1. Talcott Parson (1949)

- a. "a theoretical system in the present sense is a body of logically interdependent generalized concepts of empirical reference."
- b. Parsons often slips at the lower or empirical levels.
- c. At the higher levels, his theories seem to consist largely of conceptual schemes.
- d. Parsons presents his theory as a "general" theory that he intends to explain all behavior.
- e. Hans Zetterberg (1958) calls Parsons a "dimensionist."
- f. it seems that what is lacking from Parsons approach are contingent propositions about their relationships.

2. Robert King Merton (1957)

- a. "the term ...theory refers to logically interconnected conceptions which are limited and modest in scope, rather than all embracing and grandiose."
- b. Merton is concerned with theories of the "middle range" rather than "general" theories.

3. Jonathan Turner (1974)

- a. Theory - means by which science realizes its' three main goals:
 1. to clarify and organize events
 2. explain and predict
 3. demonstrate understanding
- b. Turner defines theory in terms of what it intends to accomplish rather than as what a theory is made up of.

4. Braithwaite (1953)

- a. theory - explanation of phenomenon by means of a deductive system (Scientific Explanation, 1953).

B. General Characteristics of a Theory

1. Theories are built from concepts

- a. Most generally, concepts denote or point to phenomena
 - b. Concepts isolate features of the world which are considered for the moment at hand important
 - c. Examples - notions of atoms, protons, neutrons and the like are concepts.
 - d. Familiar criminological concepts would include group, norm, role, and status.
2. A set of concepts (a conceptual scheme)
- a. When used to build a theory, two general types of concepts can be distinguished:
 - 1. descriptive concepts - serving to show what the theory is about - those that simply label phenomena and allow us to distinguish properties.
 - a. examples
 - 1. individualism
 - 2. suicide
 - 3. Protestantism
 - 4. dog
 - 5. cat
 - 6. group
 - 7. social class
 - 2. operative concepts - properties of nature - this form of variable allows us to distinguish properties.
 - a. These types of concepts are variables.
 - 1. examples
 - a. suicide rate
 - b. incidence of Protestantism
 - c. dogs
 - d. cats
 - e. groups
 - f. social classes
 - b. A conceptual scheme alone is insufficient to constitute a theory
3. Statements
- a. Concepts organized into groups of statements
 - 1. Existence statements -
 - a. indicate when and where in the world instances of a particular concept can be found
 - 2. Relational statements
 - a. represent a critical feature of theory, for only by stating the relationships between or among concepts is prediction, explanation and understanding of events in the world possible.
 - b. Relational statements bring together concepts, denoting variable properties of phenomena, and begin to pave the way for visualizing how one variable may

- be "caused" by another
 - c. **Types of relational statements**
 - 1. associational - relational statements that stop short of proclaiming that variations in one phenomena "cause" variations in another.
 - 2. Causal - one set of variable properties denoted by one concept is seen as "causing" the occurrence of other variable properties denoted by another concept.
 - b. **Propositions**
 - 1. each stating a relationship such as "varies directly with" between at least two properties.
 - 2. The propositions form a deductive system
 - 3. A deductive system also provides grounds for prediction.
 - 4. contingent propositions
 - a. some of the propositions of a scientific theory must be contingent, in the sense that experience is relevant to their truth or falsity or that of propositions derived from them.
 - b. non-contingent propositions also exist, they are non-contingent in that experience is irrelevant to their truth or falsity.
 - 5. The more general propositions are called higher-order propositions and the less general, lower order or empirical ones. A theory need not contain only one highest order proposition.
 - 6. According to the rules of logic, proposition # 3 is derived or deduced from proposition #s 1 & 2, and proposition # 5 in turn from #s 3 & 4.
- 4. **Power of a theory**
 - a. The fact that a wide variety of empirical propositions may be derived from a few higher-order propositions under different given conditions.
- 5. **Completeness of A Theory**
 - a. George Casper Homans - "It is idle to claim that any theory is ever complete."
 - 1. The most general propositions in the theory, as formulated, may themselves be explainable by another, still more general set of propositions.
 - 2. Some of the lower order propositions in a theory are often themselves explainable by deductive systems, through the theorist for one reason or another may not want to bother to explain them

Exercise:

Now that you have had the opportunity to learn about what is theory and what makes for a good theory, it is now your turn to help develop a theoretical model. Helping to build this model will allow you to bring into play your critical thinking skills to create a theoretical model. Once you have completed the assignment, please send it as an attachment via email to the instructor.

The following propositions were put forth by Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist who was studying suicide.

Questions:

1. For proposition # 1, please identify the independent variable and the dependent variable. What type of concepts are the independent and dependent variables?
2. For proposition # 2, please identify the independent variable and the dependent variable. What type of concepts are the independent and dependent variables?
3. You have been given enough information to create proposition # 3. How should proposition # 3 read?
4. You have been given enough information to create proposition # 5. How should proposition # 5 read?

Proposition # 1

In any social grouping, the suicide rate varies directly with the degree of individualism (egoism)

Proposition # 2

The degree of individualism varies directly with the incidence of Protestantism

Proposition # 3

?

Proposition # 4

The incidence of Protestantism in Spain is low

Proposition # 5

?

Closing Note:

The above "theoretical model" explains only one empirical proposition, and most scholars would therefore not consider it a theory at all. Usually we speak of a theory only when it deals with a class of phenomena such as all variations in suicide rates. In this sense of the word, a theory consists of a cluster of deductive systems, differing of course in their lower-order propositions, including the propositions to be explained, but containing one or more of the same higher-order ones. When we speak to the power of a theory, we refer to the fact that a wide variety of empirical propositions may be derived from a few higher-order propositions under different conditions. This, indeed, is the justification for calling the higher-order propositions more general.