

## Comparative Criminology

Code: 103952  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2025/2026**

Degree	Type	Year
Criminology	OT	4

### Contact

Name: Gustavo Javier Fondevila Perez  
Email: gustavo.fondevila@uab.cat

### Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

### Prerequisites

This course requires a B2 level of English. The language of the course (theory and seminar) is English.

### Objectives and Contextualisation

- Understand the methodological problems related to the comparisons of crime across nations.
- Understand the way in which crime data are collected across nations.
- Understand the theoretical explanations of the evolution of crime across time and space.
- Understand how a historical and cultural approach can help to explore differences in crime and the use of punishment in different countries.

### Competences

- Ability to analyse and summarise.
- Accessing and interpreting sources of crime data.
- Drawing up an academic text.
- Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
- Reflecting on the foundations of criminology (theoretical, empirical and ethical-political ones) and expressing this in analysis and propositions.
- Students must be capable of autonomously updating their criminological knowledge.
- Students must demonstrate they comprehend the criminological theories.
- Students must demonstrate they know a variety of criminal policies in order to face criminality and its different foundations.
- Verbally transmitting ideas to an audience.
- Working autonomously.
- Working in teams and networking.

### Learning Outcomes

1. Ability to analyse and summarise.
2. Applying the variety of criminal policies and their foundations in the criminological field.
3. Drawing up an academic text.
4. Effectively using the theoretical foundations of criminology.
5. Finding and analysing crime databases.
6. Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
7. Inferring the scientific knowledge of criminology in the applied field.
8. Students must show interest for the scientific updates in the criminological field.
9. Verbally transmitting ideas to an audience.
10. Working autonomously.
11. Working in teams and networking.

## Content

1. Introduction
2. The role of theory in comparative criminology
3. Cross cultural differences in criminology
4. Culture and the explanation of crime and victims in comparative criminology
5. Comparing orientations to justice
6. Policing and police cultures.
7. Criminal policies in comparative perspective.
8. The history of victimology: comparative victimology
9. International crimes and international criminal justice system. Transnational crime
10. The future of comparative criminology.

## Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
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Type: Directed			
Lectures	19.5	0.78	2, 6, 7, 8, 5, 4
Seminar	19.5	0.78	2, 7, 8, 3, 1, 9, 11, 5, 4
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Type: Autonomous			
Required readings	55.5	2.22	10
Written assignment	55.5	2.22	6, 3, 1, 10, 4
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- The course combines lectures and seminars. It requires reading a series of scientific articles for their discussion in class. In the seminars papers and other assignments will be discussed and submitted by the students.

- Before the starting of the course a detailed weekly schedule of activities will be provided.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Assessment

### Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Academic essay	30%	0	0	2, 6, 7, 8, 3, 1, 9, 10, 5, 4
Article summary and presentation	20%	0	0	3, 1, 9, 10, 5, 4
Cultural analysis exercice	10%	0	0	6, 8, 3, 1, 10, 4
Open questions exam	25%	0	0	2, 7, 8, 5, 4
Seminars participation activities	15%	0	0	2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 5, 4

Evaluation assignments:

- The evaluation takes into consideration:

- A paper summary and its presentation (20%).
- Seminars participation activities (15%).
- Cultural analysis exercice (10%).
- A final academic essay of the course and its presentation (30%).
- Multiple-choice exam (25%)

Evaluation criteria:

- Essays out of time will not be accepted and the student will get a fail mark (0), without possibility of late assignment. Only excuses based on illness or similar reasons may be accepted under proper justification.
- Plagiarism in essays will lead to a fail mark (0) and the student will lose the right of a new assessment. In case of relapse, the student will obtain a fail mark for the whole course (0) and will lose the right of a new assessment.
- It's necessary to obtain a final mean grade of 5 in order to pass the course.
- A minimum of 80% attendance to lectures and seminars is required to pass the course (only absences due to illness or similar reasons are accepted).
- Classes start on time. Late arrival is not admitted. Also, leaving the class before its end without proper justification is not permitted.

Single assessment system

It will consist of two exams:

1rst) 4 questions on the mandatory reading of the course and the papers of the complementary bibliography.

2nd) Exercise to show the skills to do a comparative criminology analysis.

## Bibliography

### Mandatory readings

Aebi M. & Linde A. (2015). The epistemological obstacles in comparative criminology: A special issue introduction. *European Journal of Criminology*, 12(4), 381-385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370815595311>

Evans, T. D., Lagrange, R. L., & Willis, C. L. (1996). Theoretical development of comparative criminology: Rekindling an interest. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 20(1), 15-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.1996.9678559>

Friedrichs, D. O. (2007). Transnational crime and global criminology: Definitional, typological, and contextual conundrums. *Social Justice*, 34(2), 4-18. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768431>

Karstedt, S. (2001). Comparing cultures, comparing crime: Challenges, prospects and problems for a global criminology. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 36, 285-308. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1012223323445>

Liu, J. (2007). Developing comparative criminology and the case of China: An introduction. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 51(1), 3-8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X06295774>

Marshall, I. H., & Marshall, C. E. (1983). Toward a refinement of purpose in comparative criminological research: Research site selection in focus. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 7(1-2), 89-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.1983.9688765>

Nelken, D. (2002). Comparing criminal justice. In M. Maguire, R. Morgan, & R. Reiner (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of criminology* (3rd ed., pp. 175-202). Oxford University Press.

Nivette, A. (2014). Legitimacy and crime: Theorizing the role of the state in cross-national criminological theory. *Theoretical Criminology*, 18(1), 93-111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480613499793>

Sebba, L., & Berenblum, T. (2014). Victimology and the sociology of new disciplines: A research agenda. *International Review of Victimology*, 20(1), 7-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269758013511657>

### Complementary references

Cavadino, M. & J. Dignan (2006). *Penal systems: A comparative approach*. Sage.

Elias, N. (1939/2000). *The civilizing process*. Blackwell.

LaFree, G. (2021). Progress and Obstacles in the Internationalization of Criminology. *International Criminology*, 1, 58-69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43576-021-00005-2>

Law, D. S. (2015). Judicial comparativism and judicial diplomacy. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 927-1036. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2410074>

Messner, S. F. (2014). Social institutions, theory development, and the promise of comparative criminological research. *Asian Journal of Criminology*, 9, 49-63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11417-013-9175-1>

Neapolitan, J. L. (1997). *Cross-National Crime: A Research Review and Sourcebook*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Newman, G. R. (1977). Problems of method in comparative criminology. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 1(1-2), 17-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.1977.9688627>

Shelley, L. I. (1981). *Crime and modernization: The impact of industrialization and urbanization on crime*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Szabo, D. (1975). Comparative Criminology. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 66(3), 366-379. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1142740>

Williams, P., & Godson, R. (2002). Anticipating organized and transnational crime. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 37, 311-355. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016095317864>

Zvekic, U. (1996). The international crime (victim) survey: Issues of comparative advantages and disadvantages. *International Criminal Justice Review*, 6, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105756779600600101>

## Software

The course does not require specific software.

## Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(SEM30) Seminaris (30 students per group)	11	English	second semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	1	English	second semester	afternoon