

*"...it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Matthew 19:24*

*"All animals are created equal, but some animals are more equal than others." George Orwell, Animal Farm.*

*"We don't smoke that shit. We just sell it. We reserve the right to smoke for the young, the poor, the black and the stupid." R J Reynolds executive, London Times, June 1992*

## SYLLABUS for CJ 497/597

### **White-Collar Crime**

#### General Information

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#### Email Contact

Email contact is the most efficient means of contacting me. I respond to every email as quickly as possible, which means a response should be received normally within eight hours. The response time may vary if I am traveling or if the email is sent during the weekend. If you do not receive a response within eight hours, please send a second message.

Given the virtual nature of the class, asynchronous communication is integral to our success (yes, yours and mine). Please – never hesitate to contact me and never apologize for doing so. The volume of email does not concern me.

#### Philosophy

The primary goal of attending college is educational attainment. In pursuit of this goal, one of the objectives of this course is to create an atmosphere conducive to critical thinking. My approach is **not** to inundate you with facts and figures (some essential information is a requisite), but to provide you with some fundamental tools that can be used to explore various issues including crime, criminality, and the social response to law breaking. My method also includes challenging students' perceptions (some of which are closely held) and introducing students to a variety of concepts, issues, and ways of constructing reality.

Lectures (in this case podcasts): (1) focus on major issues; (2) assist in the synthesis of knowledge; (3) encourage constructive criticism; and (4) interject material not found in the reading assignments. Assignments: (1) assist in the synthesis of knowledge; and (2) reinforce academic competencies. In order to receive the maximum benefit from this course, it is imperative that students logon to the course Web site daily and keep pace with assignments. Rest assured that students are held to high standards of performance. **Grades will not be given; they are earned!**

### Academic Integrity

The ability to pursue knowledge in an open and candid atmosphere free of intimidation and ad hominem attacks is a bedrock principle of university life. Striving to meet this ideal affords a degree of freedom not found in any other venue. In order to preserve and benefit from this environment it is important that we observe two fundamental standards – civility and honesty – that make academic life possible and enjoyable.

#### **Civility**

While individuals have a general right to pose questions, to respond to questions, and to make statements, these rights do have limits. Civil discourse is always expected from each member of the class. During any exchange, please be respectful no matter how much you might disagree with the content of the question, statement, or discussion. You will be exposed to a number of ideas, arguments, and discussions that you might not agree with or respect. That is the nature of academic life. However, it is essential that emotions be kept in check and that respect for every individual in the class be maintained at all times. Please feel free to contact me outside of class to voice any political or ideological objections to the content of the course.

#### **Honesty**

All forms of academic dishonesty are inimical to the goals of this class. Any student who engages in academic misconduct, or knowingly assists another student in this purpose, is in violation of [university policy](#). While there are many forms of academic dishonesty, the two major forms are cheating on an exam and plagiarism. All forms of academic dishonesty undermine the opportunity to learn and bring the institution into disrepute. Therefore, the highest standards of honesty will be observed in this class at all times. Failure to abide by this code of conduct will be dealt with according to university policy.

## Purpose

This course is an introduction to the study of upper-class deviance and criminality. It seeks to:

1. familiarize you with the general characteristics of this genre of criminality;
2. provide you with a theoretical understanding of this phenomenon;
3. challenge your perceptions of conventional criminality;
4. address the implications of corporate and white-collar crimes for society and its major institutions, including the criminal justice system.

Given the asynchronous nature of the class and the necessity to become familiar with a variety of technologies, students will also be introduced to digital forms of communication.

## Readings

Friedrichs, D.O. (2007). *Trusted criminals: White-collar crime in contemporary society* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth (ISBN 0-495-00604-1).

Ermann, M.D., & Lundman, R.J. (2002). *Corporate and governmental deviance: Problems of organizational behavior in contemporary society* (6th ed.). New York: Oxford (ISBN 0-19-513529-6) .

