Introduction
Welcome to CCJS 498, The Politics of Criminal Justice. Over the course
of the semester, we will be discussing a wide variety of topics having
to do with the political and social context of policing and criminal
justice in the United States of America. Justice does not occur in a
vacuum, and without understanding the various pressures exerted upon
it by the currents of society, we cannot hope to understand its unique
challenges, its failures and successes, and its opportunities for
improvement – or collapse.

Grades will be calculated based on two written assignments, a
presentation, and class participation. This latter grade will be based
on an online component, wherein you will post two one-paragraph
reflections (one on in-class material, one on assigned readings) on
the course’s ELMS site, which will all be also turned in as a single
document at the end of the semester.

Two classes may be missed without excuse until grading is affected;
afterward, each missed class will result in a full letter grade
deduction. Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of every
class. All assignments are to be turned in as hard copies, unless
arrangements are made otherwise beforehand.

Disclaimers
UMD policies relevant to undergraduate courses may be found at
Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and will be prosecuted.

Required Texts
Readings will be required throughout the semester, but will be
provided online. There is no required textbook.
Grading Breakdown
Class Participation  25%
Short Paper    25%
Term Paper      50%

Syllabus

Weeks 1-2
The Policymaking Process
Week 3
The Constitution and Criminal Justice
Week 4
Partisan Perspectives on Crime and Justice
Week 5
The Urban Context of Crime
Week 6
Criminal Policing in American Cities
Week 7
First Paper Due
The Police and the Culture
Week 8
SPRING BREAK
Week 9
The Politics of Race and Class
Week 10
The Courts and the Prisons
Week 11
Public Corruption
Week 12
MOVIE: Twelve Angry Men
Week 13
Transnational Issues: Terrorism and Immigration
Week 14-15
PRESENTATIONS
Week 16
Second Paper Due
Conclusions