Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum
Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Social and Behavioral Sciences. Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

This course is an overview of what constitutes deviance in society and the explanations for deviance. Self-report, victimization data, and police data are used to determine patterns of deviance including substance use, sexual behaviors, crime, sexual harassment, suicide and mental illness. Theoretical explanations emphasize the role of societal factors, institutional and individual factors affecting deviant behavior. The course also covers basic concepts in deviance theories including social control of deviant behavior (both formally through institutions and informally in terms of individual interactions), subcultures in groups, and individual deviant careers. Data from empirical studies are evaluated in the course in terms of evidence for theories of deviance examined. Determining how social facts are established in deviance literature through a range of methodologies used in research is discussed.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

Students will learn the concepts and methods involved in understanding deviance in society. They will learn how to use empirical evidence to evaluate course theories. They will learn how to derive policy and prevention implications for some types of deviance from course theories and other materials. They will learn when theoretical integration is appropriate in understanding deviance. This will be assessed through in class exercises and exams.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

Students will learn to evaluate deviance theories and empirical research using statistical methods and patterns of statistical trends as illustrated through visual representation of charts, graphs and statistical tables. They will also learn from qualitative information, such as written ethnographies or filmed documentaries provided in deviance research. Their understanding of this visual and oral material will be assessed through exams and short written exercises. In class discussions within small groups will allow students to practice oral skills. This will be assessed through group presentations of exercises.
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Empirical and Quantitative Skills (to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions):

Students will be able to interpret tables, figures, and qualitative narrative information regarding deviance in society. They will gain a sense of understanding the concept of causality, and reliability and validity of studies conducted. They will understand the different strengths of multiple forms of data for understanding deviance. This will be assessed through in class exercises and examinations.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Students will learn how deviance is socially constructed in different times and places. They will learn to assess different strategies for understanding and addressing deviance in society. They will be able to make sense of real-world examples and major issues facing society. This will be assessed through in class discussions, and in-class and out of class exercises.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.