

Race, Crime and Criminal Justice
(CCJS 370:0201)
Fall 2024
Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 – 1:45 PM
Tawes Hall (TWS) 1107
University of Maryland, College Park

Professor: Dr. B. Hitchens
Office: 2153 LeFrak Hall
Email: hitchens@umd.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00pm; and by appointment

Graduate TA: Sarah Silberman, M.A.
Office: 2158 LeFrak Hall
Email: ssilber2@umd.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00-11:00am; and by appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course explores the enduring significance of racial and ethnic inequality 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 systematic detail: historical underpinnings of race and racism in crime; public perceptions of the relationship between race/ethnicity and crime; the distribution, type, 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 writing assignments which will demonstrate their level of mastery of course content.

REQUIRED TEXTS

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

1. 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.
2. Rios, Victor. 2011. *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York: NYU Press.
3. 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 two exams. Exams will cover material from lectures, class discussions, videos, and readings. About 2/3 of each exam will consist of multiple choice and 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% 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. Critical Reflections Essays.

A primary goal of this course is to facilitate students' ability to articulate the relationships between race/ethnicity, class, crime, and punishment in the US. Throughout the semester, students are required to critically respond to the weekly assigned readings. Students must submit five (5) critical reflections by **11:59pm on the assigned due date**. There will be a total of 6 opportunities to submit reflection essays, but I will drop the lowest grade ***5 will be graded towards final grade***). No makeups for assessments will be given. **These assessments count towards 25% of your final grade.**

Criteria below:

Critical reflection essays consist of a **double-spaced, three-to-five-page** typed essay where students critically respond to the weekly assigned readings. These essays are required to examine **at least two (three is recommended)** of the assigned readings within the designated course timeframe (see Course Outline below). These essays should include a topical overview of the readings (i.e., "This week's readings examined the following themes, arguments, topics..."). The questions for each of the required critical reflection essays are posted on the Canvas site for this course. It is important to underscore a reflection paper is ***NOT a summary of the readings***. I am interested in your **critical judgments about the principles, arguments and processes** raised in the readings. *How do we examine the relationship*

between race/racial inequality and this week's topic (e.g., mass shootings, drug use, human trafficking)? To what extent do the findings support or challenge a differential offending and/or differential treatment argument? Your writing should also criticize, compare and/or challenge the literature and analysis presented in the readings. Noted in the syllabi are **due dates** for critical reflection papers. **Please review Sample Critical Reflection Essays on ELMS.**

Format:

In addition, reflection papers should be written in **APA style**; and in **third person language** (not first-person language). Reflection papers need to open up with a paragraph that describes the importance and focus of the argument; as well as the specific readings identified for your critical review. Reflection essays should conclude with a paragraph summarizing the arguments you advance. The top-right hand corner of essays should include in **single-spaced format: Full Name, CCJS370, and Critical Reflection Essay #.** Once again, all papers are required to be written in **third person** (not first-person language). No **“me,” “my,” and “I” statements should be included.**

3. In-Class/Small Group Assessments.

To help students connect with each other and myself on class topics and content, we will have several in-class/small group discussions throughout the semester. There will be a total of 9, but I will drop the two lowest grades (**7 will be graded towards 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 15% of your final grade.**

COURSE GRADE

Grades will be determined as follows:		Grades are based on following scale:			
Exam 1 (Midterm)	30%	Grade	% of total	Grade	% of total
Exam 2 (Final)	30%	A+	100-97	C+	79-77
Critical Reflection Essays (5)	25%	A	96-93	C	76-73
Group Assessments (7)	15%	A-	92-90	C-	72-70
Total	100%	B+	89-87	D+	69-67
<i>Note: Course Grades are rounded at the professor's discretion</i>		B	86-83	D	66-63
		B-	82-80	D-	62-60
				F	Below 60

FINAL GRADES

Your final course grade is based on the number of points you earn during the semester. If you think that I have miscalculated your points or didn't enter an assignment grade, you may contact me, and I will review the calculations. You may not email me to request that your grade be changed for any other reason (for example, to request additional points, rounding up, extra credit, redo an assignment, etc.), and it would be highly unethical for you to do so. Specifically, it is unethical to expect me to provide only one student with any special accommodations, and it would be unethical for me to falsify your record. **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 Keynote/PowerPoint slides.* Be sure to compare your notes from class with the Keynote/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.

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/courselatedpolicies.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 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" 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.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS: This course requires you to complete various assignments that assess your understanding and application of the course content. You are expected to **do your own work and cite any sources** you use properly. **You are not allowed to use any artificial intelligence (AI) tools**, such as chatbots, text generators, paraphrasers, summarizers, or solvers, to complete any part of your assignments. Any attempt to use these tools will be considered **academic misconduct** and will be dealt with according to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to complete all work **independently** and without the assistance of AI-generated content. If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable use of AI tools, please consult with the instructor *before* submitting your work.

