CRM 4312

Special Topic: Violence Against Women

Instructor: Dr. Holly Johnson
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Office hours: Wednesday, 10:00 - 12:00 or by appointment

Class time: Tuesday 8:30-11:30
Classroom: THN 123

Course description

This course will focus on theories and methods used in criminology to study and interpret acts of male violence against women. It will explore the social character of intimate partner violence and homicide, sexual assault, and sexual harassment through a critical discussion of theories, empirical research, current controversies, and criminal justice and social policy responses to these issues.

Organization of the course

This is a seminar course that requires students to attend class prepared to discuss the required readings in a critical fashion. It will combine lectures from the professor; guest speakers, films and student-led discussion.

Student assessment

Evaluation of students’ performance will be based on the following:

1) Each student will take responsibility for presenting one of the readings to the class. The student will be expected to have read the material thoroughly and to reflect critically on it in light of other readings. Students will highlight issues for class discussion. This is worth 30% of the final grade.

2) Each student is responsible for reacting to a student presentation by preparing 2-3 questions for discussion, and preparing a 4-5 page reaction paper (double-spaced), summarizing the key issues or themes in the reading and the major points of the class discussion. The paper is due the following week. Worth 15% of the final grade.

3) Students will submit a research paper based on a comprehensive overview of a specific topic, which may include exploring the causes and effects of certain aspects of violence against women; policy responses and intervention strategies; statistics and case studies; or social and legal histories. This is worth 40% of the final grade and is due during the exam period (date to be announced).
4) A participation mark will be based on attendance and the productive contribution students make to class discussions. This is worth 15% of the final grade.

With respect to these course requirements, please note:

1. It is assumed that students have read and understand the University policy on academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is a serious matter and will be dealt with seriously. For examples of academic fraud and associated penalties see http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/newsletter/fraud_e.html
2. Students may not replace or supplement these assignments with alternative or additional work.
3. Students must complete all course work to complete the course, irrespective of grade.
4. Late submissions of work will be deducted 5% of the total possible mark for each day late.

Course materials

A course reader is available at Enviro-Copies, 404 Dalhousie Street. The course reader contains all required readings.

Schedule and required readings

Sept. 15 Introduction to the course, definitions and concepts
Film: After the Montreal Massacre

Sept. 22 Violence against women in historical and international context

Sept. 29 Gender Violence in the Context of Armed Conflict

Oct. 6 Theoretical approaches to the study of violence against women
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Film: Date Rape Backlash: Media and the Denial of Rape |
| Nov. 3 | Domestic Violence Courts | Prior to this class, students are required to attend at least one trial at the Domestic Violence Court at the Ottawa Court House, 161 Elgin Street. The DV trial court sits everyday from 10:00. At the noon recess on October 27, the Assistant Crown Attorney will outline the criminal justice response to intimate partner violence in Ottawa. |
Nov. 10  Treatment programs for violent men


Guest speaker: Mark Holmes, New Directions

Nov. 17  Sexual violence and the law


Film:  Dreamworlds

Nov. 24  Battered woman’s defence


Restorative Justice


Dec. 1  Violence against women in the media


Film:  Tough Guise
Your presentation

1. Read the article thoroughly. Do a little background work and tell us something about the author(s) and the journal or book where the article is published.
2. Prepare a powerpoint presentation on the article and an accompanying one-page handout to be distributed to the class. Both should include (a) a clear summary of the article and (b) a critique.
3. Your critique should cover four areas:
   a. Thesis – main points the author is trying to make
   b. Methods – how does the author go about supporting the thesis, were appropriate methods used and were they used correctly
   c. Evidence – what evidence did the author present in support of the thesis, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence
   d. Evaluation – what are the benefits of this research, who will benefit, what is your evaluation of the article, how could the analysis be improved.
4. Prepare 4-5 discussion questions for the class. These should stimulate a discussion about your article, which you will lead at the end of your presentation.

Reaction paper and discussant role

1. Sign up to prepare a reaction paper on an article presented by one of your classmates.
2. Read the article thoroughly and prepare 2-3 questions for discussion.
3. In a 4-5 page paper, summarize the key issues or themes of the article as well as the major points of the class discussion.
4. Present your own critique of the article and the discussion. Relate it to other class readings or reading you have done in other classes.

Research paper

1. You are free to choose any topic related to violence against women, but speak to me first if you choose a topic that was not covered in class. All papers must be original; you may not submit work that was prepared for another class.
2. The paper must be 15-20 pages in length (double-spaced) and include 10-20 references.
3. Marks will be deducted for poor grammar and incomplete referencing and citations.