Reiman, J. (2007). *The rich get richer and the poor get prison: Ideology, class and criminal justice* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon (ISBN 0-205-46172-7)

Orwell, G. (1945). *Animal farm*. New York: Doubleday and Page.

## Grading

Grading will be based upon four factors:

1. Final examination (comprehensive) -- 25%
2. Research project – 20%
3. Three critical essays – 10, 15, & 20% (respectively)
4. Discussion list --10%

Final grades are based on the following scale:

A+ = 97-100    B+ = 87-89    C+ = 77-79    D+ = 67-69    F = 59<

A = 93-96    B = 83-86    C = 73-76    D = 63-66

A- = 90-92    B- = 80-82    C- = 70-72    D- = 60-62

## **Nota Bene!**

Grading for all writing assignments will be based on the ability to adhere to the conventions of the English language while presenting a well organized, well researched, logical presentation of the material. In addition, the following factors will determine the final grade:

A = well written with integration/synthesis of knowledge

B = well written with theoretical explication

C = well written but descriptive only

All work must be submitted in digital form.

**PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED LATE WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OR WITHOUT! NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED WITH MISSPELLED WORDS, TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS!**

### Final Examination

The final examination will be comprehensive and will consist of a combination of objective and subjective test items. The dates of the exam will be announced on Blackboard, and the primary testing site is the [Online Testing Center](#), located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Education Building. Arrangements can be made for off-campus testing, but requests must be made well in advance of the end of the semester. Additional information will be available on Blackboard.

### Research Project

The research project involves the participant observation method of exploring the pervasiveness of white-collar crime. This assignment will require you to go into the field, collect information, and present it to the class. While you are encouraged to be creative, please note that you should **not** engage in behavior that is dangerous or that will bring discredit to yourself, me (special emphasis on me!), and/or the university.

In addition to the class presentation, the grade for this assignment will be based on the research experience, focusing on the (1) method, (2) results of the project, and (3) scope. The purpose of this assignment is (1) to engage in research, (2) to inform

others about your findings, and (3) to inform others about what you learned about white-collar crime. One of the challenges of this assignment is making the argument that your project is either a crime or should be classified as such. This assignment must be completed by **November 18**.

The focus of this assignment is on white-collar crime and not necessarily on white-collar criminals. In the event that your project brings you into direct contact with a white-collar criminal(s), students must comply with all rules and regulations regarding the use of [human subjects](#). Students contemplating this line of research must contact me ASAP and should refrain from any interpersonal contact with participants until authorized to do so.

Undergraduate students have the option of submitting the assignment in one of three ways (grad students are restricted to one of two options). The first is written. The second and third options involve digital media.

### **Option 1 – Writing**

Undergraduate students may elect to submit a paper that describes your research project. It should be organized using the following outline:

- Introduction – Statement of the Problem
- Method – Describe your Study
- Results – What did you discover? Did you take any sort of action?
- Scope – How prevalent do you think the problem is based on your study?
- Summary & Conclusions – What did you learn? What are your recommendations for addressing your problem?
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The paper will be submitted in digital form (preferably as a .pdf documents) to the course wiki.

### **Option 2 – Documenting with Digital Photos**

Undergraduate and graduate students may elect to document their research using digital images and voice narration (these items will need to be combined through some medium). Students opting for this method will need to upload digital images into a slideshow software program such as [Windows Photo Story](#) for PCs or iPhoto or iMovie for Macs (these programs are free or readily found installed on computers). Please follow the same outline described in Option 1.

### **Option 3 – Documenting with Digital Video**

Undergraduate and graduate students may elect to use video to document their research. Please follow the same outline described in Option 1.

The project must be submitted in video format that can be shared over the Internet (QuickTime is recommended) and should not exceed 10-15 minutes in length.

Students needing assistance with any digital project at any time are encouraged to utilize the services provided by [Studio-D Multimedia Project](#), which is located in the Simplot-Micron Building at BSU.

