

Sociology 234 – The Criminal Justice System

Fall 2009

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. 208 Clark Hall

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Office Hours Tuesday 12:00 – 2:00
Thursday 1:00 – 2:00
or by appointment

Logic of the Course

How should a society respond to crime? The criminal justice **system** involves three components: (1) police, (2) courts, and (3) corrections. In the United States, each of these components is anchored to the Constitution and to legal statutes. Yet, they also are social institutions influenced by social dynamics. In this course, we will critically study each component as it has been implemented in the United States.

Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Understand the foundation of criminal law as defined by the United States Constitution
- Recognize the tension between crime control and due process in the U.S. Criminal Justice System.
- Differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the three branches of the criminal justice system.
- Critically apply legal and procedural guidelines to actual cases

Required Reading

(1) Randall G. Sheldon et. al (2008). Crime and Criminal Justice in American Society. Waveland Press. Referenced on the reading Schedule as <T:> (for Text)

(2) Assorted readings which will be made available through Ecampus or the Library's electronic reserve. Readings posted in Ecampus will be prefaced with <E:>

About Reading

You are responsible for all of the assigned reading on the day it is scheduled. That means, I consider every section, paragraph, and textbox fair game for the exam (**even if we do not cover the material in class**). We will cover approximately 30 pages per class period. If you wish to do well in this class, I would strongly advise you to keep up with the reading.

Unsolicited advice

Sometimes students ask me how they can maximize the chances of doing well in this class. The following general strategy served me well in school (I went from a 1.7 gpa in my first semester of college to the Dean's List my final two years by using these strategies).

1. Read & Outline the assigned reading BEFORE class.
 - a. Outlining is an active learning strategy which forces you to slow down and think about the ideas being expressed by the writer.
 - b. Reading before class both flags things that don't make sense (so you can ask questions) and primes you to actively discuss the content. The purpose of discussion in class is to reinforce the important concepts which are introduced in the book.
2. Take notes in class and then re-write them after class. By re-writing your notes, you actively review them.
3. Review your reading outline & class notes at least once a week and preferably twice per week. This makes it much easier to study prior to the exam.
4. Ask questions in class. Try to answer the questions I put out. If something doesn't make sense, try to figure out what isn't making sense and then ask for clarification.

Grading & Evaluation

Your grade will be based on 4 exams¹ worth 100 points each for a total of 400 points. I do not intend to offer extra-credit. Final grades will be based on the following point allocation:

Grade	% of Points	Points necessary to achieve this grade
A+	> 98.00	392
A	92.00 - 97.99	368
A-	90.00 – 91.99	360
B+	88.00 – 89.99	352
B	83.00 – 87.99	332
B-	80.00 – 82.99	320
C+	78.00 – 79.00	312
C	73.00 – 77.99	292
C-	70.00 – 72.99	280
D	65.00 – 69.99	260
F	< 65.00	259 or less

Exam scores will be posted on Ecampus in a timely fashion. You can estimate your current grade at anytime by applying the scale above to your current percentage. Similarly, you can use this table to determine how many points you need on the final exam to achieve _____ (fill in the desired grade).

¹ Students are required to supply the appropriate Scantron Form #882-ES (100-Question form) for each examination.

Makeup Exam Policy

The exams will be given on the dates listed in the course schedule. All students are expected to take the exam when scheduled. According to the University policy, “Students absent from regularly scheduled exams **because of authorized University activities** will have the opportunity to take them at an alternate time.” Students meeting these criteria **should notify me immediately** and **provide official documented evidence** of his or her circumstances. In order to be fair, the makeup exams will involve additional essay questions, not asked on the main exam.

The division of Sociology and Anthropology has a clear make-up exam policy.

- Make-up exams will take place on Tuesdays between 12:00 PM and 4:00 PM in the Clark Hall Research Annex 152.
- All students must make up an exam **within one week** of the original exam time.
- Students **are only allowed one make up exam per course**.
- Students must show their id and sign in to take the makeup exam.

I **will not** authorize make-up exams for vacations & travel schedules, job interviews, and other non-university recognized exigencies.

Special Needs

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me **immediately** and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

Attendance

You are expected to attend **every** class and are responsible for what we cover. If you can not make it to class, you should make arrangements to get notes from someone who was present. I will not give you a copy of my notes, nor will I respond to emails answering the question, “what did I miss?” If am always happy to answer specific questions..

Communicating with Me

Email is the best way for you to get in touch with me. However, to ensure that I understand what you ask of me, please be sure to utilize the following email conventions.

- (1) Concisely state the purpose of the message in the subject line.
- (2) In the body of your message, clearly tell me:
 - a. Who you are (your first and last name).
 - b. Which class you are in (I teach several classes and have hundreds of students). For instance, “I am in your Tuesday morning Criminal Justice Class (soca 234).”
 - c. Your specific question. “How many points was the last exam worth?”
 - d. Any additional information which will help me to reply to your message.

- (3) Please use conventional English. I don't understand text-messaging short hand. Every sentence should have both a subject and predicate.

My office phone has voicemail, which I check when I'm in the office. However, if you leave me a voice mail message, it is imperative that you clearly state:

- (1) Your name and which class you take.
- (2) The purpose of your call
- (3) Where and when I can reach you.

As I rule, I prefer not to return long-distance phone calls for non-emergency events. E.g., I am unlikely to call your cell phone with a New Jersey area code, in order to answer a question about the assigned reading. Of course, if you had to leave Morgantown suddenly for a family emergency and need to speak to me, I will return the call.

Academic Honesty

I assume that I will never have reason to doubt your honesty. Scholastic dishonesty involves...

- misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another;
- submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without the written approval and consent of all instructor's concerned;
- depriving another student of necessary course materials
- interfering with another's work

These definitions are based on the West Virginia University Undergraduate Catalog. Please see the section on Academic Integrity / Dishonesty for the full definition and discussion of these procedures.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses. Clear cases will result in an F and appropriate academic discipline. If you have any question about when and how to document sources, or any other question that will help assure academic honesty, please talk to me.

Social Justice

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that statement and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Schedule²

Tuesday		Thursday	
8/25	Introduction to Class Purchase your books!	8/27	Introducing The Criminal Justice Process E: The People vs. Donald Payne E: Lobster Court
9/1	Conceptual Foundations T: Chapter 1 (1-15)	9/3	Defining and Measuring Crime T: Chapter 2 (19-35)
9/8	Fundamentals of Criminal Law T: Chapter 3(39-65)	9/10	Constitutional Foundations of CJ E: Article III of the U.S. Constitution E: Am 1,4,5,6,8,13,14 of U.S. Constitution
9/15	Catch-up, Case-study, and Review E: Mapp vs. Ohio	9/17	Exam 1
9/22	Introduction to Policing T: Chapter 5 (91-106)	9/24	Police Bureaucracies T: Chapter 6 (111-129) E: Extract from Weber on Bureaucracy
9/29	Police Functions and Issues T: Chapter 7 (133-155)	10/1	Police Procedure under the Constitution (use of force & 4th Amendment) E: Selection from Conley: Blue Blood E: Terry vs. Ohio E: Tennessee v. Garner
10/6	Police Procedure under the Constitution (5th & 6th Amendments) E: Miranda vs. Arizona E: Christian Burrial Case	10/8	Exam II T: Chapter 6 (193-238)
10/13	Introduction to the Courts T: Chapter: 8(157 – 173)	10/15	Court Process 1 (pre-trial) T: Chapter 9 (179-207)
10/20	Court Process 2 (trial) T: Chapter 9 (179-207)	10/22	Case Study on the Criminal Trial People vs. David Krupinski (in class video)
10/27	Philosophies of Punishment & Sentencing T: Chapter 10 (213-242)	10/29	Sentencing Continued T: Chapter 10 (213-242) E: The Case of the Wild Party!
11/3	Sentencing Continued T: Chapter 9 (309-347) In Class Exercise: You be the Judge	11/5	Exam III
11/10	Punishment: Jails T: Chapter 11: (249-262)	11/12	Punishment: The History of Prisons T: Chapter 12 (267-281)

² T = Textbook (Shelden et al). E= On Ecampus. This schedule is subject to change. Changes (if any) will be announced in class.

11/17	Life in Prison T: Chapter 13 (285-306)	11/19	Prisons: a Sociological Critique T: Chapter 13 (285-306) The Stanford Prison Experiment (in class)
11/24	No Class – Thanksgiving Recess	11/26	No Class – Thanksgiving Recess
12/1	Life after Prison: Rentry issues T: Chapter 13 (311-327)	12/3	Probation and other Alternatives to Incarceration Materials to be determined
12/8	Juvenile Justice Issues T: Chapter 16 (349-372) E: In Re: Gault	12/10	Reforming Criminal Justice T: Chapter 17 (407-424)
12/16	EXAM IV & Final Essay 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in 208 Clark Hall		
This exam will include a cumulative essay question.			
Note: I will not authorize early exams. A non-refundable plane ticket is not a justifiable reason to take this exam early.			