

Race, Crime and Criminal Justice
(CCJS 370:0201)
Fall 2021
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00pm – 3:15pm
Tawes Hall (TWS) 1310
University of Maryland, College Park

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MASKING POLICY

President Pines provided clear expectations to the University about the wearing of masks for all students. Face coverings over the nose and mouth are **required** while you are indoors at all times. The only exception is when people are actively presenting to the class AND are also vaccinated, AND at least six feet distant from all others. Students that are not vaccinated must keep their masks on at all times even when speaking. Students not wearing a mask will be given a warning and asked to wear one, or will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. Students who have additional issues with the mask expectation after a first warning will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for failure to comply with a directive of University officials.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course explores the enduring significance of race and ethnicity in the study of crime and the criminal legal system in the United States. Through this course, we seek to understand why racial/ethnic minorities are overrepresented in US crime statistics and criminal justice institutions. Two dominant explanations exist: 1) racial/ethnic minorities simply commit more crimes (differential offending levels) and/or 2) the criminal justice system is designed to discriminate against racial/ethnic minorities (systematic bias against marginalized groups). We will examine scholarship that addresses these two perspectives and study in varying detail: historical underpinnings of race and racism in crime; public perceptions of the relationship among race/ethnicity and crime; the distribution and patterning of crime across whites and minorities; research geared to explain these associations; and how these statuses emerge in the criminal justice system. The ultimate goal is to provide students with a sophisticated understanding of the complex social, economic and political forces shaping the relationships between race/ethnicity, crime, and punishment in the US.

LEARNING GOALS

The course will further the following learning goals:

1. *Competence* in understanding the major theoretical perspectives through readings, lectures, discussions, and written work that address the major perspectives used to account for the sources

and consequences of racial and ethnic inequality in crime and criminal justice processes. The central focus of the course is on increasing the multicultural understanding of crime and criminal justice within society based upon contemporary theoretical and empirical knowledge. In doing so, the course will address the major institutions that affect crime and that carry out the application of justice. It will also familiarize students with the major data sources and methods used in the field through reading and discussion of current research articles.

2. *Critical Thinking* will be advanced through reading, discussion, and written assignments designed to have students apply and critique perspectives and knowledge about the underlying sources and consequences of differential involvement in crime and in the application of justice within major institutions.

3. Advanced readings of scholarly articles will further the *scholarship* of students. In addition, all students will complete a writing assignment which will demonstrate their level of mastery of course content.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Students are responsible for purchasing and reading the following three books.

Abt, Thomas. 2019. *Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence--And a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*. New York: Basic Books.

Rios, Victor. 2011. *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York: NYU Press.

Unnever, James D. and Gabbidon, Shaun L., 2011. *A Theory of African American Offending: Race, Racism, and Crime*. New York: Routledge.

There are additional readings found on the ELMS course website. THESE READINGS ARE REQUIRED.

- Students should download the readings as soon as possible. Waiting until the day before the test to download articles is strongly discouraged.
- Students are encouraged to put all of the readings in a three-ring binder for ease of access during and outside of class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Exams.

There are three exams. Tests will cover material from lectures, class discussions, videos, and readings. About 2/3 of each exam will consist of true/false questions and about 1/3 will consist of short answer questions. You are responsible for all assigned readings, even if they are not discussed in class. Exams are not cumulative. Exams are not curved. Exams are worth 60 percent of your final grade.

Exams are not returned to students; students who wish to review their exam should arrange to meet Dr. Hitchens in her office during office hours.

Make-up policy. See policy details under classroom business.

2. Writing Assignment.

Connecting Theory and Research to the Disproportionate Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity. A primary goal of this course is to facilitate students’ ability to understand and explain the relationships between race/ethnicity, class, crime, and punishment in the US. In this assignment, students are required to write up theoretically guided explanations to explain inequality in rates of incarceration between Whites and racial/ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system. Further information about this project will be provided in a detailed handout following Exam 1. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, December 9th. This assignment is worth 30 percent of your final grade.

NOTE: It is your responsibility to make sure that you complete and turn in the assignment. *Assignments that are not turned in to me at the beginning of class on their due date will be considered one day late. Late assignments will be penalized 5 percentage points for each 24-hour period that they are late.*

3. In-class/small group assessment.

To help students connect with each other and myself regarding class topics, materials and the writing assignment, we will have several in-class/small group discussions throughout the semester (a total of seven). During these discussion sessions, we will work together in small groups while masked. Given the pandemic, I want to provide a chance for flexibility so I will drop the lowest two assessment grades. In other words, *only five assessments* count towards your final grade. No makeups for assessments will be given, and they must be turned in as a group at the conclusion of class. These assessments count towards 10% of your final grade.

