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](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:**


**Additional Readings:**


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)