

# CJS 337

## Sex Offenders and the Criminal Justice System



### Course Description

This is an introductory course to sex offenders. Over the past few years, a great deal of media attention has focused on sex offenders. Public officials have been quick to use the notion of “severely punishing this group of heinous offenders” as a platform. Why shouldn’t they? No one is “for” sex offenders. The problem, however, is that there are many stereotypes regarding this group of offenders—some are supported by empirical evidence, but many are not. This course includes a broad examination of issues surrounding sex offenders and the criminal justice system. It is highly likely that criminal justice practitioners will be required to work with sex offenders in some capacity. The purpose of this course is to provide students with information that will benefit them when working with such offenders. Thus, examinations of the theoretical paradigms are reviewed. Distinctions are made among subtypes of sex offenders (i.e., adolescent offenders, female offenders, rapist, child molesters, etc.). Additionally, recent trends in assessment tools, treatment approaches, and legal responses are reviewed and discussed. Students will have the opportunity to explore problems with current trends and discuss related issues.

### Course Objectives

- To be familiar with the factual information (fundamental principles) associated with sex offenders and sex offender research. Each student should be familiar with the following:
  - Types of sex offenses and sex offenders (juveniles, male/female, rapists, child molesters, etc.)
  - Theories related to sexual offenses (biological, cognitive, psychosocial, etc.)
  - Special topics: human trafficking and online predators, polygraphs, etc.
- Gain information about sex offenders needed by criminal justice professionals. This includes the following:
  - Investigation and Community Supervision consideration
  - Assessment and Treatment approaches
  - Registration Laws and Government reaction
- Gaining knowledge regarding sex offenders is important, the real learning is the integration and application of the material in guiding sound decision making that affords the greatest probability for community safety.