COURSE GRADE

Grades will be determined as follows:		Grades are based on the following scale:			
Exam 1	15 %	Grade	% of total points	Grade	% of total points
Exam 2	20 %	A+	100-97	C	76-73
Exam 3	25 %	A	96-93	C-	72-70
Writing Assignment	30 %	A-	92-90	D+	69-67
In-class/small group assessment	10%	B+	89-87	D	66-63
Total	100%	B	86-83	D-	62-60
		B-	82-80	F	Below 60

	C+	79-77		

If *earning* a particular grade is important to you, please speak with me at the beginning of the semester so that I can offer some helpful suggestions for achieving your goal.

KEYS TO PERFORMING WELL IN THIS CLASS:

1. *Attend all class meetings.* The surest way to perform poorly in this class is to miss days. Think of attending class like a job; be there on time and pay attention.
2. *Review PowerPoint slides.* Be sure to compare your notes from class with the PowerPoint slides available on ELMS. Students will not obtain all the information they need to do well in the class if they only read the slides.
3. *Take detailed lecture notes.* A common theme for students who perform poorly in this course is to have poor notes. Another common theme is that students do not understand their own notes – this means that students do not understand the material during lecture and thus have almost no chance of correctly answering questions covering that material. Taking notes is not easy, so be prepared to work. A helpful suggestion is to type up your notes after each class. In the event that you miss class for any reason, *obtain the class notes from a classmate.* I will not provide class notes to students who are unable to attend class.
4. *Ask questions.* At times I may speak too fast, the material may be complicated, you may miss a line of argument, etc. But I cannot clarify unless I am made aware that something needs to be clarified. Times to ask questions are during class, before class, or in my office hours.
5. *Take advantage of my help.* Discussing lecture, reading and class materials and especially the writing assignment with me during my office hours can really help students. The key here, however, is to take advantage of this opportunity early.
6. *Take notes on the readings.* In particular, make sure you take notes on the questions I ask about the readings in class and during discussions.

CLASSROOM BUSINESS

ATTENDANCE: Regular attendance to class is highly encouraged by Dr. Hitchens, as it is a key way to do well in the course. During class, I go over slides that provide key ideas, themes, and research that connect with your weekly readings. It is very hard to pass this class without regular attendance.

ELMS: I will be using ELMS to post materials related to our course such as the syllabus, readings, grades, and handouts. Go to <http://elms.umd.edu> and log in with your Directory ID (logon ID) and password to use this feature. I will send announcements via ELMS too. **Grades listed on ELMS are raw scores (percentages) and have not been weighted to calculate your final grade. Please do not rely on the Assignments or Total column to determine your final grade.** Graduating seniors are graded on the same scale as all other students.

UMD COURSE RELATED POLICIES WEBSITE: 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 <http://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.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS: This class explores issues that might invoke strong emotions. Therefore, you are expected to think openly and critically. You do not have to agree with the readings or others in the class, however you need to approach them with a critical and an open mind. You will find that not everyone will agree with you on principles that are important to you, and thus, listening to and engaging with others' points of view will be a valuable learning experience. Interesting and valuable discussions are best in an environment where everyone is comfortable to openly discuss and engage.

EMAIL: Students may email me or my graduate teaching assistant (Melissa Manley) with questions and/or concerns during the semester. However, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether I have already provided the desired information in class, on the syllabus, or on ELMS. In other words, before emailing either of us, please make sure that you can't answer your own question with information that I have already provided. Also, every email should have "CCJS 370:0201" or "Race, Crime, and Criminal Justice" in the subject line, and include an appropriate greeting (e.g., "Hello Dr. Hitchens") and closing in the body of the email. We will try my best to quickly respond, but you should expect a response between 24-48 hours of your email.

DEMEANOR: Fortunately, most students understand what they're here for and how to conduct themselves in a college-level class. Unfortunately, some don't. When I close the door to begin class, I expect that private conversations will end and I will have your attention for the duration of the class. Among the things I expect you not to be doing in class: putting your head down or sleeping, talking to each other during class, cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other disruptive behaviors.

MAKEUP EXAM POLICY: Students are encouraged to never miss an exam. In the event a student must miss an exam, makeup exams will only be given in cases of excused absences. Excused absences include: religious observances, mandatory military obligation, illness of the student or illness of an immediate family member, required participation in university activities, death in the immediate family, and required court appearances. Official documentation is required. Exams are considered to be Major Scheduled Graded Events and therefore the University medical excuse policy which allows one student signed honor statement attesting to illness **does not apply** to them. I will not accept a Health Center honor statement to verify an illness. If you go to the Health Center and a doctor will not write you a note, you will need to get a copy of your medical record from them to verify your illness. By law, you are entitled to get a copy of this and it is your responsibility to do so.

