COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Cybercrime has been a growing social concern over the last few decades. Contrasting to a recent decline in most street crimes since the 1990s, we have seen a rapid increase in this new type of online crime. According to the Internet Crime Complaint Center, for example, cybercrime complaints have increased by approximately eighteen fold between 2000 (16,838 cases) and 2016 (298,728 cases), and referred financial losses have even more dramatically increased about more than eighty fold between 2001 ($17.8 million) and 2016 ($1.5 billion). It is difficult to separate those remarkable rises from a change in our lifestyle extensively integrated with information and communication technologies (ICT). Since internet accessibility is expected to continue growing due to accelerating improvement of ICT, this increasing trend might be lasting.

Considering this contemporary context, in this course we discuss several aspects of cybercrime such as its definition, nature, extent, and typology. Specifically, our focus will be on the criminological perspective for understanding cybercrime such as who commits cybercrime and why they do, what social structural conditions as well as individual propensities are associated with cybercrime offending and victimization. We will also discuss what similarities and differences between traditional street crime and cybercrime have been found to date, what implications we have had from the results, and how they can be applied to designing and implementing effective strategies for cybercrime prevention.

This course is an upper-level online course. Student performance will be largely assessed by their writings such as discussion post and research paper. Good writing skills based on critical thinking and analysis are highly expected for successful completion of this course.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
At the end of this course, students should be able to:
1. define cybercrime and address its nature and extent.
2. describe typologies of cybercrime and different types of cybercrime.
3. explain how major criminological theories and their key theoretical concepts can be applied to cybercrime offense and victimization.
4. analyze prior cybercrime cases applying criminological theories to identify a probable cause, and develop an idea for cybercrime prevention based on the analysis as well as other evidence-based research.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

- Students can order a print and/or an electronic copy of the textbook through the following link: https://global.oup.com/academic/product/cybercriminology-9780190278441?cc=us&lang=en#

GRADING POLICIES:
Your final grade will be based on the sum of the scores of your five (5) discussion board posts (150 points; 30 points each), six (6) quizzes (300 points; 50 points each), and one (1) research paper (150 points). Note that your final grades are NOT negotiable unless I make an error in calculating your grades.

Discussion Boards: 150 points (30 points each * 5 discussion boards)
Quizzes: 300 points (50 points each * 6 quizzes)
Research Paper: 150 points

Total: 600 points

A: 600-540 points
B: 539.99-480 points
C: 479.99-420 points
D: 419.99-360 points
F: below 359.99 points

DISCUSSION BOARDS:
Five (5) discussion boards will be given to students during the semester. Students are required to read a discussion question assigned in each module and post their discussions as their own responses to the question. Students are also required to reply to two (2) other student posts. Note that a word minimum will be applied to both your original post (more than 300 words) and your response to other students' posts (more than 100 words each). You must post your original response before you will be able to see other classmates' posts.

To earn good grades, students should support their opinions with textbook readings as well as other reading/multimedia materials assigned in each module. You may also find and use other academic sources such as peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, presentation proceedings, etc., which is not provided in this course but relevant to your argument. Use in-text citations and include a
reference list in your original discussion post. Note that you should avoid your personal anecdotes irrelevant to a discussion topic in your post as well as regurgitation of course materials. Your post should indicate that you read assigned reading materials thoroughly and engaged thoughtfully with the relevant and reliable sources by answering discussion questions. Students should also be courteous when replying to other classmates’ posts.

**QUIZZES:**
There will be six (6) quizzes during the semester, and one quiz will be given for each module. All the materials in a module will be covered in the quiz for that module and will include 25 questions with multiple choice and true/false questions. Since time restrictions (50 minutes) will apply to all six quizzes, students must have a stable internet connection to complete the quiz on time. If you do not have a stable connection, there are computer labs on campus that you may use. No excuses made for internet disconnection will be accepted.

**RESEARCH PAPER:**
One (1) research paper assignment will be given to students in this course. This written assignment requires students to 1) select one of the research questions relevant to the topics discussed in this course (a set of research questions will be provided), 2) find THREE academic empirical studies related to the research question selected, 3) summarize their findings and implications, and 4) write your thoughts, suggestions, criticism, or reflection about the studies that you choose.

Three academic empirical studies must be published in peer-reviewed academic journals such as *Criminology, Justice Quarterly, Journal of Quantitative Criminology, Crime & Delinquency, Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Criminal Justice & Behavior, Criminology & Public Policy*, etc. Students can access those peer-reviewed journals via the University library ([www.utrgv.edu/library](http://www.utrgv.edu/library)). Note that you are NOT allowed to use newspaper articles, Wikipedia, Blog postings, etc. Those sources are not peer-reviewed sources.

The summary of your empirical article should include: key research questions (or research hypotheses), sample characteristics, findings/implications, and your review of the study (suggestions, criticism, reflection, etc.). Do not simply copy and paste the abstract of each article. This is plagiarism so it will be strongly enforced.

Note that your research paper must:
1) meet a word minimum (at least 1,500 words).
2) include a cover page.
3) include a reference list.
4) include in-text citations.
5) follow APA format.
**Assignment is due 11:59pm, May 1.** Students must submit the assignment through Blackboard by the due date.

