

COURSE SYLLABUS
ECNS 316: Economics of Crime and Risky Behavior
Spring 2021

Class Schedule: 3:05-4:20pm on Tuesday and Thursday

-This class is a “synchronized” online course, meaning that it will be conducted in real time and with *no* recorded component.

WebEx: WebEx link will be sent to you via email for our online classes and office hours. I have also attached the link below. Because I will not be posting recorded lectures, your attendance will be vital for success.

Lecture link:

<https://montana.webex.com/montana/j.php?MTID=m528cba2398db065258e08d5bd7f2f3ed>

Meeting number: 120 150 3005

Password: UxpW55p7sjU

Professor: Dr. Mark Anderson

Email: dwight.anderson@montana.edu

Course webpage: www.dmarkanderson.com (all relevant course material will be posted here!)

Office Hours: Thursday 4:30-5:30pm (via WebEx) or by appointment

Office hours link:

<https://montana.webex.com/montana/j.php?MTID=m0b284076aeb65790e1e68dddcae2a463>

Meeting number: 120 978 1234

Password: mwJEGuYA357

Course prerequisites: ECNS 204 and STAT 217

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

Grades: Quizzes/writing assignments: 20% **(We will usually have a weekly online quiz or a short writing assignment)**

Midterm: 25% **(24-hour take-home midterm on March 11th)**

Final: 30% **(24-hour take-home final on April 27th)**

Term Paper: 25% (5% for research proposal; 20% for final paper)

-Research paper proposal due on February 9th

-Term paper due on last day of class, April 15th

Material we will cover:

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:

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.**

Cunningham, Scott and Manisha Shah (2018), "Decriminalizing Indoor Prostitution: Implications for Sexual Violence and Public Health," *Review of Economic Studies*, 85(3), 1683-1715. **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:

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.**

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.**

8.) Neighborhood Crime (Chapter 8 in Yezer)

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

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.**

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.**

Carr, Jillian and Jennifer Doleac (2018), "Keep the Kids Inside? Juvenile Curfews and Urban Gun Violence." *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 100(4): 609-618. **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.**

Other potential topics (time permitting):

Education and crime; alcohol, drugs, and crime

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

COVID-19-related Information (Despite the fact that this class is entirely online, this information is still important, especially for those of you who are taking in-person classes)

Feeling ill. Evaluate your health daily and abstain from coming to campus for other classes if you are ill. Seek medical attention as needed. *In the event of an illness, do not come to campus.* Instead notify your professor about your absence as soon as practical, so that accommodations can be made.

Symptoms. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. *Some people will experience symptoms that may simply feel like a mild, common cold.* Persons with the following symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Stuffy or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or general fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

When to seek emergency medical attention. If you are showing any of the following signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing, or persistent pain or pressure in your chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Note: This list is not all possible symptoms. You should call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Testing positive for COVID-19. Individuals with a positive test more than 10 days prior and who have been fully recovered from symptomatic COVID-19 for at least 72 hours are permitted to return to campus. Self-quarantine violations will be reported to the Dean of Students and county health department.

For more information on COVID-19 and COVID-19-related symptoms, please see

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Grades of "Incomplete" and academic misconduct

Grades of "Incomplete": In accordance with MSU policy, incomplete grades will not be assigned except for cases of extreme personal hardship or unusual academic situations that are certified by the Dean of Students. See the "Courses, Credits, and Grades" section of the MSU online catalog (<http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/academic/acad6.html#IGrade>) for more information.

Academic Misconduct: MSU has developed expected standards of student academic honesty and integrity. Students who violate these standards commit academic misconduct and will be subject to academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. You are expected to read and comply with the guidelines concerning academic integrity contained in the document, *Conduct Guidelines and Grievance Procedures for Students*, available at http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/student_conduct-code_2008-2009.htm