I must be notified by email or in person **PRIOR** to missing an exam for me to consider giving you a makeup. *If you have a problem on the day of an exam*, please email me and inform me of the nature of the situation. Even if this means you have to use your cell phone to send me a quick email, I need to be notified in advance. If you know in advance that you will not be able to take a scheduled exam on time with an approved absence, you will be expected to take the exam **prior** to the exam date. All makeup exams/assignments must be completed within two weeks of the missed exam/assignment. Makeup exams may be a different format than the original exam. Failure to adhere to these policies will result in a grade of zero for the exam.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY: In this class, students will be allowed to use their personal computers to take class notes. If a student is found to be using personal technology devices in any way that is not related to taking class notes, the student will lose the privilege of using any personal technology device for the duration of the semester. **I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand. Research is mounting on the benefits of taking notes by hand than typing them on a computer for effective learning.** All cell phones need to be silenced when class begins. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If I find you texting, you will get a verbal warning first and then a second warning will be delivered by email. If I have to warn you three times, I will drop you from the class.

DISABILITY SUPPORT: I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) and who provide me with a University of Maryland ADS Accommodation Documentation plan which has been updated for the Fall 2021 semester. This documentation must be emailed to me by ADS no later than September 7, 2021. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with ADS or who do not provide me with documentation that has not been reviewed by ADS after September 7, 2021. ADS students who require additional time for exams are expected to take the exam during the same time period as the rest of the class and must plan their time so they complete the exam before the open window closes.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: If you are unable to take the any exams during the allotted exam period due to a religious observance, you will need to discuss this with me by September 2, 2021.

COURSE OUTLINE

Below is the course outline; note that it is subject to modification. All non-book readings are available on ELMS.

Class Schedule of Topics and Readings	
WEEK 1	<p>TUESDAY (Aug 31) -Introduction to Course -Syllabus</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Sept 2) -Overview of Race and Crime in America -<i>Readings:</i> (1) Conceptualizing Race and Ethnicity in Studies of Crime and Criminal Justice (Zatz and Rodriguez) (2) Race and Involvement in Common Law Personal Crimes (Hindelang)</p>

WEEK 2	TUESDAY (Sept 7) -Historical Roots of Race and Racism in Crime <i>-Readings: (1) The Spawn of Slavery: The Convict-Lease System in the South (Dubois); (2) History’s Strange Fruit (Russell-Brown)</i>
	THURSDAY (Sept 9) -Historical Roots of Race and Racism in Crime <i>-Readings: (1) From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the ‘Race Question’ in the US (Wacquant); (2) The Transmission of Historical Racial Violence: Lynching, Civil Rights–Era Terror, and Contemporary Interracial Homicide (Petersen and Ward)</i>
WEEK 3	TUESDAY (Sept 14) -Key Theoretical Connections Between Race, Class and Crime <i>-Readings: (1) Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality (Sampson and Wilson); (2) Theory of African American Offending Chp. 1 (Unnever and Gabbidon)</i>
	THURSDAY (Sept 16) -Key Theoretical Connections Between Race, Class and Crime <i>- Readings: (1) Theory of African American Offending Chps. 3 and 6 (Unnever and Gabbidon); (2) The Slow Violence of State Organized Race Crime (Ward)</i>
WEEK 4	TUESDAY (Sept 21) -Methodologies and Sources of Data in Crime and Inequality <i>-Readings: (1) Racial and Ethnic Patterns in Criminality and Victimization (Like-Haislip)</i>
	We will also review for the upcoming exam. THURSDAY (Sept 23) <p style="text-align: center;">Exam 1</p>
WEEK 5	TUESDAY (Sept 28) -Victims and Offenders: Who are They? <i>-Readings: (1) Victims and Offenders: Myths and Realities About Crime (Walker et al.)</i>
	We will also discuss the writing assignment. THURSDAY (Sept 30) -Race and Crime in the Media <i>-Readings: (1) White Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry: The Racial Project in Explaining Mass Shootings (Mingus and Zopf); (2) Anti-Asian Hate Crime During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Exploring the Reproduction of Inequality (Gover et al.); (3) Violence, Stereotypes, and African Americans in the News (Entman and Rojecki)</i>
WEEK 6	TUESDAY (Oct 5) -Perceptions, Expressions, and Meanings of Crime and Justice <i>-Readings: (1) Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime (Quillian and Pager); (2) Black Criminal Stereotypes and Racial Profiling (Welch)</i>
	THURSDAY (Oct 7)

