

**CCJS600: SEMINAR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
**Fall 2019**

**PROFESSOR**

Brian D. Johnson, Ph.D.  
2220K LeFrak Hall  
Phone: (301) 405-4709  
E-mail: bjohnso2@umd.edu

**OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesday 1:30PM – 3:30PM  
Wednesday 1:30PM – 3:30PM  
By Appointment

**MEETING TIME**

Wednesday 4:00PM – 6:45PM  
Lefrak 2165E

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a required course in the Master's and Ph. D Program. It is intended to introduce you to contemporary issues in criminal justice, including current and historical concepts of criminal justice, interrelationships among different components of the system, and the role and function of the justice system in society. The course will be divided into four broad areas that include philosophies of punishment, contemporary policing issues, research on courtroom decision making, and modern trends in corrections.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

Students will be expected to attend class and should be prepared to discuss assigned readings. The course will rely heavily on student participation in addition to class lectures. Students will be expected to gain a deeper understanding of the fundamental issues surrounding police, courts and corrections. The ultimate goal of the course is to provide the student with a solid foundation for understanding contemporary issues in criminal justice, and to encourage them to think critically about the role that the criminal justice system, and its constituent parts, plays in the exercise of social control in society.

**COURSE READINGS**

Reading requirements for this course include several texts as well as a variety of readings from additional sources. You are responsible for obtaining copies of the texts. Articles will be provided.

**Course Texts:**

Beccaria C. (1764). *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*. Branden Books c. 1983.  
Walker. S. (1998). *Popular Justice: A History of American Criminal Justice*. Oxford University Press.  
New York: NY.  
Wilson, J.Q. and Petersilia, J. (2011). *Crime and Public Policy*. Oxford University Press. New York: NY  
Dunham and Alpert. (2015). *Critical Issues in Policing*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. Waveland. (*recommended*)  
Spohn, C. (2009). *How Do Judges Decide?* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Sage. (*recommended*)  
National Academe of Science (2015). *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States*. At [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu)

## **COURSE GRADING**

Grades for this course will be determined by class participation in conjunction with two examinations and several short writing assignments. Final grades will be determined according to the following distribution:

Participation	10%	A	90 or higher
Exam I	30%	B	80-90
Exam II	30%	C	70-80
Writing Assignments	30%	D	60-70
		F	below 60

\*Pluses and Minuses will be assigned for grades within  $\pm 2$  percentage points from grading cutoffs

## **CLASS DISCUSSION**

You will be expected to attend each class having read and critically thought about the required readings. Your discussion grade will result from your ability to intelligently identify, introduce and discuss interesting questions from the readings. This part of your grade is inherently subjective, but I will do my best to fairly assess your effort and participation in the class.

## **EXAMINATIONS**

Two in-class examinations will account for 50% of your final grade. These exams will be written essay exams covering major concepts from class lectures, readings, and discussion. Their purpose is to evaluate your ability to think critically about major concepts surrounding the administration of criminal justice in society. They will cover all of the major concepts covered in class lectures and class readings.

## **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to the examinations, you will also be expected to write several short “research” papers including three assignments based on scholarly research published in one of the following academic journals: *Criminology*, *Criminology and Public Policy*, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, or *Justice Quarterly*. For these assignments, you will select a scholarly article that is relevant to one of the main topics discussed in class, and then write a short (up to 3 pages) paper describing how the research you have chosen adds to and extends current knowledge on police, courts, or corrections. In other words, your job will be to integrate the article of your choice into our current discussion of contemporary criminal justice issues, critiquing its strengths, weaknesses and general contribution to the discipline.

## **GRADUATE COURSE POLICIES AND GRADUATE STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Graduate School provides a guide to provide you with information about graduate course policies, other policies related to graduate study, and relevant on-campus resources. The guide at the following link applies to your graduate coursework and experience at UMD: <https://gradschool.umd.edu/course-related-policies>. If you have a documented disability, please contact Professor Johnson as soon as possible so that any special arrangements can be made.

## **ONLINE COURSE MANAGEMENT**

Online course resources will be provided through the university course management system available at [elms.umd.edu](http://elms.umd.edu). Students can access weekly reading assignments, the course syllabus, and other relevant class materials through this online system.

