

# RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences

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Office Hours: By appointment only

Class: **Sex Offense Legislation- ONLINE, 01:202:388:B1**

**SUMMER SESSION 2015**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on the examination of sex offender specific legislation and the empirical research basis that exists for each law. Each law will be reviewed as a separate topic, starting with the community registration and notification (Megan's Law) and will continue to the most recent law, the Adam Walsh Act. Issues concerning etiology, treatment, management and recidivism will be discussed in accordance with their relevance. Most importantly, the course will focus on the collateral consequences of the implementation of such laws and how they may effect recidivism patterns. Strategies for reform will be explored, as well as the evolving initiatives and legislation concerning sexual violence. This class is completely online and will include multiple interactive tasks during the weekly modules.

A significant portion of the course consists of discussion groups, forums and assignments. In addition, there will be links to related readings, websites, and online videos. The online environment offers a potential advantage to the in-class experience by allowing repeated reviewing of the video lectures and by enabling student-student interactions through the discussion groups. In addition, the online environment allows a variety of engagement activities that can be used to stimulate student participation that can also be monitored through Sakai tools.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the completion of this course, students are responsible for:

- 1) An increased knowledge of the criminal justice system and its response to sex offenders
- 2) An increased understanding of the current initiatives in the criminal justice system, and the additional topics that are covered separate from the book.

## **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:**

1. 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, labelling, learning, strain, and trait-based approaches. Theoretical literacy should extend to multicultural and international understanding.

2. 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.

3. 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.

## **REQUIRED READING (Book is not optional)**

Sex Offender Laws, 2nd edition: Failed policies, New Directions. Edited by Richard Wright, Springer Publishing. ISBN: 9780826196712

## **COURSE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS**

The formal organization of this course consists of multiple parts: 1) power point lectures, 2) weekly quizzes/assessments, 3) midterm and final exam, 4) weekly chapter reading assignment, 5) intermittent journal or article reading, 6) intermittent video viewing, 7) structured student online participation through discussion boards and 8) a one-time site visit to a criminal justice agency (i.e. a public court room, a correctional facility, a lawyer office) and a write up of the experience.

**Lectures:** There are 13 power point lectures, uploaded into modules. The lectures will be broken into sections with a variety of engagements between sections. Some lectures will also be accompanied by a short video featuring a current issue.

**Weekly quizzes:** Each weekly module will be accompanied by an assessment/ quiz. The questions will range in type and extent and the assessment can be taken at any point after viewing the power point lecture and any additional video. These assessments will automatically be graded and students will receive feedback upon submission. This allows students to know their grades throughout the semester, as does the interactive grade book. Quizzes make up 25% of the semester.

**Midterm and final exams:** These will be given online in a variety of formats, multiple choice, fill in and short answer. Final topics for exams will be reviewed with the class. These are worth 25% of the course grade (12.5% each).

**Weekly chapter reading assignment:** Each weekly module will be accompanied by a chapter in the text book. This ties into the weekly quiz/assessment.

**Intermittent journal or article reading:** During various weekly modules, students will see that I have uploaded a relevant newspaper or journal article to be read. This will be tied to either the weekly quiz/assessment or the student weekly discussions.

**Intermittent video viewing:** During various weekly modules, students will see that I have uploaded a relevant video to be viewed. This will be tied to either the weekly quiz/assessment or the student weekly discussions.

**Structured student online participation through discussion boards:** In addition to assigned coursework, logging onto the class website, and viewing the prepared online material, students are expected to spend at least 10 hours over the course of the semester (approximately 40 minutes per week) in structured participation. This will be monitored via the discussion boards and the mandatory weekly posts. Students will be graded on the level and quality of their participation and guidelines will be given at the beginning of the semesters as to make students aware of expectations. Students will likely be assigned to groups and a group leader will be assigned. These weekly discussion board assignments are worth a total of 25% and each will be graded individually.

**One-time site visit to a criminal justice agency (i.e. a public court room, a correctional facility, a lawyer office) and a write up of the experience:** Drawing on this site visit and the lectures, readings,

and group syntheses, students will write a 1,000 word (3 pages) report. Guidelines will be provided and students will need to set up their own visit at any point during the semester and the final paper/write up is due by the last day of class. This will constitute the final 25% of the grade. I may swap this at some point (and notify students) that this will be extra credit.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Weekly Quizzes/Assessments = 25%

Midterm and Final = 25%

Student discussion boards= 25%

Site visit and final paper = 25%

### **INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT CONTACT:**

The instructor will be available for virtual office hours each week with set times. Students can enter into a virtual chat room and all questions will be logged on the site for student viewing, to serve as a possible FAQ section. Also, the instructor will monitor and (as necessary) contribute to each section's threaded discussions each and every week throughout the term.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and any violation will be reported to the Dean of Students. No excuse will ever be tolerated for academic dishonesty, but it is even more important that students understand the repercussions of this unethical behavior. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, the fabrication or invention of information used in an assignment, plagiarism, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others or denying access to materials and resources.

### **2015 SUMMER CLASS SCHEDULE**

Week 1

Chapter 1, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Discussion Board

Week 2

Chapter 4 and Chapter 4

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Assignment

Week 3

Chapter 6 and Chapter 7

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Assignment

MIDTERM

Week 4

Chapter 8, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Assignment

Week 5

Chapter 11 and Chapter 12

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Assignment

Week 6

Chapter 13 and Chapter 14

Power point

Weekly Quiz

Weekly Discussion Board

Week 7

Chapter 15 and Chapter 16

Power point

Weekly Discussion Board

FINAL EXAM