	<p>-Perceptions, Expressions, and Meanings of Crime and Justice <i>-Readings: (1) The Dog Walker, the Birdwatcher and Racial Violence: The Manifest Need to Punish Racial Hoaxes (Russell-Brown); (2) Temporal Containment and the Singularity of AntiBlackness: Saying Her Name in and across Time (Gomez)</i></p>
WEEK 7	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 12) -Race, Crime and Communities <i>-Readings: (1) Race, Crime, and the Changing Fortunes of Urban Neighborhoods, 1999-2013 (Krivo et al.); (2) The Rise and Fall of Lyford Street (Duck)</i></p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Oct 14) -Race, Crime and Communities <i>-Readings: (1) Crime and Safety in Suburbia (Singer and Drakulich); (2) The Code of the Suburb and Drug Dealing (Jacques and Wright)</i></p>
WEEK 8	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 19) -Race and Violence: Structural and Cultural Explanations <i>-Readings: (1) The Long Reach of Violence: A Broader Perspective on Data, Theory, and Evidence on the Prevalence and Consequences of Exposure to Violence (Sharkey); (2) Race and Neighborhood Codes of Violence (Matsueda et al.); (3) <u>Bleeding Out</u>: Chp. 1 (Abt)</i></p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Oct 21) - Race and Violence: Structural and Cultural Explanations <i>-Readings: (1) <u>Bleeding Out</u>: Chps. 2, 3, and 6 (Abt); (2) The Politics of Murder and Revenge (Duck); (3) Wounded: Life after the Shooting (Lee)</i></p>
WEEK 9	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 26) -Unraveling Racial Disparities in the Criminal Legal System <i>-Readings: (1) Reducing Racial Disparity in the Criminal Justice System: Sections I and II (Sentencing Project); (2) Race, Ethnicity, and the Criminal Justice System (American Sociological Association)</i></p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Oct 28) -Latinos, Immigration and Crime <i>-Readings: (1) Immigrant Assimilation and Crime (Morenoff and Astor); (2) Racializing Crimmigration: Structural Racism, Colorblindness, and the Institutional Production of Immigrant Criminality (Armenta)</i></p>
WEEK 10	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 2) -Women, Race and Crime <i>-Readings: (1) Crime at the Intersections Race, Class, Gender, and Violent Offending Stacy (De Coster and Heimer); (2) It's Not Where You Live, it's How You Live: How Young Women Negotiate Conflict and Violence in the Inner City (Jones); (3) Gender on the Run: Wanted Latinas in a Southern California Barrio (Flores and Camacho)</i></p> <p>We will also review for the upcoming exam.</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Nov 4) <p style="text-align: center;">Exam 2</p></p>
WEEK 11	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 9) -Race and Policing</p>

	- <u>Readings</u> : (1) <u>Punished</u> : Part 1 pg. 1-96 (Rios)
	THURSDAY (Nov 11) -Race and Policing - <u>Readings</u> : (1) <u>Punished</u> : Part 2 pg. 97-156 (Rios)
WEEK 12	TUESDAY (Nov 16) -Race and Policing - <u>Readings</u> : (1) Police Don't Like Black People: African-American Young Men's Accumulated Police Experiences (Brunson); (2) The Context for Legal Cynicism: Urban Young Women's Experiences with Policing in Low-Income, High-Crime Neighborhoods (Hitchens)
	THURSDAY (Nov 18) - NO CLASS; Online Film Viewing
WEEK 13	TUESDAY (Nov 23) -Race, Courts and Sentencing - <u>Readings</u> : (1) Drug Use, Drug Possession Arrests, and the Question of Race: Lessons from Seattle (Beckett et al.); (2) Punishing the "Model Minority": Asian-American Criminal Sentencing Outcomes in Federal District Courts (Johnson and Betsinger); (3) A Punishing Look: Skin Tone and Afrocentric Features in the Halls of Justice (King and Johnson)
	THURSDAY (Nov 25) Thanksgiving Recess NO CLASS
WEEK 14	TUESDAY (Nov 30) -Mass Incarceration - <u>Readings</u> : (1) The Mass Criminalization of Black Americans: A Historical Overview (Hinton and Cook); (2) The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration (Coates) Saved on ELMS and available online at: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/
	THURSDAY (Dec 2) -Mass Incarceration - <u>Readings</u> : (1) Mark of a Criminal Record (Pager); (2) Ban the Box, Criminal Records, and Statistical Discrimination: A Field Experiment (Agan and Starr)
WEEK 15	TUESDAY (Dec 7) -Mass Incarceration - In Class Film Viewing
	THURSDAY (Dec 9) Writing Assignment Due in Class We will also review for the final exam.
Dec 14 – Reading Day Dec 18 – Final Exam [10:30am-12:30pm] in our classroom	