



Course Information

Course Title: Corrections
Course Number: CCJS342 0101
Course Location: SQH 1120
Course Times: T/Th 11:00 am – 12:15 pm
Term: Fall 2023
Credits: 3
Course Dates: Aug 28-Dec 11, 2023

Professor: Dr. Ellis
Pronouns: she/her
Email: ellisr@umd.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm (LeFrak 2165B)

Teaching Assistant: Siya Gu
Pronouns: she/her
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TA Office Hours: Schedule by email (LeFrak 2160)

Course Description

What does punishment look like in America today? This course examines the philosophies and practices of contemporary corrections in the U.S. We will trace its history and origins, then cover prevalent punishment practices from jail and bail, to probation and house arrest, from prison and solitary confinement, to the sex offender registry and the death penalty. We will engage with debates on prison labor, gender and rehabilitation, and criminal justice reform. Along the way, we will examine the collateral consequences of corrections, including fines and fees, strained family relationships, social stigma, and the impacts of Covid-19. We will explore the perspectives of the punished alongside those of correctional professionals to analyze the goals and consequences of corrections in their broader social context.

Course Objectives

By engaging with scholarship, news articles, podcasts, videos, and contemporary court cases, students will emerge with strengthened critical reading and writing skills and a firm grasp on the range of correctional practices and alternatives. Throughout the semester, students will learn to:

1. Identify underlying correctional philosophies in the U.S.
2. Evaluate contemporary correctional practices
3. Connect news and current events to correctional goals and methods

Required Readings

Textbook: Clear, Todd R., Michael D. Reisig, and George F. Cole. *American Corrections*, 11th, 12th, or 13th edition (published 2019-2022). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

You *may* purchase an earlier edition, as long as you look at the table of contents to ensure each of the chapters in our reading list are available. You may also buy or rent the eBook [through this link on the Cengage website](#).

Additional assigned articles and book chapters available on ELMS-Canvas.

Assignments

Class will consist of lecture, discussion, and small group activities. This course is learner-driven – prepare in advance and attend class ready to participate. Learning styles differ; assignments are designed to give students the opportunity to showcase their learning through a variety of formats. Assignments total 100 points.

1. **Participation and in-class activities (10 points)**

Student engagement is at the heart of this course. Thoughtful, respectful participation in class discussion will improve your experience of this course. Participation includes speaking in discussions, completing in-class assignments, engaging with fellow students in small-group activities, active listening, and asking questions.

2. **“Educational autobiography” memo (5 points)**

Early in the semester, students will be asked to write a 1-2 page (double-spaced) educational autobiography describing past experiences that led to taking this course and future goals. Further instructions will be provided.

3. **Midterm exam (30 points)**

One in-class midterm will assess progress in this course. This will include multiple choice, short answer, and/or long answer format.

4. **Infographic assignment (10 points)**

Students will be asked to create an infographic about a topic related to contemporary corrections. Further instructions will be provided.

5. **“Corrections reflections” essay (10 points)**

Towards the end of the semester, students will be asked to write a 3-4 page (double-spaced) essay applying perspectives learned in this course to a correctional case study of their choosing. Further instructions will be provided.

6. **Final exam (35 points)**

A cumulative final exam will assess progress in this course.

Assignment	Percentage
Participation and in-class activities	10%
Educational autobiography memo	5%
Midterm (in class)	30%
Infographic assignment	10%
Corrections reflections essay	10%
Final Exam (take home)	35%
Total	100%

Lateness policy

*Late work will be accepted **without** contacting the TA or professor. An automatic 5% per day is deducted for late work. (e.g. 1 day late, highest possible grade is 95%; 2 days late, highest possible grade is 90%). All assigned grades are non-negotiable.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings must be completed in advance of the class session for which they are assigned. You may find it helpful to read in the order listed. All topics and readings are subject to change.

