Assignments, readings and lecture notes can be accessed via Moodle.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. Please contact the instructor or the teaching assistant to discuss accommodations for this course.

**Prerequisite:** PA 5021 Economics for Policy Analysis and Planning I or equivalent, advanced policy analysis methods concentration, or instructor consent.

**Overview**

This course is designed to help students learn how to read and interpret a technical economics journal article, report, or analysis. The focus will be on articles in the domain of the economics of crime and law enforcement. Policy topics range from those dealing with optimal enforcement of the law to examinations of domestic violence, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and gun control. Students will gain an appreciation for has the strengths and weaknesses of the rational choice model of crime and the use of economics to develop policies addressing problems of race, crime and law enforcement.

There are many crime and law enforcement policy debates that hinge on economic modeling. Do body cameras reduce racial disparities in police use of deadly force? Do gun buy-backs, waiting periods, mandated gun designs (such as trigger locks), background checks, or high taxes on gun sales reduce violence? Do metal detectors in schools and zero-tolerance policies affect the likelihood of mass shootings on school campuses? Do increased police response times and arrests reduce the risk of intimate partner violence in domestic disputes? Do welfare reforms that make it more difficult for women to leave abusive relationships increase the risk of violence?

More fundamentally, how does *Policy Analysis* frame these questions so that answers can be sought? What are the tools of applied microeconomics and quantitative policy analysis?
that are useful in addressing these questions of developing strategies for reducing or controlling crime and violence in society? How can conventional rational choice models be applied effectively to help structure these questions? When do these models fail? What types of empirical approaches can overcome the conceptual weaknesses of choice models in designing and evaluating anti-violence initiatives?

This course approaches these questions. It is a course on *Applied Policy Analysis* with a focus on methods and techniques for problem solving related to criminal justice issues. The course does not delve into the literature on the social or psychological underpinnings of crime. The common theme, derived from the economics of crime literature, is that under certain circumstances deterrence and sanctions work to influence individual outcomes. The course introduces modeling schemes for helping to craft interventions that might work. The course explores how one goes about measuring and estimating *how effectively* these policy instruments work.

**Methods and Procedures**

**Lectures**


**Team Presentations of Assigned Paper Critique**

Students will be assigned to teams of 5-6 persons based on the results of the diagnostic examination. The goal of the team formation is to create a diverse group with at least one person in each team with strong economics and empirical skills.

Teams will review the assigned article and produce a 3-4 page review and critique of the assigned article. The review and critique should address these questions:

- What is the policy question identified in the article? What are the central findings? What is the main policy conclusion?
- What is the theoretical technique used to address the policy question?
- What data sources are used to discuss this question?
- What empirical techniques did the author(s) employ to answer this policy question?
- How does this paper fit into the larger literature on this subject?
- Are the data, techniques, framing, and context appropriate for addressing the policy question?
• What are the limiting theoretical assumptions or empirical shortcomings that may affect the interpretations of the results or the policy relevance of the conclusions?

The written critique is due at 11:59 pm the day before the scheduled presentation. The critique will be graded by the instructor according to the following scale:

**Satisfactory Plus (S+)** = 100 Correctly addresses all points

**Satisfactory (S)** = 90 Adequately addresses most points with few errors

**Satisfactory Minus (S-)** = 80 Some significant misunderstandings but addresses all points

**Unsatisfactory (N)** = 70 Fails to address all points and/or major misunderstandings

Teams will prepare a presentation of their article review/critique and lead the class discussion. Presentations should be from 30-40 minutes, with 20-30 minutes reserved following presentation for general discussion.

Presentations should be clearly organized and easy to follow. Peers will evaluate the presentations. The criteria for evaluation will include:

1. sufficiency of background information provided;
2. organization;
3. adequacy of visual aids if used;
4. ability to keep within time limits;
5. overall success of the session in maintaining students’ interest

Scores will range from unsatisfactory to outstanding with the following conversions:

- Unsatisfactory 60
- Needs Improvement 70
- Good 80
- Very Good 90
- Outstanding 100

**Midterm Examination**

There will be an in-class midterm examination covering the required readings, lectures and the assigned articles. The midterm will consist of short answers and a few simple calculations and derivations and problem solving based on examples or illustrations from the readings and lectures. A study guide will be provided two weeks prior to the examination.