It is possible to combine two or more technologies (such as embedding photos or video in a Word document and then saving the file as a .pdf document).

### Critical Essays

As part of the course requisites, you will be required to submit three critical essays. Orwell's *Animal Farm* is part of the assigned readings and will serve as the foci of the critical essays. I have selected this allegorical work to assist us in exploring several issues relevant to the study of white-collar crime. Regurgitation and/or recitation of the selected work is not the purpose of these assignments. On the contrary, the purpose of these assignments is to demonstrate your ability to think critically, to organize your thoughts, and to present them in written (digital) form.

**The first essay** involves the reporting of an (in)famous white-collar crime. Your report should include the following items:

- a brief description of the crime, the offenders, the context in which the crime occurs (occupational, organizational, etc.), and the target. Be sure to describe how the offender(s) was/were able to manipulate the environment in order to facilitate completion of the crime. Indicate whether there were co-conspirators, and why they were chosen.
- what was the motivation and objective(s) of the offender(s)?
- organizational and environmental conditions conducive to committing the crime.
- organizational and environmental conditions limiting exposure and risk.
- how the crime was discovered?
- what happened to the offender(s)?
- summary **and** conclusion – what did you learn?

The first essay is due October 5.

**The second essay** is an examination of the context in which white-collar crimes frequently take place. This essay will compare and contrast the role of power in the video [Wall Street](#) (two copies are on reserve in Albertsons Library) and in *Animal Farm*. Resources to assist in the development of this category of theme are available on Blackboard.

The second essay is due November 9.

**The third essay** involves creativity on your part. For this assignment you are to create a fictionalized account of a white-collar crime. The crime may be located in any organizational context you wish. It can be big or small, involving millions of dollars or just a few. Do not recount a crime you've read about elsewhere. Remember, the point of this exercise is to demonstrate that you understand and can analyze the opportunities for white-collar crime, the complexity of social and economic relationships that can be manipulated and exploited by white-collar offenders, as well as the strategies used to commit and cover-up white-collar offenses. The fictionalized crime should be sophisticated, but it should not be so complex that you lose sight of the objective.

You should focus on the following items:

- the modus operandi of the crime.
- the motivation for engaging in illegal behavior.
- the personnel: the major offenders as well as any willing or unwitting facilitators or co-conspirators; including how they were selected and recruited.
- the organizational structure: what gets manipulated; how structure facilitates your efforts.
- the kinds of victims that will be exploited and how they are recruited.
- cover-up strategies and why they are necessary.
- plans to distance the perpetrator from the crime (or why you think you will get away with it).
- potential threats to the scheme and how they will be neutralized (if different than above).
- public attitudes toward the crime and the criminal.
- how the crime will eventually end.
- summary **and** conclusion – what did you learn?

The third essay is due December 7.

### Discussion List

Questions will be posed each week on the Discussion Board. Students will be required to select three (3) questions, develop a response, and create a podcast that will be posted on Blackboard. Other students will then respond to the podcast in writing on the Discussion Board. Instructions for downloading and using [Audacity](#) can be found via the Course Materials link on Blackboard. Mac users can use GarageBand or Audacity for this assignment. Laptop users may be able to use internal microphones, but the sound quality is usually poor, so consider investing in an inexpensive external microphone.

## Software and Intellectual Rights

Because most forms of information are easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical in academic environments. Breaches of integrity, including plagiarism, invasions of privacy, unauthorized access, and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the class in accordance with the rules and regulations outlined in the Student Handbook. Work submitted in other classes for a grade will not be accepted in this class.