WEEK 1

Welcome & The Four Goals of Corrections

Tuesday, August 29

NO READINGS

Thursday, August 31

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 4 “Contemporary Punishment”
- New York Times. 2019. “College Admissions Scandal: Your Questions Answered.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/14/us/college-admissions-scandal-questions.html>
- U.S. Department of Justice. 2022. “Investigations of College Admissions and Testing Bribery Scheme.” <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ma/investigations-college-admissions-and-testing-bribery-scheme>

WEEK 2

Corrections Then, Corrections Now

Tuesday, September 5

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 2 “The Early History of Correctional Thought and Practice”

ASSIGNMENT

- “Educational Autobiography” memo due: submit in ELMS-Canvas

Thursday, September 7

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 3 “The History of Corrections in America”

WEEK 3

Who Gets Punished? Race, Demographics, & the Correctional Client

Tuesday, September 12

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 6 “The Correctional Client”
- CBS New York. 2017. “Seniors Caught Pushing Pills Are The ‘New Face of Drug Dealing’; Experts Say.” <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/senior-citizen-drug-dealers/>

Thursday, September 14 FILM SCREENING IN CLASS

READINGS

- Delaney, Ruth, et al. 2018. "American History, Race, and Prisons." *Vera Institute* <https://www.vera.org/reimagining-prison-web-report/american-history-race-and-prison>
- *American Corrections* Chapter 19 "Race, Ethnicity, and Corrections"

WEEK 4

Jail and Bail

Tuesday, September 19

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 7 "Jails: Detention and Short-Term Incarceration"
- Irwin, John. 1986. *The Jail: Managing the Underclass in American Society*. Selection: Chapter 1 "Managing Rabble" (pp. 1-17) and Chapter 2 "Who is Arrested" (pp. 18-41).

Thursday, September 21

READINGS

- Cannon, Ryan T. 2020. "Sick Deal: Injustice and Plea Bargaining During Covid-19." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 110:91-105.
- Lartey, Jamiles. 2020. "New York Tried to Get Rid of Bail. Then the Backlash Came." *Politico* <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/04/23/bail-reform-coronavirus-new-york-backlash-148299>

WEEK 5

Juvenile Detention and Probation

Tuesday, September 26

READINGS

- Orendain, Natalia. 2019. "Should Children as Young as 12 be sent to Juvenile Detention?" *The Conversation* <https://theconversation.com/should-children-as-young-as-12-be-sent-to-juvenile-detention-107848>
- Times Editorial Board. 2023. "L.A. County's Juvenile Hall Problem? It's not the Buildings." *Los Angeles Times* <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-05-14/juvenile-hall-death>

Thursday, September 28

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 8 "Probation"
- Phelps, Michelle S. 2018. "Ending Mass Probation." *The Future of Children* 28(1):125-146.

WEEK 6**Probation and Intermediate Sanctions**

Tuesday, October 3

READINGS

- Human Rights Watch. 2020. "Revoked: How Probation and Parole Feed Mass Incarceration in the United States." *HRW* July 31, 2020.
<https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/07/31/revoked/how-probation-and-parole-feed-mass-incarceration-united-states>

Thursday, October 5

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 9 "Intermediate Sanctions and Community Corrections"

WEEK 7**Fines and Fees**

Tuesday, October 10

READINGS

- Harris, Alexes. 2018. "Justice Shouldn't Come with a \$250 Fine." *New York Times*
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/03/opinion/alternative-justice-fines-prosecutors.html>

Thursday, October 12

READINGS

- Fernandes, April D., Brittany Friedman, and Gabriela Kirk. 2022. "Forcing People to Pay for Being Locked Up Remains Common." *Washington Post* May 2, 2022.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/05/02/forcing-people-pay-being-locked-up-remains-common/>
- Listen to this podcast episode (33 minutes): "Jay Learns Who Really Pays for Prison Time." *The Untold Story: Criminal Injustice with Jay Ellis*
<https://lemonadamedia.com/show/theuntoldstory/>

WEEK 8**Introduction to Prisons & Midterm Exam**

Tuesday, October 17

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 10 "Incarceration"
- Metcalf, Jerry. 2018. "A Day in the Life of a Prisoner." *The Marshall Project*
<https://www.themarshallproject.org/2018/07/12/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-prisoner>

Thursday, October 19

Midterm Exam in class

NO READINGS

WEEK 9

The Prison Experience

Tuesday, October 24

READINGS

- Charles, Dan. 2017. "What's it Really Like to Work in a Prison Goat Milk Farm? We Asked Inmates." *National Public Radio*
<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/07/20/538062911/whats-it-really-like-to-work-in-a-prison-goat-milk-farm-we-asked-inmates>
- Tardiff, Sara. 2021. "The Last Wildfire-Fighting Camp for Incarcerated Teens in California." *Teen Vogue* November 19, 2021.
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/wildfire-camp-incarcerated-teens>

