



Criminal Justice (CRJS) 360

The Psychology of Criminal Behaviour (Revision 7)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision ❌

Delivery mode: [Individualized study online](#). Delivered via Brightspace.

Credits: 3

Area of study: Applied Study

Prerequisites: None (prior course in psychology is recommended)

Precluded: None

Challenge: CRJS 360 has a challenge for credit option.

Faculty: [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

Criminal Justice 360: The Psychology of Criminal Behaviour, is a three-credit course that is being offered online as a distance education course through Athabasca University. CRJS 360: The Psychology of Criminal Behaviour, is an undergraduate course designed to introduce students to the psychological variables that are thought to underpin criminal behaviour. Students who work or intend to work in fields such as law enforcement, institutional or community corrections, and public or private security should find this course helpful in their work.

The textbook for this course was specifically selected for its Canadian focus. Canadian researchers are at the forefront of modern risk-assessment practices, and most existing risk metrics have Canadian origins. This focus on issues of risk assessment and management is reflected throughout the textbook. Key Canadian researchers are profiled in each chapter, and additional readings are offered throughout the book so that students can learn more about Canadian contributions to our understanding of criminal behaviour.

The course content is organized into four parts. The first provides a contextual foundation for the course by reviewing crime trends in Canada and discussing the relevant statistical issues. Part 2 provides an overview of the relevant theoretical models of crime. Part 3 is more concrete in focus:

Here students will be introduced to a variety of factors that have been empirically linked to both nonviolent and violent crime. Discussion of the latter will include both violence against strangers and violence against intimate partners. The course then closes with a focus on special populations. This section of the course includes review of the varied needs of adolescent offenders, mentally ill offenders, psychopathic offenders, sexual offenders, female offenders, and Indigenous offenders.

Outline

CRJS 360 comprises thirteen units, divided into four parts:

Part 1: Introduction

- Unit 1: Crime in Canada

Part 2: Theories of Crime

- Unit 2: Biological and Evolutionary Theories of Crime
- Unit 3: Learning and Environmental Theories of Crime

Part 3: Violent and Nonviolent Offending

- Unit 4: Economically Motivated Offenders
- Unit 5: Substance Abuse and Crime
- Unit 6: Violent Offending
- Unit 7: Intimate Partner Violence

Part 4: Special Populations

- Unit 8: Adolescent Offenders
- Unit 9: Mentally Disordered Offenders
- Unit 10: Psychopathic Offenders
- Unit 11: Sexual Offenders
- Unit 12: Female Offenders
- Unit 13: Aboriginal Offenders

Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for CRJS 360, students must complete and submit all of the assignments and write the final exam. They must achieve a minimum grade of **D (50 percent)** [📄](#) on the final exam and an overall grade of at least D (50 percent) for the course.

Students will be evaluated on their understanding of the concepts presented in the course and on their ability to apply those concepts. The final grade in the course will be based on the marks achieved for the following activities.

Activity	Weight
Assignment 1	30%
Assignment 2	30%
Final Exam	40%

Activity	Weight
Total	100%

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#) section of the Calendar.

Materials

Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

Brown, S., Serin, R., Forth, A., Nunes, K., Bennell, C., & Pozzulo, J. (2017). *Psychology of criminal behaviour: A Canadian perspective* (2nd Canadian ed.). Pearson Canada.

Other Materials

All other materials are provided online.

Challenge for credit

Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit** [↗](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for the CRJS 360 challenge registration, students must achieve a grade of at least 50% on the exam.

Activity	Weight
Exam	100%
Total	100%

 [Challenge for credit course registration form](#)

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)
- › [Program planning](#) [↗](#)
- › [Request assistance](#) [↗](#)

> [Support services at AU](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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View [previous revision](#) 