## Semester Reading & Assignment Schedule (more detail is provided on the Web site)

Week 1 – August 27 - September 2

Friedrichs: Chapter 1; Ermann & Lundman: Chapters 1,12 & 14

Week 2 – September 4 - 9

Friedrichs: Chapter 2

Week 3 – September 10 - 16

Ermann & Lundman: Chapters 4

Week 4 – September 17 - 23

Friedrichs: Chapter 3; Ermann & Lundman: Chapters 2, 3

Week 5 – September 24 - 30

Friedrichs: Chapter 4

Week 6 – October 1 - 7

Friedrichs: Chapter 5; Ermann & Lundman: Chapters 7,9,10 & 11

**Critical Essay #1 Due**

Week 7 – October 8 - 14

Friedrichs: Chapter 6 ; Ermann & Lundman: Chapter 16

Week 8 – October 15 - 21

Friedrichs: Chapter 7

Week 9 – October 22 - 28

Friedrichs: Chapter 7

Week 10 – October 29 – November 4

Friedrichs: Chapter 8; Ermann & Lundman: Chapters 6 & 8

Week 11 – November 5 - 11

Friedrichs: Chapter 10; Ermann & Lundman: Chapter 13

## **Critical Essay # 2 Due**

Week 12 – November 12 - 18

Friedrichs: Chapter 11; Ermann & Lundman: Chapter 15

## **Research Project Due**

Week 14 – November 26 – December 2

Friedrichs: Chapter 12; Ermann & Lundman: Chapter 15

Week 15 – December 3 - 9

Reiman – His basic argument

## **Critical Essay #3 Due**

Week 16 – December 10 - 16

Reiman – Implications for the conventional criminal justice system

Summary and Conclusions

Week 17 – December 17 – 20

Final Examination

## Disclaimers

1. This syllabus does not constitute a contract. Therefore, it is possible that changes may be made to accommodate changing circumstances. Modifications will be posted on Blackboard. In the event of revisions, students are responsible for updated information.
2. Part of the course requirements include various levels of participation in different activities, several of which require public display. Your continued participation in this course constitutes implied agreement to having some or all of your work available to members of this class, faculty, graduate assistants, and in limited circumstances, the general public. You can control access to your identity and contact information through Blackboard. No performance data will be accessible by anyone other than you, the professor, and his graduate assistant. The only individuals who will have access to personal information, including email addresses, will be the professor and his graduate assistant, unless you elect to reveal this information

**Acknowledgement of Understanding of  
Course Requirements for  
CJ 497/597 White-Collar Crime  
and a Promise to Abide by Same**

I certify that I:

1. have thoroughly read the course syllabus and its accompanying materials;
2. have asked the professor to clarify all course and syllabus items that appeared to be unclear;
3. have become completely satisfied that no item in the syllabus or on Blackboard regarding course performance expectations remain ambiguous;
4. understand that no work can be made up after the passage of its due date without an excused absence;
5. understand that qualification for an excused absence requires me to submit a completed *Request for Excused Absence* form that is included with the syllabus. I also understand that the completed form must be presented (along with documentation) **prior** to a university-recognized event.

I promise to:

1. abide by the guidelines conveyed in the course syllabus;
2. refrain from requesting an exception to the syllabus guidelines based on anything that is under my control (e.g., requesting to take the final exam early so I may leave on personal vacation);
3. ask for an excused absence prior to the university-recognized event;
4. forfeit any claim for an excused absence or any opportunity to make up work for my failure to provide the professor with a completed *Request for Excused Absence* form within the guidelines contained in the course syllabus.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Credit for activity or test scores requires submitting this signed agreement to the professor by the end of the first week of classes. I suggest that you retain a copy for your records and that the completed form be faxed (208-426-4371), scanned and submitted as an email attachment ([mblanken@boisestate.edu](mailto:mblanken@boisestate.edu)), or submitted in person.

## Request for an Excused Absence Form

**Instructions:** NO work can be made up unless a written copy of this form is submitted on the first day back after an absence. The form must be submitted prior to an event for which you are requesting an excused absence.

Request for Excused Absence  
**(Attach relevant documentation)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: CJ 497/597 White-Collar Crime Fall, 2007

Date(s) of Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of First Class Attended after Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief explanation of circumstances beyond the control of the student leading to the absence: