

SOC*3840: SEMINAR IN SOCIOLOGY
“TECHNOLOGY AND CRIME”

University of Guelph
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Winter 2025

Section 01: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-2:20pm, Location TBD

Instructor: Dr. Andrew D. Nevin | anevin@uoguelph.ca

SOC*3840 covers topics at the intersection of technology and crime. During the semester, we will learn about how digital technologies and rapid technological advancements complicate our traditional understanding of crime and deviance, victimization, and criminal justice interventions. In particular, we will discuss a range of cybercrimes and other online misbehaviours, including cyberbullying, cyberstalking, digital piracy, and hacking, among many others that demonstrate the diverse risks facing today's digital citizens. We will draw attention to theoretical explanations of online offending, measuring cybercrimes, and empirical patterns in the literature. We will also consider practical and policy implications, including cybersecurity practices, law enforcement strategies, and the challenges associated with developing laws and policies that govern the prevention, detection, and prosecution of cybercrimes. Ultimately, we will address the overarching question: “How do the risks and opportunities of the digital world shape our behaviours, and how can/should society respond?”. Throughout the course, we will predominantly situate our learning within the contexts of Canada and the United States.

This course has several learning outcomes. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of core concepts and debates in the field of cyber-criminology
- Compare and contrast important criminological theories in terms of their applicability for explaining cybercrimes vs. traditional crimes
- Draw connections between various explanations for cybercrime and the ways that online offending has been addressed in policy and practice
- Develop a broader and deeper understanding of the challenges facing criminal justice and legal institutions related to rapid technological advancements
- Cultivate skills for effective written communication, respectful discussion, studying, and time management

This course will be a lecture-based format with opportunities for participation during (in-person) lectures and on the CourseLink discussion forums throughout the semester. Students' grades will be determined based on a combination of in-class tests and written assignments. Course readings are TBD.

Please note that this draft outline is for informational purposes only and a complete course syllabus will be provided via CourseLink on the first day of classes. As such, the assessment structure is subject to change prior to finalizing the syllabus in January.