**IMPORTANT NOTES FOR YOUR SUCCESS IN PASSING THIS COURSE:**

1. Do not simply rely on the power point lecture (summary) slides. Students are required to read all the chapters of our textbook and additional reading materials assigned in this course thoroughly, understand key terms/concepts/arguments, and apply them to discussion boards, quizzes, and research paper in order to earn good grades.

2. Students are encouraged to ask any questions about the course in general, learning materials, and/or assessment, etc. The best way to contact me is email. I will respond to students’ emails within 24 hours unless they are irrelevant to the course or written in a rude/aggressive manner. Emails received after 6pm will be responded to the following day.

3. Note that no late submissions will be accepted and no make-up discussion boards/quizzes/case study paper will be given to students except in the case of emergency situations that can be proven by proper documentation (e.g., death of immediate family, admission to a hospital, etc.). Be aware of and keep up with the course schedule in the syllabus.

4. A significant portion of your final grades (50%) will be based on your writing pieces including your discussion board posts and your research paper. That is, your writing skills will be very important for your success in this course. I am expecting advanced college-level writings for the aspects of quality and content. For instance, your writing pieces should be free from grammatical error as well as typos, be well-organized for the aspects of logical flow and structure. Your arguments should also be supported or exemplified by our course materials (e.g., textbook, additional readings, and multimedia sources) and other reliable sources from discipline or media. If you are not very confident with your writing skills, I encourage you to contact the writing center located at BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg). Otherwise, you may reconsider taking this course.

5. Do not plagiarize others’ work. Not even a single sentence will be acceptable. Blackboard has an integrated application for plagiarism check so your plagiarized exam essay and/or case study paper will be detected with no exception. If you are caught for plagiarism, you will fail in this course and may be reported to the Department Chair or the College Dean.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro Module</td>
<td>Introduction: Read the course syllabus thoroughly and post your introduction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 14 – Jan 18</td>
<td>■ “Introduce Yourself” due Jan 18 at 11:59pm (10 pts for extra credit)</td>
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| Module 1 | Textbook Readings:  
| Ch. 1: Cybercrime & Cybercriminals: Development of Cybercriminology  
| Ch. 2: Measuring Cybercrime  
| Ch. 3: Cybervictimization  
| Jan 19 – Feb 1  
| Additional reading materials are also provided.  
| ■ Module 1 Quiz due Feb 1 at 11:59pm  
| ■ Module 1 Discussion Board due Feb 1 at 11:59pm |

| Module 2 | Textbook Readings:  
| Ch. 4: Cybercrime, Rational Choice, and Emotions: Punishment and Reduction of Cyberoffending  
| Ch. 5: Cybercrime and the Propensity to Offend  
| Feb 2 – Feb 15  
| Additional reading materials are also provided.  
| ■ Module 2 Quiz due Feb 15 at 11:59pm  
| ■ Module 2 Discussion Board due Feb 15 at 11:59pm |

| Module 3 | Textbook Readings:  
| Ch. 6: Cybercrime, Culture, and Inequality  
| Ch. 7: Conformity, Learning, and Sources of Social Control  
| Feb 16 – Mar 1  
| Additional reading materials are also provided.  
| ■ Module 3 Quiz due Mar 1 at 11:59pm  
| ■ Module 3 Discussion Board due Mar 1 at 11:59pm |

| Module 4 | Textbook Readings:  
| Ch. 8: Constructing & Reacting to Cybercrime: Labeling and Moral Panics  
| Ch. 9: Conflict Cybercriminology: Cybercrime, Power, and Gender  
| Mar 2 – Mar 22  
| Additional reading materials are also provided.  
| ■ Module 4 Quiz due Mar 22 at 11:59pm  
| ■ Module 4 Discussion Board due Mar 22 at 11:59pm |
Module 5
Mar 23 – Apr 5
Textbook Readings:
Ch. 10: Interpersonal Cybercrime
Ch. 11: Cybertrespass, Cybervandalism, and Cybertheft
Additional reading materials are also provided.
■ Module 5 Quiz due Apr 5 at 11:59pm
■ Module 5 Discussion Board due Apr 5 at 11:59pm

Module 6
Apr 6 – May 1
Textbook Readings:
Ch. 12: Deviant Cyberacts and Public Order Cybercrimes: Paraphilia, Prostitution, Substance Abuse, and Gambling
Ch. 13: Organized Cybercrime
Ch. 14: Political Cybercrime
Additional reading materials are also provided.
■ Module 6 Quiz due Apr 26 at 11:59pm
■ Research Paper due May 1 at 11:59pm

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services for additional information and to request accommodations.

Student Accessibility Services
Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.
MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available on or about:

Module 1  February 13 – 19
Module 2  April 10 – 16
Full Fall Semester  April 10 – May 1

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND VIOLENCE:
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

COURSE DROPS:
According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education
institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

**STUDENT SERVICES:**
Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

- **Learning center:** BSTUN 2.10 (Brownsville) or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg)
- **Writing center:** BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg)
- **Advising center:** BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg)
- **Career center:** BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg)

**SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE:**
This syllabus is subject to change. If some changes are needed, I will immediately announce them and post a revised syllabus on Blackboard.