**Research Note:**

Individual students will choose a single policy topic from the list below and locate a single academic journal article published within the past 10 years addressing one of the following topics:

- Police use of deadly force
☐ Racial disparities in arrests
☐ Racial disparities in incarceration
☐ Drug use and drug selling
☐ Racial Profiling
☐ Racial disparities in traffic stops
☐ Labor Markets and Crime
☐ Effects of imprisonment on post-prison employment
☐ The effects on incarceration on marriage and family structure
☐ Causes of the drop in crime rates
☐ Evaluation of "Broken Windows" policies
☐ Stop and Frisk policies
☐ Racial discrimination in pre-trial detention
☐ The effectiveness of community policing
☐ The effects on violent crimes of
  o Gun buy-backs,
  o Waiting periods,
  o Mandated gun designs (such as trigger locks),
  o Background checks,
  o High taxes on gun sales
  o High taxes on bullets
  o High gun registration fees
☐ The impacts of risk assessment protocols in child abuse and neglect investigations on:
  ▪ Child-homicides
  ▪ Racial disparities in substantiation rates
☐ The effects of longer prison sentences and/or increased arrests for drug violations on injuries sustained by victims of robberies and other property crimes
☐ The impacts of airport profiling and targeted searches on arrests of drug dealers and/or terrorists
☐ Police response times, arrests and intimate partner violence
☐ Effects of welfare reforms on intimate partner violence
☐ Metal detectors in schools and mass shootings on secondary school campuses
☐ Employee security checks and the risk of workplace violence
☐ Arming teachers and mass shootings in schools

The article should be published in an economics or applied economics/econometrics peer reviewed journal. In exceptional circumstances, individuals may wish to justify using a working paper, a book or a government document (such as a publication of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) or the General Accounting Office (GAO).

**ABSTRACTS**

Abstracts of the chosen article (with full citation) are due **April 10, 2018 by 11:59 pm Central time. Full credit awarded for satisfactory abstracts submitted on time.** A satisfactory submission is one that identifies an economics article that addresses the research topic posed. For example, for the topic of “Do more guns result in less crime?” the classic economics article is: John R. Lott, Jr. & David B. Mustard, Crime, Deterrence, and Right-to-Carry Concealed Handguns, 26 J. LEGAL STUD. 1 (1997).
Students are expected to produce a professional-quality, Research Note, of 2,000 – 2,500 words, including tables, references, captions and footnotes. A Research Note is much shorter than a typical journal article and can take the form of one of the following:

- Commentary or critique of the existing theory or empirical result
- Detailed comparison with another competing article or research report
- A re-estimation of a previously published analysis that adopts an alternative model specification or estimation technique and compares the results
- Presentation of new data or evidence that confirms or contradicts previously reported findings

A preliminary draft of the Research Note will be presented in class during the last two weeks of class. The presentation should be a 10 – 15 minute summary of the Research Note, allowing time for questions and peer feedback.

The final Research Note is due May 8, 11:59 pm.

**Course Grading**

1. Abstract of Research Note Article 10%
2. Research Note Presentation (Peer Evaluated) 10%
3. Final Research Note 20%
4. Midterm Examination 30%
5. Team Review/Critique of Assigned Article 20%
6. Peer Evaluation of Team Presentation 10%

**TOTAL** 100%

**Incompletes**

Humphrey School of Public Affairs policy stipulates that incompletes only be given under extenuating circumstances and only after the instructor and student have mutually agreed upon a timetable (contract) for completion of all coursework. This course, moreover, is structured so that all student work can be delivered before the end of the quarter. Accordingly, only in the most compelling instances will the instructor consider a request for an incomplete.
Organization of the Course

Week 1: Major Economic Trends

Required Reading


Optional Readings


Week 2: The Becker Model of Crime

Required Readings


Optional Readings


**Critique Paper**


**Week 3: Racial Profiling and Discrimination in the CJS**

**Required Reading**


**Optional Readings**


**Critique Paper**

**Week 4: Effects of Incarceration**

**Required Reading**

**Optional Readings**


Harry J. Holzer, “Collateral Costs: The Effects of Incarceration on Employment and Earnings of Young Workers,” in Do Prisons Make Us Safer?: The Benefits and Costs of the Prison Boom edited by Steven Raphael, Michael A. Stoll

Week 5: Gun Violence

Required

Optional Readings


Critique Paper
# Weeks 6-7: Presentation of Individual Research Notes

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<th>Dates</th>
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<td>FINAL RESEARCH NOTES DUE</td>
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Please review the following academic policies:

**Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:**
The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: [http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf).

**Disability Accommodations:**
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, [https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/](https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/).

**Mental Health and Stress Management:**
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: [http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu).

**Student Conduct Code:**
The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: **Student Conduct Code**. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: [http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf).

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

**Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:**
Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html).

**Scholastic Dishonesty:**
You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty
permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf)

If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html.

If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class—e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

**Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:**
Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html.

**Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:**
Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html.

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility:**
Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom and conduct relevant research. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. When conducting research, pertinent institutional approvals must be obtained and the research must be consistent with University policies.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.