

SOCL 4413 Deviant Behavior

Fall 2025

PY 100, 12:30-1:50

PROFESSOR: Beverly L. Stiles, Ph.D.

OFFICE: O'Donohoe 124

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon. 10:00–12:00

Tues. 9:00-9:30

Wed. 10:00–12:00

Thurs. 9:00-9:30

Fri. By Appointment

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TEXT: *Constructions of Deviance: Social Power, Context, and Interaction*, 8th edition, by Adler & Adler.

Additional D2L readings

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

What is deviance? Why do people engage in deviant behavior? Why do some people assume a deviant identity while others do not? How does deviance impact our society? How does deviance influence the behavior of groups and individuals? This class will explore answers to these questions as well as the relationship between deviance and formal systems of social control. The nature and function of deviance will be examined with particular reference to various sociological and theoretical perspectives on deviance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Expose students to a variety of studies of deviant behavior (e.g. criminal behavior, sexual deviance etc.).
- Students should learn that there is often more involved in behavior defined and treated as being "deviant" than is readily apparent.
- Students should learn a variety of perspectives/point of views pertaining to the study of deviance.
- Students should learn the limitations of extrapolating from their own experiences and be able to articulate how the life experience of others may differ.
- Students should be able to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of current sociological theories and research related to deviant behavior.
- To be able to critically evaluate institutional responses to deviance and control.

EXAMS AND GRADING:

You will have the potential to earn 300 points during this semester. That breaks down to what 3 exams would be worth if I were giving exams, but instead the following is the breakdown for how points will be earned:

50 points: attendance

15 points: Positive Deviance paper.

30 points: TWO Chapter Summaries of your choosing.

315 points: Quizzes

The above totals 410 points (10 bonus points factored in).

From Tuesday, Aug. 26 through Dec. 4th, there are 27 class days. I'm counting 25 of those days for you to earn attendance points (assuming that crap happens to everyone so you may miss a couple day). You earn 2 points for each class day that you are present (maximum of 50, not 54). If you come in late, you do not earn a point. If you leave before I have concluded class, you do not earn a point. There are no exceptions to this. If you miss no class at all, I will add 4 bonus points to be averaged into your points earned at the end of the semester.

CHAPTER SUMMARY/reaction paper: You will choose a reading to summarize, from you COD book, that we did not cover in class. I want your reaction to it also and tell me why you chose this reading. This is due by Oct. 21st.

POSITIVE DEVIANCE PAPER: This paper will consist of a paper using a sociological analysis of "Random Acts of Kindness." This is due Nov. 25th.

CHAPTER SUMMARY/reaction paper #2: Dec. 11th.

QUIZZES: You will be required to come to class having read the material for the day. I will give random quizzes to total 315 points. Sometimes the quizzes will be worth 10

points, but other times they may be worth as much as 25 or more. There are no make-up quizzes.

A=360-400

B=320-359

C=280-319

D=240-279

F=Below 240

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Aug. 26: Introductions: Deviant Behavior vs. Criminality

Aug. 28: Positivist/Constructionist theories of Deviance:

“What is Deviant Behavior?” by Thio 2019, pages 2-14 (D2L)

“Defining Deviance in COD, pages 11-23.

Unconventional Beliefs (you do not have to read anything for this)

Sept. 2&4: The Diversity of Deviance (D2L)

Sept. 9: Positive Deviance:

“Applying an Integrated Typology of Deviance Middle-Class Norms,” by Heckert and Heckert in COD pages 25-38.

Sept. 11: “Heretics: Women in Good Trouble.” (D2L)

Sept. 16: Constructionism:

“The Three Perspectives” in COD pages 40-50 (this is only 2 of them).

Sept. 18: Disability & Inclusion: From Labeling Deviance to Social Valuing. (Frank Fitch)

Sept. 23 & 25: Stigma Management:

“Contesting Stigma in Sport: The Case of Men Who Cheer” in COD pages 335-347.

“Bothersome Bowels and Fetid Flatulence: Managing Stigmatizing Gastrointestinal Symptoms of Celiac Diseases.” By Conyers and Calhoun, Pages 354-374.

