

SOC4500 W25

Crime and Social Exclusion

“Crime and Social Exclusion” is an advanced undergraduate (double credit) course designed to introduce students to the relationship between criminalization and social exclusion.

Social exclusion (hereon, “SE”) is a process by which individuals are denied access to various rights, opportunities and resources that are otherwise available to members of a society. Restricting access to these results in limiting their access to everything from basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, employment, healthcare, etc.), to social acceptance to self- and social-realization (e.g. civic engagement, democratic participation, and due process).

SE is associated with four common correlates including,

- material deprivation,
- limited social participation,
- a lack of normative integration.
- insufficient access to social rights,

It can be regarded as resulting from a combination of risk factors such as,

- socially constructed categories and perceptions (often based on age, gender, race, etc.).
- macro-societal changes (such as demographic, economic, technological, social norms, etc.).
- law and policy.
- the actual behaviours and practices of fellow citizens as groups, consumers, businesses, administrators, governments, etc.

Those who are socially excluded suffer negative consequences which include everything from exclusion from economic, social, and political to increased “inclusion” in the criminal justice process. There is mounting evidence that SE has a negative impact well beyond its subjects. Society as a whole suffers high costs of SE which may include everything from needless law enforcement and incarceration costs (both human and economic) to an overall loss of human potential.

To the extent that the SE is arbitrary, disproportional or perceived as unjustifiable, it is increasingly the subject of resistance, protest and calls for political, social and legal reform.