Class Information:
Meeting Time: Thursday 5.30-8.00
Location: 422 Snell Library
Instructor: Professor Jacob I. Stowell, Ph.D.

Contact Information:
Office: 429 Churchill Hall
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Office Hours: 12:00-1:30 Mondays and Wednesdays, and by appointment

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Office Hours: 11.45-1.15 Tuesdays and 12.30-2.00 Thursdays, and by appointment

Required Text:

Additional Readings:
Throughout the semester, students will be responsible for reviewing a number of quantitative research articles. When possible, I will make the articles available electronically on Blackboard.

Course Description:
The primary objective of this course is to teach students the process of mapping. Too often mapping courses are constructed in a “mapping by numbers” vein, wherein various mapping techniques are presented in isolation over the course of a semester. The problem with this approach, in my opinion, is that the techniques learned are rarely used in combination with other methodologies covered in a textbook. That is, a student will learn the skill of geocoding, for example, and then move on to another technique, such as buffer zone analysis, without a clear discussion of how these analyses are truly interrelated. In this course, we will move beyond this traditional (and somewhat disconnected) class structure by employing a more holistic approach to learning how to create and interpret maps.

I also believe that this approach, though novel, will provide a much deeper understanding of crime mapping and leave students with a solid foundation of skills that are transferable and scalable. Although this course represents an introduction to crime mapping, I am confident that students completing the course will be successful in future mapping endeavors, whether that is a
career in a practitioner setting or if they decide to incorporate mapping into their dissertation research and future academic pursuits. Essentially, what makes this course different, I feel, is that it focuses on how to create effective maps (start to finish) rather than focusing largely on the various mapping capabilities currently available to researchers.

Course Objectives:
1. Expose students to a number of spatial analytical techniques that are commonly used by criminal justice practitioners and criminological researchers. This will include thorough discussions of the strengths of a given mapping technique as well as its limitations.

2. Continue to strengthen analytical and data management skills that will be applied in future research projects.

3. Extend familiarity and comfort with mapping and spatial analytic software (ArcMap, CrimeStat, Geoda), which will be useful skills while enrolled in this program and in the students' subsequent professional careers.

Course Requirements:
You must attend class each week, complete and return all assignments. There will not be any opportunities for extra credit. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

Note that students are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to the scheduled class meeting. Should you fall behind in the reading and/or assignments it will be difficult to catch up, and your grades on the assignments will likely suffer. I also recognize that much of this may be new and not intuitive. Please don't let yourself fall behind. If you find yourself in need of additional explanation or guidance (with the lecture material or the computer assignments), please come see me during office hours or make an appointment.

Course Grading:
Your grade for the course will be based on your performance in three areas:

1. Assignments (25%):
You will be given several assignments throughout the semester that you must complete outside of class. These will involve using various mapping, or data management techniques discussed in class. This may also include preparing sections of your term paper before it is due. You are free to discuss the assignments with fellow students, but the work you turn in must be your own.

2. Article Summaries (25%):
Throughout the semester students will complete a number of article reviews that make use of spatial analysis. Students will select articles from the criminological research literature to increase awareness of the various ways in which the use of mapping and related analyses inform our understanding of criminological processes. The specific articles reviewed will need to be approved. The dates of the summaries will be announced in class a week in advance and on Blackboard and are to be determined based
on the pace of the course.

3. **Term paper (50%)**: 
   Each student is required to submit a term paper on any topic that interests you within the field of criminology and criminal justice. You will choose the topic of the paper, but it must be approved by me no later than March 17th (including a discussion of the analytical strategy). The paper must be of graduate student quality, double-spaced, and formatted in accordance with the standards of a major social science journal (e.g. Criminology, JRCD, JQ, SP, etc). The analyses conducted for this paper will need to be based on a number of the analytical techniques covered during the semester. A more detailed explanation of paper requirements will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Final letter grades will be based on total points achieved during the course. Letter grades will be determined in the following way:

The final course grades are based on the following scale:

- **A** = 93-100%  
- **A-** = 90-92%  
- **B+** = 87-89%  
- **B** = 83-86%  
- **B-** = 80-82%  
- **C+** = 77-79%  
- **C** = 73-76%  
- **F** = <73%

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Students are expected to do their own work in this class. Students found cheating (or plagiarizing) on any exam or assignment will receive a “0” for that assignment or exam. I will also report such cases to the appropriate University office for investigation. Below is a link to the University’s official policy on academic dishonesty:

[http://www.northeastern.edu/provost/policies/](http://www.northeastern.edu/provost/policies/)

*Please note that I will try to follow this syllabus as closely as possible. However, the subjects covered and course policies are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and on Blackboard.*