Introduction for Faculty Colleagues

About the Course
This assignment was prepared for a course on the social construction of deviance, a cross-listed sociology/criminal justice course. The assignment is not a modification of an earlier assignment, but rather is an assignment created exclusively for this course- a course I had not taught before. The assignment was crafted for a version of the course being offered online and during a condensed summer session. Accordingly, the assignment refers to discussion board posts which were a required component of the online course.

How the Assignment Fits Into the Course
This assignment is the second assignment required for the course. The first assignment was much more introductory and invited students to describe themselves and their baseline views on deviance. This is the first assignment that required the students to have carefully read assigned course materials.

Aims for the Assignment
The aims for this assignment include setting the tone for the course, communicating my expectations about the required level of engagement with required readings, and assessing students’ familiarity with important sociological theories of deviance.

Important Features of the Assignment
This assignment has been crafted to put the assignment into the larger context of the course; understanding sociological theories of deviance is a main aim of the course. The assignment is crafted to give students a sense of confidence about what is expected of them so that the assignment (and ultimately the course) feel like experiences in which the student can succeed if he or she puts in effort.

Rubric
The grading criteria are clearly outlined on the assignment. The assignment can earn up to 5 points; 0, 1, 2, or 3 posts. Each response will receive 0, 1, or 2 points. Points are allocated based criteria within the assignment description, namely, the depth of thinking, timeliness of submission, length of post, and quality of the writing.
The Assignment I Distribute to Students

SOC 342 – The Social Construction of Deviance
Discussion Board Activity 2

Task
Consider whether you see deviance as socially constructed. Use evidence from the readings on positivist theories of deviance and constructionist theories of deviance to support your view. Provide an example of a behavior/way of being that you think illustrates your perspective.

Connection to Course Objectives
This assignment reflects and facilitates the following course objectives described on the course syllabus:

1. To gain a sociological understanding of “deviance,” and the ways in which notions of deviance may be socially constructed.

2. To understand major theories in the sociology of deviance and explore different methodologies used to gather data.

Learning Objective
The specific learning objective of this assignment is to display an awareness of various theories of deviance (specific positivist and constructionist theories) and to apply those theories to the question of whether deviance is socially constructed.

Product
You will create an 800-1,000 word discussion board post responding to the task prompt. This document should be constructed offline for clarity and editing and then subsequently posted on the discussion board. It should be written in a formal scientific style (and not first-person voice).

You will create a 400-500 word response post that provides a critical response to a response post made by a peer. The response can be typed directly into the discussion board or prepared offline (in case the discussion board crashes), and can be written in first-person. PLEASE RESPOND TO SOMEONE THAT NO ONE ELSE HAS RESPONDED TO- I WOULD LIKE EACH STUDENT TO RECEIVE ONE RESPONSE. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO TIMING ISSUES, PLEASE RESPOND ONLY TO SOMEONE WHO HAS ONE OTHER RESPONSE.

Process
1. Thoroughly review Articles 1-2 and 3-5 in your course text and the PowerPoint lectures I have posted to ensure that you have an adequate understanding of the relevant theories. While most Thursday assignments
will reflect on only the Thursday readings, this assignment requires you to reflect on the readings from Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

2. Consider what it means for deviance to be socially constructed and evaluate whether you think deviance is socially constructed. Identify an example of a behavior/way of being that illustrates your view.

3. Craft a post in which you summarize each theory, state your perspective, and then use selected theory to describe the ways in which deviance can be considered socially constructed, and to justify the example (behavior/way of being) you selected.

4. Feel free to reference article authors in your response and post (in-text, with author names and year, and page number if including a direct quotation). However, you need not create a reference list for your post unless you are incorporating scholarship that is not from the textbook.

5. Posts are due no later than 9:30 AM on Thursday 6/6/13.

6. Review the posts of your peers, and post a response to a peer posting. Response posts will critically evaluate the posting of a peer. Do you agree or disagree- why or why not? Can you see the behavior/way of being described through an alternate theoretical lens?

7. Response posts are due no later than 10:30 AM on Thursday 6/6/13.

Criteria
Discussion board activity 2 is worth 5 points total. Each discussion board post will receive 0, 1, 2, or 3 points. Each response will receive 0, 1, or 2 points. Points will be allocated based on the following criteria:

1. Depth of thinking and application of theories- do the post and the response demonstrate a careful and thoughtful consideration of the topic?

2. Timely display of post and response- does it meet requirements?

3. Length of post- does it meet the word requirements?

4. Writing quality- is the writing free of typos? Is it grammatically correct?

I have online office hours on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30-11:30 AM and can be reached via email at other times (with a <24 hour response time M-F). Please contact me with any questions or concerns.