Correctional Systems 01:202:303:80
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Freehold Campus

Fall 2015
Tuesday 6:00 – 8:40pm

Dr. Matthew J. Sheridan

Office Hours by appointment


Tonry, M. and Petersilia, J. Prisons

The students will focus on circumstances in confinement and during re-entry. Students will understand basic theoretical constructs about the correctional experience, its literature, subfields, and role as a field of study within criminology, criminal justice and corrections. The student will be exposed to historical and emerging developments in the correctional field with special emphasis on evidence based practices. The student will explore correctional systems to understand strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and potential pitfalls. Special attention is paid to the social environment of prison as a change agent that must be addressed upon re-entry. Failure to effect change is viewed as contributing to failure and additional victimization in society. This course also deals with analysis of contemporary programs and trends in the criminal justice system's response to ex-convicts, their families, victims and society.

Program in Criminal Justice Learning Goals:
A Statement of Principles

The Program Committee for the Program in Criminal Justice at Rutgers University in New Brunswick has adopted a series of learning goals for students who complete the major. These goals represent the consensus of the faculty regarding the concepts a student should grasp and the skills a student should acquire in the course of completing the major. These goals guide the choices faculty make about the structure of the curriculum and the requirements for our majors. Moreover, they guide faculty and instructors preparing course material and teaching courses.

The Program in Criminal Justice will provide students with a rich understanding of crime and criminal justice in the United States and abroad through an interdisciplinary approach that blends a strong liberal arts educational experience with pre-professional instruction in
the field of criminal justice. Graduates of the program will be well-informed citizens on the topic of crime and justice, and qualified for graduate study or for employment as practitioners in a variety of legal, policymaking, and law enforcement fields.

Criminal justice majors graduating from a research university should be able to use critical thinking, factual inquiry, and the scientific approach to solve problems related to individual and group behavior. In addition, students should have an understanding of the legal, political and policymaking processes that affect criminal justice systems in the United States and elsewhere in the world. Finally, students should be familiar with the institutional structures and latest developments in the field in order to engage in meaningful debate about current public policy issues.

Learning Goals for Criminal Justice Majors

1. Competence:
   a.) Theory. Students who complete the major in criminal justice should understand and be able to articulate, both orally and in writing, the core theoretical concepts that form the foundation of analysis and research in criminology and criminal justice today. Core concepts are derived from explanations of crime from a variety of perspectives, including biogenic, psychological, and sociological approaches. There are myriad theories of crime that are informed by these perspectives, including, classical, control, critical, ecology, labeling, learning, strain, and trait-based approaches. Theoretical literacy should extend to multicultural and international understanding.

   b.) Institutions. Students who complete the major in criminal justice should understand the special role of three types of institutions: Police, Corrections, and Courts. In addition, students should know how institutional forms vary across jurisdictions and how these institutions interact with and influence each other.

   c.) Research Methods. Students who complete the criminal justice major should be familiar with the tools, techniques, and data sources necessary for empirical analysis. Students should understand the various ways that empirical analysis is used in the scientific approach: for description, for developing, and for testing theories. They should be able to analyze data using computer applications and should be familiar with basic statistical techniques and regression analysis. They should be able to read and assess research from a wide range of sources, including general interest, academic, and government publications.

2. Critical Thinking: Upon completion of the major students should be
able to apply their understanding of core concepts and quantitative tools to analyze and research real world problems, and evaluate alternative policy proposals on a range of criminal justice issues, from micro-level analyses relevant to particular cases to management concerns to macro-level analyses of legislative and other broad-scale policies. Accomplishment of this goal will require that students can apply their literacy and numeracy skills to different institutional structures, within the U.S. and across countries.

3. Scholarship: Qualified majors should have an opportunity through such avenues as advanced coursework, internships, and faculty interactions to conduct independent research on matters of central relevance to the field of criminal justice.

Scholarship: Students will complete a research paper as one of their course requirements. They will adhere to a rubric and the topics applicable to the course content.

Suggested Reading for the Semester:

Hassine, Victor, Johnson, Robert, and Dobrazhanska, Ania  
*The Crying Wall and Other Prison Stories.*  West Conshohoken, PA: Infinity Publishing Co., 2005

*Convict Criminology,* Stephen Richards and Jeffrey Ian Ross

September 1  A Revisionist History of Correctional Processes
Assignment: The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 1
Prisons: American prisons at the beginning of the Twenty-first century pp 1-16

****September 8  NO CLASS

A discussion of Punishment
Assignment: The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 1

September 15  Who goes to Prison
Assignment: The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 1
Understanding Prison policy and population trends pp 63-120

September 22  Jails
Assignment: The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 2
Prisons: Prison suicide and prisoner coping

September 29  : Visit to Jail to be scheduled
October 6  Alternatives to prison
Assignment:  The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 2
   Prisons: Adult Correctional treatment  pp. 361-426

October 13 :  **Review for Mid term**  Community Courts and Drug Court

October 20  **Mid Term and Research Discussion**
   First half of journal entries due
   Interpersonal Violence and social order in Prisons  pp. 205-282

October 27  Community Justice Programs – Restorative justice
   The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 2
   Interpersonal Violence and social order in Prisons  pp. 205-282

November 3 Community Corrections
   Assignment:  The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 3

November 10:  Special Populations
   **Papers due**
Assignment:  The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 3
Prisons:  Interpersonal Violence and social order in Prisons  pp. 205-282

November 17 Women in Corrections
   Assignment:  The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 4

November 24:  Re-entry and Diversion (this should be Nov 24)
   **Final Journals and reflection paper due**
Assignment:  The Dilemmas of Corrections Part 4
Prisons:  Parole and prisoner re-entry in the United States  pp. 479-530

December 1 Collateral Consequences Class Presentations

December 8  review for final Class Presentations

**Final Exam To Be Announced**

Other Topics:  The Prisoner as Victim:  Holmsburg, Alabama, California, Arkansas, Washington & Oregon, correctional officer academy

**Evaluation**

1.  Reaction Journal 30 entries (15 points).
The final entry: review all previous entries and react to them and to your experiences this semester

2. Application - Research Paper – (Due week 5 **25 pts**)

3. Mid term and Final Examination – 30 + 30 = **60 points**

**Attendance will not be taken at each class. In the event that a snap quiz is given to evaluate who and who is not attending the quiz(s) will be worth up to five points which will be deducted from examination scores. Be aware that exam questions are primarily based on lecture notes. It is your responsibility to get notes from classmate in the event of absence. Office hours by appt only**

**Selected Bibliography**


Maden, T. Women, Prisons, and Psychiatry: Mental Disorder Behind Bars


Masters, R. Counseling Criminal Justice Offenders ISBN 0803955324


Shaw, R. Chaplains to the Imprisoned: Sharing Life with the Incarcerated (Haworth Criminal Justice, Forensic Behavior Sciences, & Offender Rehabilitation, Haworth Press 1995. ISBN 1560248777

Smith, B. The Legal Aspects of Counseling: Social Problems, Psychology, and Criminal Justice. ASIN 0894210246 out of print

Walsh, A. Understanding, Assessing, and Counseling the Criminal Justice Client ASIN0534086527 out of print


Watts, T. Experiences and Problems of Women in Prison/P3002 1990 out of stock

Williams, B. Counseling in Criminal Justice (Counseling in Context) ISBN0335192408

Zaplin, R. Female Offenders: Critical Perspectives and Effective Interventions 1998

Term Paper Grading Rubric

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