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.

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. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with ADS or who do not provide me with documentation. 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 at the beginning of the semester.

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 27) Topic: Introduction to Course -Syllabus</p> <hr/> <p>THURSDAY (Aug 29) Topic: Classic Overview of Race and Crime in America <u>-Readings:</u> (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); (3) On the Racial Disproportionality of United States’ Prison Populations (Blumstein)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #1</p>
WEEK 2	<p>TUESDAY (Sept 3) Topic: Historical Roots of Race and Racism in Crime, Pt. 1 <u>-Readings:</u> (1) The Spawn of Slavery: The Convict-Lease System in the South (Dubois); (2) History’s Strange Fruit (Russell-Brown)</p> <hr/> <p>THURSDAY (Sept 5) Topic: Historical Roots of Race and Racism in Crime, Pt. 2 <u>-Readings:</u> (1) From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the ‘Race Question’ in the US (Wacquant); (2) Anti-racism in Criminology: An Oxymoron or the way Forward? (Palmer et al); (3) The Iconic Ghetto (Anderson)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #2</p>
WEEK 3	<p>TUESDAY (Sept 10) Topic: Key Theoretical Connections Between Race, Class and Crime, Pt. 1 <u>-Readings:</u> (1) Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality (Sampson and Wilson); (2) <u>Theory of African American Offending</u> Chp. 1 (Unnever and Gabbidon); (3) Race, Crime, and the American Dream (Cernkovich et al.)</p> <hr/> <p>THURSDAY (Sept 12) Topic: Key Theoretical Connections Between Race, Class and Crime, Pt. 2 <u>- Readings:</u> (1) <u>Theory of African American Offending</u> Chp. 4 (Unnever and Gabbidon); (2) Racial Threat and Crime Control (Smith)</p>

WEEK 4	<p>TUESDAY (Sept 17) Topic: Methodologies and Sources of Data in Crime and Inequality <i>-Readings:</i> (1) Racial and Ethnic Patterns in Criminality and Victimization (Like-Haislip)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Critical Reflection Essay #1 (Weeks 1-4.1)</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Sept 19) Topic: Victims and Offenders: Who are They? <i>-Readings:</i> (1) Victims and Offenders: Myths and Realities About Crime (Walker et al.)</p>
WEEK 5	<p>TUESDAY (Sept 24) Topic: Race and Crime in the Media: If it Bleeds, it Leads <i>-Readings:</i> (1) “‘Action News’ & the Rise of Anti-Black Local ‘Crime’ Reporting” with Layla Jones (<i>Citations Needed</i> Podcast); Saved on ELMS and available online at: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/live-interview-action-news-the-rise-of-anti-black/id1258545975?i=1000566517326; (2) Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime (Quillian and Pager)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #3</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Sept 26) Topic: New Jim Code: Race, Crime, and Technology <i>Readings:</i> (1) <u>Race after Technology</u>, Introduction-The New Jim Code (Benjamin) (2) <u>Race after Technology</u>, Engineered Inequity: Are Robots Racist? (Benjamin) (3) Racial Bias in AI: Unpacking the Consequences in Criminal Justice Systems (IRIS Sustainable Development)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***Exam Review***</p>
WEEK 6	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 1) NO In-Person Class Today</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Critical Reflection Essay #2 (Weeks 4.2-6)</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Oct 3)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***Exam 1 (Midterm)***</p>
WEEK 7	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 8) Topic: Whiteness and Racial Violence <i>-Readings:</i> (1) The Dog Walker, the Birdwatcher and Racial Violence: The Manifest Need to Punish Racial Hoaxes (Russell-Brown); (2) The White Space (Anderson); (3) White Racial and Ethnic Identity in the United States (McDermott and Samson)</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #4</p> <p>THURSDAY (Oct 10) Topic: Race, Domestic Terrorism and Mass Shootings <i>-Readings:</i> (1) White Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry: The Racial Project in Explaining Mass Shootings (Mingus and Zopf); (2) Domestic Terrorism and Hate Crimes: Legal Definitions and Media Framing of Mass Shootings in the United States (Taylor)</p>
WEEK 8	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 15) Topic: Race and Missing Women: Politics of Deservingness <i>-Readings:</i> (1) Missing White Woman Syndrome: An Empirical Analysis of Race and Gender Disparities in Online News Coverage of Missing Persons (Sommers); (2) “Newsworthy” Victims? Exploring Differences in Canadian Local Press Coverage of Missing/Murdered Aboriginal and White Women (Gilchrist)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #5</p> <p>THURSDAY (Oct 17) Topic: Race and Human Trafficking <i>Readings:</i> (1) The Intersection of Race and Gender in Human Trafficking Vulnerability and Criminalization (Gonzalez)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Critical Reflection Essay #3 (Weeks 7-8)</p>
WEEK 9	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 22) Topic: Race and Crime in Suburban America, Pt. 1 <i>Readings:</i> (1) <u>In My Father’s House: A New View of How Crime Runs in the Family</u>, Prologue (Butterfield); (2) Crime and Safety in Suburbia (Singer and Drakulich)</p> <p>THURSDAY (Oct 24) Topic: Race and Crime in Suburban America, Pt. 2 <i>Readings:</i> (1) The Code of the Suburb and Drug Dealing (Jacques and Wright); (2) The War on Drugs That Wasn’t: Wasted Whiteness, “Dirty Doctors,” and Race in Media Coverage of Prescription Opioid Misuse (Netherland and Hansen) (3) Pathways To Drug Dealing in The Middle and Upper Classes: Early Marginalization, Relative Disadvantage and Countercultural Opposition (Berger et al. 2023)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #6</p>
WEEK 10	<p>TUESDAY (Oct 29) Topic: Urban Gun Violence, Pt. 1 <i>-Readings:</i> (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) <u>Bleeding Out</u>, Chp. 1 (Abt)</p>

