Course description:
This seminar will explore two kinds of order without law: (a) criminal organization and (b) informal systems of social control. We will focus mainly on the Sicilian Mafia (Cosa Nostra). We will also examine gangs, community sanctions, vigilantism, and self-help. Students are encouraged to analyze and reflect on their own unwritten rules of campus life.

The course is designed as an introduction to history and the social sciences. The particular approach is methodological individualism—jargon for the important commonsense idea that we should explain social phenomena from the bottom up, by identifying what individuals do (behavior), why they do what they do (motivations), and how their behaviors have unintended consequences (social mechanisms). Students will get acquainted with basic distinctions among history, economics, political science, psychology, and anthropology.

Course requirements:
• Five papers (one for each Part of the syllabus). One is a position paper on a debate topic.
• Class participation, consisting in regular attendance, a debate, a report on assigned materials, and discussion.

Grade policy:
• The cumulative score is on a scale of 100 points and is graded on a curve.
• Papers amount to 75% of the course grade. Each paper is worth 15% (15 points available). Each paper should be five pages. Papers are graded on five criteria: focus, integration of assigned materials, argument, evidence, and prose. Each criterion is graded on a 3-point scale. 3 points = excellent. 2 points = satisfactory. 1 point = poor.
• Class participation amounts to 25% of the course grade. (The debate is worth 10%, the oral report is worth 10%, and discussion is worth 5%.)
• Penalties apply to students who miss more than three classes.

The debates:
One debate will be held at midterm. The topic is: Should we legalize 'victimless crimes'? If possible, within the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board, students will interview lawmakers, law enforcement officers, offenders, and advocacy groups to prepare for the debate. The other debate will be held in the last week of class. The topic is: Should students make and enforce the rules that govern them at the College? Draft position papers are due a week before the debates.

Purchase list. (All books are paperback):
• Jim Leitzel, Regulating Vice (Cambridge U. Press, 2008)
• Peter Maas, Underboss (Harper, 1997)
• Selwyn Raab, Five Families (Thomas Dunne Books, 2005)
• Alexander Stille, Excellent Cadavers (Pantheon, 1995)
• Sudhir Venkatesh, Gang Leader for a Day (Penguin, 2008)
Films to view:
- *I Cento Passi* (One Hundred Steps)
- *The Godfather*, Parts I and II
- *Donnie Brasco*
- *Goodfellas*
- *Traffik* (BBC)

**SYLLABUS**

An asterisk denotes materials available online at course BlackBoard site

**Part One: Mafia & Anti-mafia in Sicily**

I. 1/23
Norms of revenge

1/25
Rational Choice

Sicilian proverbs*, *Godfather I*

II. 1/28
Grass-roots Anti-mafia

1/30
Gender norms


2/1
Private protection

Pizzini (1999)*

Gambetta (1992) 1-71

1st paper due: Tuesday, February 5th

**Part Two: Mafia & Anti-mafia in Sicily (cont.)**

III. 2/4
*Omertà* (code of silence)

2/6
Judicial Anti-mafia (I)

Prisoner’s Dilemma*, *Godfather II*

2/8
Formal organization


Gambetta (1992) 75-155

IV. 2/11
Judicial Anti-mafia (II)

2/13
Markets

*Stille* (1995) 213-421

2/15
Equilibrium & change

Gambetta (1992) 159-257

2nd paper due: Tuesday, February 19th

**Part Three: Illegal markets ("victimless crimes")**

V. 2/18
Liberty & democracy

2/20
Harms to others

Elster (1993)*

2/22
Harms to self

Leitzel (2008) Intro & I

VI. 2/25
Debate 1: Liberty & limits

2/27
Debate 2: Drugs

Leitzel (2008) III & V

2/29
No class - Trinity Day

Leitzel (2008) IV

VII. 3/3
Debate 3: Commercial sex

3/5
Debate 4: Gambling


3/7
Debate 5: Loansharking


Reuter (1983)*

3rd paper due: Tuesday, March 11th
Part four: Mafia in the USA

VIII. 3/10 Voice & exit Raab stba
3/12 Colligation & contingency Raab stba
3/14 Indicators: Prohibition Raab stba

IX. SPRING VACATION

X. 3/24 Cartels Gambetta/Reuter (1995)*
3/26 Mechanisms Alexander (1997)*
3/28 Grips Raab, stba

XI. 3/31 Infiltration Donnie Brasco
4/2 Surveillance Maas (1997)
4/4 Betrayal Reuter (1995)*

4th paper due: Tuesday, April 8th

Part five: Comparative perspectives

XII. 4/7 Gangs & community Akerlof/Yellen (1994)*,
Venkatesh/Levitt (2000)*

XIII. 4/14 Pirates Leeson (2007)*
4/16 Close-knit groups Ellickson (1991)
4/18 Informal social control Ellickson (1991)

Debates: Should students make and enforce the rules that govern them at the College?

XIV. 4/21 Student order without law Muller (2003)*
4/23 Debate I: predatory crime
4/25 Debate II: environment crime

XV. 4/28 Debate III: plagiarism
4/30 Debate IV: harms to self (paternalism)

5th paper due: Thursday, May 8th

Bibliography of readings, other than purchase list


Muller (2003). Robin Muller, "Order without Law among Students at a Residential Liberal Arts College” (TCCTR, Trinity College, MS).


