

REVISED COURSE SYLLABUS
ECNS 316: Economics of Crime and Risky Behavior
Spring 2020

Class Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:05-4:20pm (Harrison Hall 107)

Professor: Dr. Mark Anderson

Email and course webpage: dwight.anderson@montana.edu; www.dmarkanderson.com

Office hours: 11am-1pm (Tuesdays)

Course prerequisites: ECNS 204 & STAT 217

Textbook: *Economics of Crime and Enforcement* by Anthony M. Yezer

Grades: Quizzes: 20% (**We will no longer have weekly quizzes after spring break**)

Midterm: 25% (March 5th)

Final: 25% (2-3:50pm, May 8th) – **Unless we go back to having in-person lectures, this will likely take the form of a take-home final exam.**

Term Paper: 30% (5% for research proposal; **25% for final paper**)

-Research paper proposal due on February 4th

-Term paper due on last day of class, April 30th

Material we will cover:

Economic theory of criminal and risky behavior

1.) Economic Rational for Criminal Law (Chapter 1 in Yezer)

2.) Benefit/Cost Analysis of the Enforcement Decision (Chapter 2 in Yezer)

-Other readings:

Ehrlich, Isaac (1996), "Crime, punishment, and the market for offenses," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 10(1), 43-67. **Required reading.**

Becker, Gary (1968), "Crime and punishment: an economic approach." *Journal of Political Economy*, 76(2), 169-217. **Optional reading.**

3.) Measuring Amount and Cost of Crime (Chapter 3 in Yezer)

-Other readings:

Anderson, David (1999), "The Aggregate Burden of Crime," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 42(2), 611-642. **Required reading.**

McCollister, Kathryn, Michael French, and Hai Fang (2010), "The Cost of Crime to Society: New Crime-Specific Estimates for Policy and Program Evaluation," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 108, 98-109. **Required reading.**

4.) Victimless Crime (Chapter 4 in Yezer)

-Other readings:

Anderson, D. Mark, Benjamin Hansen, and Daniel I. Rees (2013), "Medical Marijuana Laws, Traffic Fatalities, and Alcohol Consumption," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 56(2), 333-369. **Required reading.**

5.) Crime with Victims (Chapter 5 in Yezer)

6.) Risk Preferences and the Supply of Offenses (Chapter 6 in Yezer)

-Other reading:

Mungan, Murat and Jonathan Klick (2014), "Forfeiture of Illegal Gains, Attempts, and Implied Risk Preferences," *Journal of Legal Studies*, 43, 137-153. **Optional reading.**

7.) State Preference Model and Tax Evasion (Chapter 7 in Yezer)

-Other readings:

Alm, James and Benno Torgler (2006), "Culture Differences and Tax Morale in the United States and Europe," *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 27, 224-246. **Optional reading.**

Braguinsky, Serguey, Sergey Mityakov, and Andrey Liscovich (2014), "Direct Estimation of Hidden Earnings: Evidence from Russian Administrative Data," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 57, 281-319. **Required reading.**

8.) Neighborhood Crime (Chapter 8 in Yezer)

9.) Game Theory and Crime (Chapter 9 in Yezer)

Empirical Topics in Crime and Risky Behaviors

10.) Guns and Crime (Chapter 19 in Yezer)

-Other readings:

Lott, Jr., John and David Mustard (1997), "Crime, Deterrence, and Right-to-Carry Handguns," *Journal of Legal Studies*, 26(1), 1-68. **Required reading.**

Duggan, Mark (2001), "More Guns, More Crime," *Journal of Political Economy*, 109(5), 1086-1114. **Required reading.**

Duggan, Mark, Randi Hjalmarsson, and Brian Jacob (2011), "The Short-Term and Localized Effect of Gun Shows: Evidence from California and Texas," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 93(3), 786-799. **Required reading.**

Anderson, D. Mark and Joseph J. Sabia (2018), "Child Access Prevention Laws and Juvenile Firearm-Related Homicides," NBER Working Paper No. 25209. **Required reading.**

Lang, Matthew (2013), "Firearm Background Checks and Suicide," *Economic Journal*, 123, 1085-1099. **Required reading.**

McClellan, Chandler and Erdal Tekin (2017), "Stand Your Ground Laws, Homicides, and Injuries," *Journal of Human Resources*, 52(3), 621-653. **Required reading.**

Cheng, Cheng and Mark Hoekstra (2013), "Does Strengthening Self-Defense Law Deter Crime or Escalate Violence? Evidence from Expansions to Castle Doctrine," *Journal of Human Resources*, 48(3), 821-853. **Optional reading.**

Edwards, Griffin, Erik Nesson, Josh Robinson, and Fredrick Vars (Forthcoming), "Looking Down the Barrel of a Loaded Gun: The Effect of Mandatory Handgun Purchase Delays on Homicide and Suicide," *Economic Journal*. **Optional reading.**

Mustard, David (2001), "The Impact of Gun Laws on Police Deaths," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 44(s2), 635-658. **Optional reading.**

-Other potential topics (time permitting)

-Education and crime; alcohol, drugs, and crime; legalization of prostitution; ban-the-box

Learning Outcomes:

By participating in this class, students will:

- 1.) Learn the classic rational choice model of crime and theory of deterrence
- 2.) Learn the role of risk preferences in the benefit/cost analysis of the crime decision
- 3.) Learn the seminal neighborhood crime model and its extension to gang activity
- 4.) Gain a working knowledge of the basic game theoretic applications to crime
- 5.) Gain exposure to a large empirical literature on the economics of crime and risky behavior
- 6.) Develop an understanding of how well-defined natural experiments can be leveraged to determine causal relationships within the context of crime and risky behaviors

Other Notes:

Undergrad study rooms: There is an undergrad econ study room in Linfield Hall 404 and a computer room in Linfield Hall 409A. They are open Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm.