

Cedar Crest College  
**Crime and Place (Environmental Aspects of Crime)**  
Spring 2010

Course: CRJ 311  
Credits: 3

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Course Description

This course focuses on the social ecology of crime in that it examines the relationship between crime, victimization and the environment. Ecological theory examines spatial and temporal patterns of criminal conduct and victimization. This course also examines community and environmental strategies which have been developed to reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Course Objectives

Through this course, the intent is to assist the student to develop and use critical thinking skills to:

1. Develop an understanding of the unique role spatial and temporal factors have in the understanding of crime and the development of crime prevention programs.
2. Gain an understanding of how place and time have evolved into a critical aspect of crime evaluation and prevention.
3. Develop an understanding of the major environmental crime theories.
4. Analyze the practical application of environmental theory by evaluating community responses to these theories.
5. Understand the effect alterations to the physical environment have on crime patterns.

## Course Outcomes

The student will be able to explain how researchers explore the effects “space” and “time” has on crime; how it is defined; and how it is measured.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Space, Time and Crime, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination.

Students will be able to distinguish between the major theoretical models influenced by environmental beliefs, and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Space, Time and Crime, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how environmental design changes can affect crime pattern in a given community.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Space, Time and Crime, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination. In addition, students will present an independent research project identifying some of the major design changes seen in community settings and what their impact has been on crime patterns.

## Texts and Readings

### Main Text

Lersch, Kim Michelle. Space, Time and Crime. Durham, North Carolina; Carolina Academic Press, 2004.

### Selected Readings

Readings will be assigned as necessary to assist with student learning. All readings will be placed on the ecollege companion site for ease of access.

## Student Assignments

Each student is expected to do high quality work in completing the following assignments:

1. To regularly attend all class periods and read all assigned readings.
2. Students will be required to submit four written essays that will cover all of the readings, lectures and other educational material presented in class. Each essay will be posted shortly after the lecture is completed on the topic. The essay response is due at a time that will be discussed in class.
3. Students will participate in a group crime analysis project. Broken into groups of four or five, students groups will be assigned two community locations with which they must compare and contrast environmental features. Student groups will then be responsible for presenting their findings based on concepts discussed during the course of the semester.

Students will be given five hours of class release time to complete the project and 1 hour in which to make a class presentation. Students will be responsible for evaluating the participation of each group member and will receive a grade based on the overall completeness of the assigned task.

The following locations will be used for comparison:

1. Hamilton Blvd (Allentown) vs. Main Street (Bethlehem)
2. Allen High School vs. Parkland High School
3. Walmart ( MacArthur Rd.) vs. Target (Cedar Crest Blvd)
4. Trexler Park (Springhouse Road) vs. West Park
5. Cedar Crest College vs. Lehigh University

## Classroom Protocol

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest College Honor Code. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late

arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations and any other behavior that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

Furthermore:

Students are expected to have prompt and regular classroom attendance in accordance with the policy stated on the syllabus.

Faculty are expected to make clear on the first day of class reasons for specific classroom decorum and repercussions for non-compliance. Faculty should be aware of setting boundaries and procedures for exceptions to expectations stated in the syllabus.

Sleeping, or the appearance of sleeping is strictly prohibited. Any student who is observed sleeping will receive a zero for the class participation portion of the course. Repeated events will result in any student failing the course. Any student who is observed sleeping during a guest lecture will fail the course without question.

Students need to understand that open discussion is encouraged and expected in order to foster an advanced learning environment. However, all students should use caution when sharing personal information. There is a point to which personal experiences are detrimental to the learning environment.

Written assignments are 10 calendar days from the date distributed. The dates provided on the syllabus are intended to serve as an outline only, recognizing that the speed of student learning cannot be predicted in advance. All assignment dates will be clearly discussed in class. Any assignment handed in late will be assessed a 10 point reduction in the grade for each day that it is late. A zero will be received once the assignment is five days late. An assignment is considered late if it is not handed in by the time the class period expires on the announced date of the assignment. All late assignments must be sent to me via email and will not be accepted in any other format. Additionally, late assignments will be graded without comment.

## Honor Philosophy

The Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy is based upon the principle that, as a self-governing body, students have the ability to create an atmosphere of trust and support. Within this environment, individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, develop personal regard for the system under which they live, and achieve a sense of integrity and judgment that will guide them through life.

## Grading

Essay 1	15 %
Essay 2	15 %
Essay 3	15%
Essay 4	15%
Group Project	30 %
Class Participation	<u>10 %</u>
Total	100%

## Course Outline

### Week 1

Explanation of class design

Introduction to the basic concepts of spatial and temporal analysis

Video: *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*

#### Reading Assignment

Chapter 1 in Space, Time and Crime

Chapter 2 in Space, Time and Crime

Felson, M. & Clarke, R.V. (1998). *Opportunity makes the thief: Practical theory for crime prevention.*

### Week 2

What is “space” and “time”

History of the ecology of crime

Introduction to theoretical approaches; “classical” v “positivist”

Analysis of Social Disorganization theory

Development of the crime mapping project and assignment of geographical groups.

#### Reading Assignment

Chapter 3 in Space, Time and Crime

#### Class Assignment

Essay 1

Week 3

Individual theoretical approaches  
Rational Choice Theory

Reading Assignment  
Cohen & Felson (1979)

Class assignment  
Essay 2

Week 4

Individual theoretical approaches  
Routine Activity Theory

Assigned Reading:  
Brantingham & Brantingham  
Criminality of Place  
Nodes, Paths and Edges

Class assignment  
Essay 3

Week 5

Individual theoretical approaches  
Crime Pattern Theory

Reading Assignments:  
To be posted: covering Displacement;  
Diffusion of benefits  
Risky facilities

Class assignment  
Essay 4

## Week 6

Displacement  
Diffusion  
Risky Facilities

### Reading Assignment

To be posted: covering hot spots

### Class assignment

Essay 5

## Week 7

Hot spots

### Reading Assignment:

Chapter 4 in Space, Time and Crime

Chapter 5 in Space, Time and Crime

### Class assignment

Essay 6

## Week 8

Building Communities  
Altering the physical environment  
    Defensible space  
    Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)  
    Situational Crime Prevention

## Week 9

Problem Oriented Policing

## Week 10 & 11

These weeks are assigned to your field research, however, they are only meant to serve as an indication that two weeks will be afforded to you. When those weeks occur depends on many factors outside of the syllabus.

## Weeks 12 – 14

These weeks will be devoted to the class project and presentation. The student presentations themselves will be conducted during weeks 12 and 13, with week 14 being used for flexibility in presentation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Question \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_

	1	2	3	4
Academic Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the content</li><li>-did not answer the question</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- demonstrates a limited understanding of the content</li><li>- student did not answer the question with sufficient depth</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- demonstrates sufficient understanding of the content</li><li>- answered the question with sufficient depth</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- demonstrates exemplary knowledge of the content</li><li>- answered the question asked with exemplary depth</li></ul>
Academic Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- no flow to ideas</li><li>- unable to follow</li><li>- simple vs. complex sentence structure used</li><li>- uses spoken language/slang overall</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- flow of ideas inconsistent-difficult to follow- some complex sentence structure- drifts between formal &amp; spoken language</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Adequate flow to ideas-somewhat easy to follow-adequate complexity to sentence structure-adequate use of formal language</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- excellent flow to ideas</li><li>- easy to follow-complex sentence structure throughout-excellent use of formal written language</li></ul>
APA Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- uses academic content without proper citation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- occasionally uses citations appropriately but not enough to match the content presented</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- proper attempt at citation but inconsistent with APA format</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- uses academic content with appropriate citations that follow the APA format</li></ul>

Crime and Place

CRJ 311

**Evaluation of Oral Presentations**

**Subject of Presentation**\_\_\_\_\_

Rate the presentation on each element, on the following scale:

5= Excellent      4= Very Good      3=Good      2=Unsatisfactory      1= Poor

**I. Clarity**

A. Audibility	5	4	3	2	1
B. Articulation	5	4	3	2	1
C. Length of Presentation	5	4	3	2	1
D. Organization of Material	5	4	3	2	1

Overall comments are clarity of presentation:\_\_\_\_\_

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**II. Comprehensiveness**

A. Presentation was relevant to the topic selected	5	4	3	2	1
B. Coverage of topic	5	4	3	2	1
C. Coverage of argument/ Supporting evidence	5	4	3	2	1
D. Creative Format	5	4	3	2	1

Overall comments on comprehensiveness of presentation:\_\_\_\_\_

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