Thursday, October 26

READINGS

- Reiter, Keramet. 2016. *23/7: Pelican Bay Prison and the Rise of Long-Term Solitary Confinement*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Selection: Chapter 1 "A Supermax Life" (pp. 10 – 33)
 - *Recommended*: Listen to the episode titled "The SHU" of the podcast *Ear Hustle* – July 26, 2017 (Available for free on iTunes, Stitcher Radio, or online on this website: <https://www.earhustlesq.com/listen/2017/7/26/episode-four-the-shu>)

WEEK 10

Gender, LGBTQ+ Populations, and Prisons

Tuesday, October 31

READINGS

- Comfort, Megan L. 2003. "In the Tube at San Quentin: The 'Secondary Prisonization' of Women Visiting Inmates." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 32(1):77-107.
- *American Corrections* Chapter 12 "Incarceration of Women"

Thursday, November 2

READINGS

- Buist, Carrie and Emily Lenning. 2016. Chapter 5: "Queer Criminology and Corrections." Pp. 91-111 in *Queer Criminology*. New York: Routledge.

WEEK 11

Covid-19 in Jails and Prisons & Reentry

Tuesday, November 7

READINGS

- Lewis, Nicole. 2021. "How We Survived Covid-19 in Prison." *The Marshall Project* <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2021/04/23/how-we-survived-covid-19-in-prison>
- Randall, Clark and Luce Curtis. 2021. "At the St. Louis City Jail, Inmates Have Been Pushed to the Brink." *The Nation* <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/st-louis-jail-workhouse/>

Thursday, November 9

READINGS

- Mooallem, Jon. 2015. "You Just Got Out of Prison. Now What?" *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/19/magazine/you-just-got-out-of-prison-now-what.html#whats-next>)
- Satija, Neena and Justin Wm. Moyer. 2021. "A Grandmother Didn't Answer her Phone During a Class in Baltimore. She was Sent Back to Prison." *The Baltimore Sun* <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/crime/bs-wp-md-cr-federal-prisoners-home-confinement-20210701-hoqdc5y7pna6jkrevr6pvak2vq-story.html>

WEEK 12

American Society of Criminology Conference

Tuesday, November 14 **American Society of Criminology Conference: NO CLASS**

NO READINGS

Thursday, November 16 **American Society of Criminology Conference: NO CLASS**

ASSIGNMENT

- Infographic due: submit in ELMS-Canvas

WEEK 13

Sex Offender Registry

Tuesday, November 21

READINGS

- Listen to the episode titled "Sex Offenders" of the podcast *You're Wrong About* – August 2019. Available for free on iTunes, Stitcher Radio, or online on this website: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/sex-offenders/id1380008439?i=1000465289962>
- Tewksbury, R. and M. Lees. 2006. "Perceptions of Sex Offender Registration: Collateral Consequences and Community Experiences." *Sociological Spectrum* 26(3):309-34.

Thursday, November 23 **THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS**

WEEK 14

The Death Penalty

Tuesday, November 28

READINGS

- *American Corrections* Chapter 20 “The Death Penalty”
- Listen to this podcast: *More Perfect* (Presented by Radiolab), “Cruel and Unusual.” (Season 1, 2016, 40 minutes) Listen for free on iTunes, Stitcher, or here: <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolabmoreperfect/episodes/cruel-and-unusual>

Thursday, November 30

READINGS

- Andone, Dakin. 2021. “Why Virginia’s Abolition of the Death Penalty is a Big Deal for the State and the US.” *CNN* <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/29/us/virginia-death-penalty-abolition-significance/index.html>
- Sanchez, Chelsey. 2020. “After Brandon Bernard’s Execution, Sister Helen Prejean Calls Out the Death Penalty’s Cruelty.” *Harper’s Bazaar* <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/politics/a34946554/sister-helen-prejean-brandon-bernard-death-penalty-interview/>

WEEK 15

The Great Corrections Debate: Reform or Abolition?

