



JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
The City University of New York
524 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019

CORPORATE AND WHITE COLLAR CRIME (ECO/SOC 360)
Course Syllabus Fall 2022

Instructor: Jackson Schwartz
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Office: Economics Department, 9th Floor
Office Hours: By Appointment, Mon/Wed 6pm-7pm

Course description:

In examining crimes committed by corporations and organizations, as well as individuals in the course of their occupation, this course explores: how such crimes are socially defined, who commits them, who is victimized by them, which social contexts promote them, and how society responds to them. The economic, social, and political costs of corporate and white-collar crime are compared to street crime. Other topics include: embezzlement, fraud, and theft which occurs within enterprises, "underground" economic activity; criminal violation of antitrust and environmental laws, security, fiduciary, and market crimes; and corrupt relationships between business and government. Members of either the Economics or Sociology faculties teach this course with varying emphasis on the above topics.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be familiar with the types of crime that fall under the umbrella category of white collar crime, and will have an analytical framework for identifying the political, social and economic impact of such crimes. Students will develop a solid knowledge of the historical and political circumstances that facilitate these crimes, and will have a general literacy in the most common types of economic crime for the purpose of developing a deeper understanding of current events. This knowledge will be put toward developing a more holistic theory of how this type of crime informs today's political economy.

Evaluation:

Participation 20%

This class will be predominantly discussion focused. Students are expected to attend every class and participate actively. Most classes will begin with a short lecture, followed by an in-depth discussion of the week's material. Students should come to class prepared with questions and comments, and be ready to critically analyze both the textbook assignments and the additional readings.

Response Papers and Homework 20%

Students are expected to submit 10 response papers over the course of the semester. These should be 300-500 words and investigate in some depth a specific aspect that week's reading. These will be due before the start of class on Monday every week unless otherwise noted.

These are meant to help students engage with the material and develop a deeper understanding of the topics covered. While these responses should make it clear that a student has a general familiarity with the material, students are encouraged to creatively approach the subject matter, and are free to pursue whatever aspect of the reading interests them. Because these are meant to help students prepare for in-class discussions, late response papers will not be accepted. However, only 10 are required over the course of the 15 weeks of class, so missing a few is expected.

Group Presentations 20%

Twice throughout the semester, students will work in groups of 3 or 4 to investigate a case study related to some aspect of white collar crime. Students will then present their research to the class and lead a short discussion about their findings. These presentations should be about 10 minutes total. While it's not necessary to create a visual presentation, students are expected to turn in a short written outline of their presentation day-of.

Essays 40%

Students will complete two longer essays. One 4 page paper as a midterm, and one 7 page paper as a final. These will be research papers about particular case studies related to topics we will cover in class. Students will receive prompts 2-3 weeks before the due date, and are encouraged to discuss their research topics with me at some point in the writing process. Proper citations are required.

Plagiarism Policy

While pasting direct passages from other pieces of work into your papers is obviously prohibited, lack of clear citations can lead even the best student to accidentally plagiarize. Please avoid this by clearly marking all quotes. If you are paraphrasing an argument found in a reading, be sure to finish your sentence with your citation in parentheses, as even summarizing someone else's work can be considered plagiarism. Students should be aware of John Jay's policy on academic honesty. It is available online at: http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/web_images/Policyand_Procedures.pdf.

Accommodations Policy

Qualified students with accessibility needs will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of a student's eligibility from the OAS which is located at L66 NB (212-237-8031). It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the office and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.

Wellness and Student Resources

Students experiencing any personal, medical, financial or familial distress, which may impede on their ability to fulfill the requirements of this course, are encouraged to visit the Wellness Center (L.68 NB). Available resources include Counseling Services, Health Services, Food Bank, and legal and tax aid through Single Stop.

Readings:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard. If possible, I would suggest acquiring a physical copy of the main textbook, *Profit Without Honor*, as we will be working out of it for the majority of the course.

Textbook:

Rosoff, Pontell, H. N., & Tillman, R. (2014). *Profit without honor : white-collar crime and the looting of America* (Sixth edition.). Pearson.

Additional Readings:

Balleisen. (2017). *Fraud : an American history from Barnum to Madoff*. Princeton University Press.

Black. (2013). *The Best Way to Rob a Bank Is to Own One: How Corporate Executives and Politicians Looted the S&L Industry*. University of Texas Press.

Enrich. (2017). *The spider network : the wild story of a math genius, a gang of backstabbing bankers, and one of the greatest scams in financial history*. New York, NY : Custom House, an imprint of William Morrow 2017.

Friedrichs. (2010). *Trusted criminals : white collar crime in contemporary society (4th ed.)*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Gandal, Hamrick, J., Moore, T., & Oberman, T. (2018). *Price manipulation in the Bitcoin ecosystem*. Journal of Monetary Economics, 95, 86–96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmoneco.2017.12.004>

Obermayer, & Obermaier, F. (2016). *The Panama papers : breaking the story of how the rich & powerful hide their money*. Oneworld Publications Ltd.

Outline:

Week 1: Introduction to White Collar Crime

August 29 - Syllabus and Introduction

Reading: N/A

August 31 - Defining White Collar Crime

Reading: Friedrichs 1-15

Week 2: Defining White Collar Crime (Cont.)

September 7 - Identifying the Victims

Reading: Friedrichs 15-58

Week 3: Fraud

September 12 - An American History of Fraud

Reading: Balleisen 3-42

September 14 - Consumer Fraud

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 36-47

Week 4: Fraud (Cont.)

September 22 - Advertising and Market Manipulation

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 54-78

September 24 - Unsafe Products

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 91-113

Group Presentation Topic Due

Week 5 - Deregulation and Oversight

September 28 - Deregulation

Reading: Ballisen 353-364

September 29

Group Presentation 1

Week 6 - MLMs

October 3 - MLMs

Podcast: The Dream

Week 7: Crimes Against Employees

October 12 - Overview

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 150-175

Midterm Paper Due

Week 8: Economic Crime

October 17 - Definitions

Reading: N/A

October 19 - Securities Fraud

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 218-248

Week 9: Control Fraud

October 24 - S&Ls

Reading: Black 1-41

October 26 - Enforcement

Reading: Black 246-267

Week 10: Fiduciary Fraud

October 31 - Overview

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 312-341

November 2 - 2008 Financial Crisis

Documentary: Inside Job

Week 11: LIBOR

November 7 - LIBOR Fixing

Reading: Spider Network (TK)

November 9 - Enforcement

Reading: Spider Network (TK)

Week 12: Corporate Fraud

November 14 - Overview

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 264-301

November 16 - Enron

Documentary: The Smartest Guys in the Room

Group Presentation 2 Topic Due

Week 13: Money Laundering

November 21

Group Presentation 2

November 23 - The Panama Papers

Reading: Obermayer (TK)

Week 14: Corruption

November 28 - Overview

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 403-442

November 30 - Iran Contra

Podcast: Fiasco

Final Paper Topic Due

Week 15: Computer Crime

December 5 - Overview

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 493-535

December 7 - Cryptocurrency

Reading: Gandal, Hamrick, Moore, Obermana

Week 16: Conclusions

December 12

Reading: Rosoff, Pontell, Tillman 549-576

Week 17: Final Paper Due (Date TBD)