## WEEKLY READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

*Note: This is a tentative schedule subject to necessary adjustments. Additional Readings/Assignments may be given throughout the semester*

### Section 1: Overview of the Criminal Justice System

### Readings/Assignments

*The mood and temper of the public with regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilization of any country.*

*~Winston Churchill~*

#### **Week 1 (8/28): Course Introduction**

Course Readings and Expectations  
On Crimes and Punishments – Context

#### **Week 2 (9/4): The Meaning of Justice**

On Crimes and Punishments – Content

**Beccaria, All Chpts.**

#### **Week 3 (9/11): The Purposes of Punishment**

Theories of Punishment  
Philosophies of Punishment  
The Creation of Law in Society

**Walker, Ch. 1-3  
W&P Ch. 14  
Spohn Ch. 1**

#### **Week 4 (9/18): The Emergence of Modern Justice**

Historical Perspective on Criminal Justice  
International Perspective on Criminal Justice  
An Overview of the System  
Crime Rates and Crime Statistics

**Walker, Ch. 4-7  
W&P Ch. 2  
W&P Ch. 19**

### Section 2: Police: Gatekeepers of the System

### Readings/Assignments

*Police are the most visible face of government, one that people recognize and encounter with frequency*

*~Wes Skogan~*

#### **Week 5 (9/25): The Idea of Police**

The Role of Police in Society  
Historical Perspectives on Policing  
Policing Research and Experimentation  
Police Discretion and Decision-Making

**Dunham, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 5  
1<sup>st</sup> Writing Assignment Given**

#### **Week 6 (10/2): Innovations in Policing**

Modern Policing Innovations  
Community Oriented Policing  
Problem Oriented Policing  
Broken Windows & Hot Spots  
COMPSTAT

**Dunham Ch. 12, 22, 24, 25  
W&P Ch. 20  
1<sup>st</sup> Writing Assignment Due**

#### **Week 7 (10/9):**

***In-Class Examination I***

### **Section 3: Criminal Courts: Agents of Punishment**

### **Readings/Assignments**

*Deciding how much to punish is an agonizing process in which conflicting aspirations compete.*

*~Andrew von Hirsch~*

#### **Week 8 (10/16): The Development of Criminal Courts**

The Rise of the Prosecutor  
Historical Perspective on the Criminal Court  
The Age of Sentencing Reform  
Sentencing in Comparative Perspective

**NO CLASS (MacArthur Grant)**

**Spohn Ch. 6 (p. 225-242)**

**W&P Ch. 15**

**MacKenzie**

#### **Week 9 (10/23): Sentencing Guidelines**

Sentencing Commissions and their Guidelines  
State Sentencing Guidelines  
Federal Sentencing Guidelines  
Research on Sentencing Guidelines

**Spohn Ch. 7 (p. 271-314)**

**W&P Ch. 16**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Writing Assignment Given**

#### **Week 10 (10/30): The Future of Criminal Sentencing**

Theories of Judicial Decision Making  
Race, Class, Gender Bias in Sentencing  
The Past, Present, Future of Sentencing Research

**Spohn Ch. 4 (p. 127-148)**

**Spohn Ch. 5 (p. 169-196)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Writing Assignment Due**

### **Section 4: Corrections: Penology and Prison**

*It is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones.*

*~Nelson Mandela~*

#### **Week 11 (11/6): The Prison Community**

History of Corrections in America  
The Emergence of the Prison  
Comparative Rates of Incarceration

**NAS, Ch. 2**

**W&P Ch. 18**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Writing Assignment Given**

#### **Week 12 (11/13): NO CLASS – ASC MEETINGS**

#### **Week 13 (11/20): Prison Administration and the Death Penalty**

Prison Administration and Prisoner Reentry  
Collateral Consequences of Imprisonment  
Death Penalty Disparities  
Quiet Rage

**NAS, Ch. 3, 4**

**W&P Ch. 17**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Writing Assignment Due**

#### **Week 14 (11/27): NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

#### **Week 15 (12/4):**

***In-Class Examination II***