School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology and Criminal Justice
Criminology Comprehensive Exam

The reading list for the criminology comprehensive examination is intended to provide students with a substantive knowledge base pertaining to the causes of crime and deviant behavior. Although the list is not meant to be exhaustive in any area, it identifies readings deemed by the faculty as essential knowledge for students who graduate from the University with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology and Criminal Justice. You also should be familiar with relevant literature published in the major journals of the field and/or covered in your coursework, even if these readings do not appear on the list. Major journals include Criminology, Journal or Research in Crime and Delinquency, Crime and Delinquency, Justice Quarterly, Journal of Quantitative Criminology, Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, Law and Society Review, American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, Social Problems, Social Forces, Criminal Justice and Behavior, and Journal of Criminal Justice.

A successful examination demonstrates an ability to apply understanding of the criminological literature to broad questions facing the field. Rarely is the inclusion or exclusion of a single article or book sufficient to warrant a “pass” or “fail.” Instead, you must demonstrate conversational familiarity with relevant issues and the extant literature and show that you possess the knowledge base necessary to produce an informed and well thought out answer. Thus, rather than simply memorize what the authors of the items on the list say, you will need to focus on synthesizing the literature in a way that shows you understand it and have thought about how individual readings might fit together. Key dimensions for synthesis of the theoretical literature include the progression of specific iterations of theory within a theoretical paradigm, the key causal propositions within specific iterations of theory, evidence bearing on the key causal propositions of theory.

READINGS

The readings below are organized into different subareas. However, as you read the literature, you will become aware that some of the readings that are listed under one subarea also could fit within other subareas. As you read, you should think about whether particular readings might be useful to answer potential questions pertaining to several the subareas.

Immediately below are books that either review criminological literature across a number of theoretical paradigms or that serve as a foundation for multiple theoretical paradigms.


1. Communities and Crime

1.1. Social Disorganization and Environmental Criminology


Thrasher, F. (1936, Newer). The gang: a study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago (The University of Chicago press: Chicago, Ill.). *Chapter 1 only*. 


### 1.2 Community Informal Social Control


1.3. Collective Efficacy


1.4 Community Culture and Crime


1.5. Disorder


1.6 Concentrated Disadvantage


2. Control theory

2.1 Control theories


Nye, F. (1958) Family Relationships and Delinquent Behavior. New York: John Wiley. [Note: Read only the section on types of control.]


### 2.2. Self-control


3. Social learning, Differential association, Interactional Theory

3.1 Theories and Theoretical Developments


### 3.2 Key Studies and Critical Tests


4. **Anomie/Strain Theory**

4.1 **Classic Strain Theory and Early Mixed Models**


4.2 **Institutional Anomie Theory**


4.3 General Strain Theory


5. Offender Decision Making: Deterrence and Rational Choice

5.1 Deterrence


### 5.2 Rational Choice


### 6. Routine Activities and Opportunity Frameworks


7. Victimology

7.1 Overview and Key Tests


Lifestyle-Exposure Theory


**7.2 Self-Control and Victimization, Victim-Offender Overlap, Life course and Victimization**


**7.3 Cycle of Violence**


**8. Labeling Theory**


9. Feminist Perspectives, Gender & Crime


**10. Critical Criminology**


**11. Life course and Developmental Theories**

**11.1 Moffitt’s Developmental Taxonomy**


11.2 Sampson and Laub’s Age Graded Theory of Informal Social Control (Life course Theory)


11.3 Criminal Careers


11.4 Developmental Criminology


### 11.5 Stability and Change


### 11.6 Adult Social Bonds and Crime


### 11.7 Developmental Trajectories Prospects and Problems


### 11.8 Age and Crime


**12. Individual Differences**


**13. Biology and Crime**


**13.1 Genetic Influences on Criminal Behavior**


