

# Course Expectation Resource Sheet - CRM 220

*“What can students expect if they choose this course?”*

**Course:** CRM 220 - Criminology

**Department:** Criminology & Criminal Justice

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Prerequisite:** None

**Catalog Description:** This course examines the nature and various dimensions of criminality through the lens of the social and behavioral sciences. Historical and contemporary explanations of crime rooted in a range of biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives are explored as well as their implications for individuals, social systems, and organizations. Students will learn how various institutions have experimented with and adopted crime-reduction policies and practices over time.

**Catalog:** 2025-2026 **Last Updated:** 9/19/2025

**Gen Ed Course:** Yes

**Gen Ed Area:** HUMAN CULTURES

**Gen Ed Requirement:** Social & Behavioral Sciences (GEC 110)

**CORE-42 Course:** Yes

**CORE-42 Area:** Social & Behavioral Sciences

**MOTR Code - MOTR Title:** CRIM 205 - Introduction to Criminology

**Is credit also available through:**

**Advanced Placement (AP)?**: No

**College Level Exam Program (CLEP)?**: No

**International Baccalaureate (IB)?**: No

*(click link for more information and required scores)*

## Responses and Advice from Department Representatives

*Last Updated: 2/6/2026*

**The following responses apply to:** Both seated and online courses

**What expectations do you have for students in this course?**

This course emphasizes curiosity, engagement, and participation. Students are expected to attend class regularly, take part in discussions and group activities, complete readings and weekly forum assignments, and apply criminological theories to real-world issues. Class sessions focus on exploring ideas together, so showing up and being involved is a key part of the learning experience.

**What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?**

Strong note-taking skills are essential in this course. Students are encouraged to listen carefully during class and write down key ideas, explanations, and examples rather than simply copying slides. Active reading, reviewing lecture notes, participating in discussions, and regularly revisiting key topics help students understand how different explanations of crime fit together.

**What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?**

See above.

**What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course?**

**What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?**

The most common challenge is missing class and trying to rely only on the textbook. This course is built around in-class discussion and explanation, which play a major role in understanding the material and preparing for exams. Students are encouraged to attend consistently and take advantage of office hours for one-on-one support when concepts feel unclear.

**How do you describe the course to students when they ask “What is this class about?” (without using the catalog description)?**

This course examines the different ways criminologists explain why people commit crime and how crime can be prevented or reduced. Students explore crime through multiple lenses—social, psychological, biological, and environmental— to understand patterns of behavior and societal responses.

From a psychological perspective, students are introduced to explanations that focus on individual behavior and decision-making. Topics include unconscious drives, deviant personality types, self-control, learned behavior, and how life experiences and stressors can influence criminal behavior.

From a social perspective, the course explores how family, peer groups, schools, communities, cultural norms, and social expectations shape behavior. Students examine how social bonds, peer influence, access to resources, and community structures can increase or reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior.

From a biological perspective, students learn how genetics, brain development, hormones, and physiological traits have been studied in relation to crime.

From an environmental perspective, the course examines how physical spaces and everyday routines influence crime. Students study how neighborhood design, land use, population movement, and opportunity structures help explain why crime occurs more frequently in certain places and at certain times.

**Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?**

This course helps you make sense of crime and behavior you already see in everyday life (on the news, online, and in your own community). You’ll learn different ways to think about why people break rules, how environments influence choices, and what works to prevent crime. Many students say the course changes how they understand real-world issues and helps them think more clearly about complicated social problems. The skills you build such as critical thinking, evaluating evidence, and seeing issues from multiple perspectives, are useful no matter what major or career path you choose.

**Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?**

This course is especially relevant for students interested in:

- Sociology and Psychology
- Social Work and Human Services
- Education and Youth Services
- Political Science and Public Policy
- Pre-Law and Government careers
- Health and healthcare-related fields
- Business majors – due to the many forms of financial crime

The course also appeals to students who are curious about social problems, public policy, community safety, or human behavior—regardless of major.

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