UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING CRIME

Key Information

Module code  ISSU0033  
Taught during  Session One: Monday 1 July - Friday 19 July 2019  
Module workload  45 teaching hours plus approximately 100 study hours  
Module leader  Lisa Tompson  
Department  Security and Crime Science, Faculty of Engineering  
Credit  15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US  
Level  Level 1, first year Undergraduate  
Pre-requisites  Standard entry requirements  
Assessment  Presentation (20%)  
          Essay (80%)  

Module Overview

This module introduces students to the study of crime and its prevention. It begins by considering the challenges with how we define and measure crime, and the implications these have for interpreting key crime trends. Special attention will be devoted to how crime patterns manifest in space and time and how they can be analysed. Next, the key sociological, psychological and ecological theories relating to criminal behaviour are critically examined. Lastly, the formal structures and machinery in place to respond to crime and security problems are outlined. This includes the role and functions of the police, courts, and corrections as the chief components of the criminal justice system, as well as the role of government in setting crime policy. Students will be encouraged to critically assess the strength of different theoretical approaches throughout the module.

Week One

- Considers the challenges and processes associated with measuring and analysing crime
- Explores key crime trends (including the international crime drop)
- Focuses on how crime patterns manifest in space and time and how they can be analysed
- Introduces the project work

Week Two

- Presents a number of competing criminological and psychological theories on criminal behaviour
- Critically appraises the underpinning assumptions and empirical status of these theories
- Contrasts the preceding theories against the theories of environmental criminology, with links made to the crime patterns discussed in week one

Week Three

Please note that this module description is indicative and may be subject to change.
• Introduces the British Criminal Justice System (includes an excursion to the Old Bailey)
• Reflects on the role of the Criminal Justice System as a means of crime control and presents an alternative framework – Situational Crime Prevention
• Consolidates knowledge with student presentations of their project work

Module Aims
This module aims to provide students with a broad understanding of issues relating to crime measurement, crime patterns, explanations of criminal behaviour and crime prevention.

Teaching Methods
This module will be delivered over three weeks of the summer vacation period. Teaching hours will be Monday-Thursday each week with an assessment and plenary event on the final Friday.
On the teaching days lectures will be held between 10am and 12pm with a seminar on the same topic between 2pm and 3pm.
Moodle quizzes will be set to check the students have understood the reading set for each topic.
An excursion to the Old Bailey will take place on the final week of the course. This will be done to illustrate the principles and practicalities of the criminal justice system highlighted in the previous day’s teaching.
On the penultimate day the students will be required to present the results of their group work and feedback will be provided in individual groups. A tutor-led session on the last day will summarise and recap the content covered.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this module, students will:
• Have a grasp of major crime trends
• Be able to think critically about current methods of crime measurement and crime-related theory
• Understand the key theories that relate to criminal behaviour and how these can be used to produce effective crime control policies
• Be able to demonstrate familiarity with the British Criminal Justice System
• Appreciate the need for evidence-informed responses to crime and the role of multidisciplinary approaches

Assessment Methods
• 10-minute presentation (20%)
• 2,000-word essay (80%)

Key Texts
Newburn, T. (2013). Criminology (2nd Ed.). Abingdon, UK: Routledge. (Chapters 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, 32)