University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Criminal Biology - lecture, PG_00201592		
Field of study	Criminology and Criminal Justice		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026	Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027
Education level	Bachelor's studies	Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Subject group related to scientific research in the field of study
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	at the university
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	English
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	5.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	exam
Conducting unit	Laboratory of Neurobiology -> Department of Animal and Human Physiology -> Faculty of Biology -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr Wojciech Glac	
	Teachers		

Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						

Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30	2.0	93.0	125

Subject objectives	
	• learning and understanding the neurobiological and social determinants of crime • learning and understanding the brain mechanisms underlying antisocial and criminal behavior • learning and understanding the mechanisms underlying the interactions between social and biological factors in their mutual influence on an individual's antisocial and criminal behavior

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[CCJL3_K02] is prepared to actively participate in groups, social or legal projects, organisations and institutions related to criminology in its broadest sense and to the administration of justice, while being able to communicate with both specialists and non-specialists in criminology	Is prepared to participate in various initiatives involving the application of knowledge and skills in criminal biology and to use this expertise professionally in communication within project teams.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK5] implementation of a problem task [SK8] observation of student's independent or team work
[CCJL3_UW01] is able to use his knowledge of criminology and related scientific disciplines to formulate and interpret basic problems associated with criminology, as well as with the functioning of the national and international justice system, observes and interprets phenomena universal for different societies in the field of etiology and phenomenology of crime	Is able to apply knowledge of criminal biology to interpret the causes of criminal behavior and to assess an individual's vulnerability to criminal behavior based on their biological traits and social environment.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU5] implementation of a problem task
[CCJL3_WG02] Has an enhanced knowledge of facts and concepts and the relationship between selected natural phenomena, social phenomena and in the sphere of the products of human thought, especially in the perspective of legal conditions related to the problems of criminal acts, as well as the etiology and phenemoenology of crime, and on key social and psychological phenomena relevant in the context of the studied direction.	Demonstrates advanced knowledge of the interaction between biological and social factors in shaping vulnerability to antisocial and criminal behavior.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW3] text preparation/written work
[CCJL3_WG05] has a basic knowledge of man, in particular, as a subject constituting social structures and the principles of their functioning, as well as a subject acting in these structures	Demonstrates knowledge of human neurobiology and the neurobiological basis of behavior, including social and antisocial behavior.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW3] text preparation/written work

Subject contents

- theories about the causes of crime
- the role of genes and environment in the development of crime
- human behavior and its regulation, emotions, motivation, drive reactions, free will, learning and conditioning
- brain mechanisms influencing susceptibility to antisocial and criminal behavior and their inter-individual variability
- brain mechanisms leading to antisocial and criminal behavior carried out in the so-called with passion and premeditation
- the impact of mental disorders and personality disorders on the tendency to commit criminal behavior
- biological differences between women and men and their impact on the tendency to engage in criminal behavior

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
discussions	51.0%	20.0%
problem-based task	51.0%	25.0%
elaborations	51.0%	30.0%
quizzes	51.0%	25.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature	• Alison Liebling, Shadd Maruna, Lesley McAra. The Oxford Handbook of Criminology. Oxford University Press, 2017 • David C. Rowe. Biology and Crime. Roxbury Pub Co., 2001
Supplementary literature	• Nicole Rafter. The Criminal Brain: Understanding Biological Theories of Crime. NYU Press, 2008 • Adrian Raine. The Anatomy of Violence: The Biological Roots of Crime. Vintage, 2014
eResources addresses	

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	quiz - indicate the theses that correctly describe the theory [name of the theory] elaborations - create a mind map illustrating various sociological factors that predispose to crime problem-based task (case study) - based on the described story, indicate and justify what biological and social factors predisposed the perpetrator to the crime and indicate what interventions should be taken to prevent the crime discussion - topic: whether specific biological predispositions should be treated as factors influencing the sentence
Work placement	Not applicable

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