Sept. 30th: Labeling Deviance:

“Homophobia and Women’s Sport” in COD pages 206-216

"Doctors and the Context of Medical Crime and Deviance" in COD pages 243-251.

Oct. 2nd: Labeling and Deviant Identity:

"Deviant Identity" in COD pages 253-262

"Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia" in COD, pages 285-294

Oct. 7th: Labeling and Deviant Identity continued:

"The Adoption and Management of a "Fat" Identity", in COD, pages 263-272

Summary of Fat Identity paper due today, uploaded on D2L before class at noon. This counts as 10 quiz points.

Oct. 9th: Sexual Diversity/Deviance:

Speaker: Stripper/Dancer, and a former DJ at the strip clubs.

Oct. 14th: Sexual Diversity/Deviance:

"Sexual Deviance Theory, Generation Z, and the LGBTQ Community" (D2L)

"Artificial Love: The Secret Worlds of iDollators" in COD, pages 477-489

Oct. 16th: Sexual Diversity/Deviance: BDSM

"Psychological characteristics of BDSM practitioners" (D2L)

"Psychotherapeutic Issues with Kinky Clients: Clinical Problems, Yours and Theirs" (hand out)

Oct. 21st: **Speaker:** BDSM

First Chapter Summary due today, before class (12:00, uploaded on D2L). You must choose a chapter that we are not covering in class and write a thorough summary over it. I also want to know why you selected it. You need to upload this on D2L, by noon (prior to class). This is worth 15 points.

Oct. 23rd: Sexual Diversity/Deviance: Sex Work

"The World of Prostitution" 2019, by Thio pages 221-236 (D2L)

"Pimp-Controlled Prostitution" in COD pages 573-583

"Common Five Myths about Sex Work, Debunked by Sex Workers" (online):

This is a very short reading: [Common Myths about Sex work](#)

Oct. 28th: Film: film on prostitution (in class).

NO CLASS ON OCT 30th. However, you have a paper assignment due.

--One small paper assignment over the prostitution film from Oct. 28th. This will be due on Oct. 30th (by 11:00 PM, on D2L). This will count as quiz points.

Nov. 4th: Physical Manifestations of Deviance:

“Revisiting Self-Mutilation and Body Modification” (D2L)

“Is the Tattoo Guy Here? Women Tattoo Artists’ Experience Working in a Male-Dominated Profession” (D2L)

“Why would anyone stick a needle in there? Motivations and Meanings Associated with Genital Piercings” (D2L)

Video: Covered (will show in class)

Nov. 6th: **Speaker**: Tattoo artist

Nov 11th: Physical Manifestations of Deviance Continued:

“Typologies of teenage Suicide: analyzing Suicide Notes through Durkheimian Categories” by Thio pages 155-165 (D2L)

“Suicide, Stigma, and Responsibility” by Curra, pages 217-222 (D2L)

Speaker: Danette Stalnaker (Counseling Center at MSU) will speak on suicide

Nov. 13th: Elite Deviance

“Clergy Misconduct as Elite Deviance by Ansom Shupe (D2L)

Nov. 18th: Accounts:

“The Devil Made Me Do it: Use of Neutralizations by Shoplifters” in COD pages 325-333.

“Force or Appeal to Loved Ones: Examining Sykes and Matzas (1957) Techniques of Neutralization on Female Serial Killers.” Conyers and Calhoun, Pages 89-100.

Presentation of recent research on college cheating and the use of neutralization, here at MSU.

Nov. 20th: Film

Nov. 25th: **NO CLASS TODAY.** Your **Positive Deviance Paper** is due tonight by 11:00 PM

Dec. 2nd: I'll cover Crime Theories

Dec. 4th: Quiz over Crime Theories

FINAL: Chapter Summary serves as your final exam: You must choose a chapter that we are not covering in class and write a thorough summary over it. I also want to know why you selected it. This is worth 15 points.

Final Chapter Summary is due *BY* Thurs., Dec. 11th by noon. Upload on D2L