Tuesday, December 5

READINGS

- Washington, John. 2018. “What Is Prison Abolition?” *The Nation* <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/what-is-prison-abolition/>

ASSIGNMENT

- “Corrections Reflections” essay due: submit in ELMS-Canvas

Thursday, December 7

LAST DAY OF CLASS

READINGS

- Dolinar, Brian. 2020. “We Can’t ‘Fix’ Policing or Prison – But We Can Decide How to Create Actual Safety.” *Waging Nonviolence* <https://wagingnonviolence.org/2020/08/prison-by-any-other-name-authors-maya-schenwar-victoria-law-abolition-conversation/>

**Take home final exam due on Thursday, December 14th at 11 am
Submit in ELMS**

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Course-Specific Policies

Names/Pronouns and Self-Identifications

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering inclusive and equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more. Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Communication with Peers

With a diversity of perspectives and experience, we may find ourselves in disagreement and/or debate with one another. As such, it is important that we agree to conduct ourselves in a professional manner and that we work together to foster and preserve a virtual classroom environment in which we can respectfully discuss and deliberate controversial questions.

I encourage you to confidently exercise your right to free speech—bearing in mind, of course, that you will be expected to craft and defend arguments that support your position. Keep in mind, that free speech has its limit and this course is NOT the space for hate speech, harassment, and derogatory language. I will make every reasonable attempt to create an atmosphere in which each student feels comfortable voicing their argument without fear of being personally attacked, mocked, demeaned, or devalued. Any behavior (including harassment, sexual harassment, and racially and/or culturally derogatory language) that threatens this atmosphere will not be tolerated. Please alert me immediately if you feel threatened, dismissed, or silenced at any point during our semester together and/or if your engagement in discussion has been in some way hindered by the learning environment.

Academic Integrity

The University's [Code of Academic Integrity](#) is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld.

It is important to note that course assistance websites, such as CourseHero, are not permitted sources, unless the instructor explicitly gives permission for you to use one of these sites. Material taken or copied from these sites can be deemed unauthorized material and a violation of academic integrity. These sites offer information that might not be accurate and that shortcut the learning process, particularly the critical thinking steps necessary for college-level assignments.

For this course, some of your assignments will be collected via Turnitin on our course ELMS page. I have chosen to use this tool because it can help you improve your scholarly writing and help me verify the integrity of student work. For information about Turnitin, how it works, and the feedback reports you may have access to, visit [Turnitin Originality Checker for Students](#).

Additionally, it is understandable that students may use a variety of online or virtual forums for course-wide discussion (e.g., GroupME or WeChat). Collaboration in this way regarding concepts discussed in this course is permissible. However, collaboration on graded assignments is strictly prohibited unless otherwise stated. Examples of prohibited collaboration include: asking classmates for answers or to work together on quizzes or exams.

Please visit the [Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies](#) and follow up with me if you have questions.

If you ever feel pressured to comply with someone else's academic integrity violation, please reach out to me straight away. Also, **if you are ever unclear** about acceptable levels of collaboration, **please ask!**

Grades

All assignment and assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades (including the exams), or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet and discuss.

Final letter grades are assigned based on the percentage of total assessment points earned. To be fair to everyone I have to establish clear standards and apply them consistently, so please understand that being close to a cutoff is not the same as making the cut (89.99 \neq 90.00). It would be unethical to make exceptions for some and not others.

Final Grade Cutoffs									
+	97.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%	+	
A	94.00%	B	84.00%	C	74.00%	D	64.00%	F	<60.0%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%	-	

Resources & Accommodations

Accessibility and Disability Services

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The [Accessibility & Disability Service \(ADS\)](#) provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at adsfrontdesk@umd.edu. Information about [sharing your accommodations with instructors](#), [note taking assistance](#) and more is available from the [Counseling Center](#).

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit [UMD's Division of Student Affairs website](#) for information about resources the campus offers you and let me know if I can help in any way.

Student Resources and Services

Taking personal responsibility for your own learning means acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. I hope you will come talk to me so that I can help you find the right approach to success in this course, and I encourage you to visit [UMD's Student Academic Support Services website](#) to learn more about the wide range of campus resources available to you.

In particular, everyone can use some help sharpen their communication skills (and improving their grade) by visiting [UMD's Writing Center](#) and schedule an appointment.

There are a wide range of resources to support you with whatever you might need ([UMD's Student Resources and Services website](#) may help). If you feel it would be helpful to have someone to talk to, visit [UMD's Counseling Center](#) or [one of the many other mental health resources on campus](#).

Mandatory Reporting

All UMD instructors (including both myself and your TA) are “responsible university employees,” meaning that if they become aware of any specific incidents of sexual assault or misconduct (including but not limited to: intimate partner violence, stalking, or sexual harassment) they must report these incidents to the campus Title IX Coordinator. Students seeking confidential resources should visit <https://umd.edu/raise-your-voice/> or ask me for information on additional resources.

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