	<p>THURSDAY (Oct 31) Topic: Urban Gun Violence, Pt. 2 <u>-Readings:</u> (1) <u>Bleeding Out</u>, Chps. 2, 3, and 6 (Abt); (2) The Politics of Murder and Revenge (Duck)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Critical Reflection Essay #4 (Weeks 9-10)</p>
WEEK 11	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 5) Topic: Street Violence in the Era of Social Media <u>-Readings:</u> (1) “When Twitter Fingers Turn to Trigger Fingers: A Qualitative Study of Social Media-Related Gang Violence” (Patton et al) (2) “Code of the Tweet: Urban Gang Violence in the Social Media Age” (Stuart)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #7</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Nov 7) Topic: Latinos, Immigration and Crime <u>-Readings:</u> (1) An Examination of First and Second Generation Immigrant Offending Trajectories (Bersani); (2) Racializing Crimmigration: Structural Racism, Colorblindness, and the Institutional Production of Immigrant Criminality (Armenta)</p>
WEEK 12	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 12) Topic: Race and Policing: Urban Youth of Color, Pt. 1 <u>-Readings:</u> (1) <u>Punished</u>: Part 1 [Hypercriminalization] pgs. 1-96 (Rios)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #8</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Nov 14) NO In-Person Class Today – ASC Conference</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Critical Reflection Essay #5 (Weeks 11-12)</p>
WEEK 13	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 19) Topic: Race and Policing: Urban Youth of Color, Pt. 2 <u>-Readings:</u> 1) <u>Punished</u>: Part 2 [Consequences] pgs. 97-156 (Rios)</p>
	<p>THURSDAY (Nov 21) Topic: Race and Policing: Differential Treatment <u>-Readings:</u> (1) The Saints and the Roughnecks (Chambliss); (2) The Context for Legal Cynicism: Urban Young Women’s Experiences with Policing in Low-Income, High-Crime Neighborhoods (Hitchens); (3) Race/Ethnicity and Perceptions of the Police: A Comparison of White, Black, Asian and Hispanic Americans (Wu)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DUE:</u> Group Assignment #9</p>

<p>WEEK 14</p>	<p>TUESDAY (Nov 26) Topic: Race and Mass Incarceration: Legacy of Inequality <i>-Readings:</i> (1) The Mass Criminalization of Black Americans: A Historical Overview (Hinton and Cook); (2) Race and Inequality in the War on Drugs (Provine)</p> <hr/> <p>THURSDAY (Nov 28) NO In-Person Class Today - Thanksgiving</p>
<p>WEEK 15</p>	<p>TUESDAY (Dec 3) Topic: Race and Mass Incarceration: Collateral Consequences <i>-Readings:</i> (1) Mark of a Criminal Record (Pager); (2) Ban the Box, Criminal Records, and Statistical Discrimination: A Field Experiment (Agan and Starr)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DUE: Critical Reflection Essay #6 (Weeks 13-15)</p> <hr/> <p>THURSDAY (Dec 5) Last Day of Class</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***Exam Review***</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Final Exam: Monday, Dec 16 from 4-6pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***Exam 2 (Final)***</p>