SYLLABUS

CJUS 4901.001
SENIOR SEMINAR: CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC POLICY
SPRING 2014

Sage Hall, Room 330
T/Th 9:30 – 10:50 a.m.
Office: 265 Chilton Hall
Office Hours: T/Th 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
& by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on America’s attempts to find a “solution” to the “crime problem.” We will first examine the real, as opposed to the perceived, extent of the crime problem. Then we will analyze the primary policy initiatives designed to reduce the level of crime in this country that have been proposed by “conservative” and “liberal” policy advocates.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Through this course, students should gain:
1) an appreciation of the complexities of criminal justice policy formulation;
2) an understanding of the need to separate rhetoric from fact in the development of criminal justice policy; and
3) an ability to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of specific criminal justice policies and to explore mechanisms to enhance their effectiveness.

REQUIRED READING:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Final course grades will be based on performance on the following activities in the following proportions: midterm examination (25% of final course grade); final examination (25% of final course grade); research paper (30% of final course grade); expert briefing paper (10% of final course grade); group presentation of expert briefing papers (5% of final course grade); and class participation (5% of final course grade). Each of these activities will be evaluated on a 100-point scale.

GRADING SCALE:
A= 90-100
B= 80-89
C= 70-79
D= 60-69
F= 0-59

EXAMINATIONS: Both exams will consist of multiple choice, definitional, descriptive, listing, and/or short essay questions. The midterm examination is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday,
**March 4, 2014.** The final examination will be given from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 8, 2014. There will generally be no make-up exams.

**EXPERT BRIEFING PAPER:** Unfortunately, there are no perfect solutions to our crime problem. Every policy initiative has strengths and weaknesses. To demonstrate this proposition, each student will be assigned a policy initiative for which the student will become a class expert as to the strengths or weaknesses of the policy initiative. Each student will prepare a briefing paper supporting the student’s position. The text of each paper should be 2-3 typed pages long (10 or 12 point font and 1.5 spacing). In addition to material taken from the required readings (or textbooks in other courses), each paper should include reference to at least 3 scholarly sources other than the readings required for class and texts in other courses, including at least 1 scholarly source describing a study supporting the effectiveness of your policy position. Students should use parenthetical references to sources and submit a bibliography containing the sources cited in the paper, both in standard MLA form.

When the class discusses the policy initiatives assigned, the student experts regarding them should be prepared to make a group presentation regarding their topic of no more than 10 minutes (for each side of the issue) and to respond to questions from the class regarding their topic.

The topics will be assigned on the second day of class. The expert briefing papers will be due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, February 18, 2014.** Each student will submit a “hard” copy of the expert briefing paper and should also submit it electronically by **February 18** to Turnitin.com via Blackboard. The paper will be evaluated on the basis of content, style, organization, and form. Any late papers will be penalized.

**RESEARCH PAPER:** Each student will select a specific policy initiative designed to address, prevent, or reduce crime (for example, preventive detention, diversion, abolition of plea bargaining, police foot patrols, intensive supervision probation, decriminalization of various conduct, etc.). The topic chosen cannot be a topic on which the student is preparing an expert briefing paper. Each student will prepare a research paper that analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the policy initiative. The text of this paper should be 10-12 typed pages long (10 or 12 point font and 1.5 spacing); the paper should include:

1) a detailed description of the policy initiative (including the current implementation of the initiative, its historical development, etc.);

2) an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the policy initiative;

3) descriptions of 3 studies describing the policy initiative’s implementation and evaluation in specific locations/jurisdictions, as well as the results of the evaluations and the validity of the evaluations;

4) a conclusion, based on the above research, as to the overall effectiveness of the policy initiative and suggestions for improving (or further improving) the effectiveness of the policy initiative;

5) reference to at least 8 scholarly sources other than the required readings for class (for example, scholarly journals, books, research studies, court cases, government statistics); textbooks from other courses can be used as references in your papers, but they will not count as part of your required number of scholarly sources;
6) parenthetical references to sources and a bibliography containing the sources cited in the paper, both in standard MLA form.

No more than 3 students may do their papers on the same policy initiative. Policy initiatives will be chosen on a first come-first served basis, but all students must identify in writing the policy initiative on which their papers will be based by the beginning of class on Thursday, February 13, 2014. These paper proposals will not be graded, but will be reviewed by the instructor and returned with comments. The reviewed proposal should be submitted with the final paper. Any major change in the topic should be approved by the instructor. The final paper will be due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, April 22, 2014. Each student will submit a “hard” copy of the research paper and should also submit it electronically by April 22 to Turnitin.com via Blackboard. The paper will be evaluated on the basis of content, style, organization, and form. Any late papers will be penalized.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: The class participation component of each student’s grade will be based on the number of times that the student actually participates in the discussions of class material. Students may volunteer to participate and they will be called on to participate. A student will be awarded up to 10 points each time that the student participates in class, up to a maximum of 100 points for the semester. No points will be deducted from or added to the student’s class participation score if the student gives an incorrect answer, is unable to respond to a question in class, or asks a question in class.

ATTENDANCE: No specific records will be kept regarding student attendance. Attendance, however, will strongly affect course grades because 1) at least 30% of each exam will be drawn from lectures, 2) lectures will elaborate on and review text materials, 3) evaluations of class participation will be based on participation in class, and 4) each student will be responsible for the content of all lectures, as well as for any announcements, schedule changes, etc. that are made in class.

ADDITIONAL CLASS ACTIVITIES: In conjunction with ongoing Criminal Justice program assessment, CJUS 4901 students will take an in-class exit exam during the semester. As part of the university-wide assessment of teaching effectiveness, students should complete the Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) online evaluations for this and all of their classes. Your input is valued.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Disruptive behavior is not permitted in class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: The rules stated in the University of North Texas Student Guidebook section on “Code of Conduct and Discipline at the University of North Texas” regarding cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced.

ADA STATEMENT: The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe that you have a disability requiring accommodations, please see me and/or contact the
Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class. Please notify me and your other instructors regarding any recommended accommodations as soon as possible.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

The following schedule reflects the *approximate* schedule for the required readings. Tentative dates for examinations and other assignments are also included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
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| 14, 16* | Introduction  
* Assignment of Expert Briefing Topics                                |
| 21, 23  | Research Paper Preparation  
The “Crime Problem” and Criminal Justice Models  
Walker chs. 1, 2                                             |
| 28, 30  | Criminal Justice Participants and the Prediction Problem  
Walker chs. 3, 4                                         |
| **February** |                                                                                   |
| 4, 6, 11, 13* | Police Strategies  
Walker ch. 5, pp. 339-48  
* Research Paper Topic Due                                    |
| 18*** | Deterrence; Incarceration Strategies  
Walker chs. 6, 7  
** Expert Briefing Paper Due  
* Death Penalty Group Presentation                                |
| 20, 25,* 27 | Incarceration Strategies (cont.)  
Walker ch. 7  
* 3 Strikes Group Presentation                                    |
| **March** |                                                                                   |
| 4** | ** Midterm Exam                                                                         |
| 6 | Bonus Reflection Paper Assignment (via Blackboard)                                      |
| 11, 13 | Spring Break                                                                            |
18,* 20  
“Loopholes” and Victims  
Walker chs. 8, 9  
* Insanity Group Presentation

25, 27*  
Rehabilitation Strategies  
Walker ch. 11, pp. 352-60  
* Boot Camp Group Presentation

April 1,* 3  
Rehabilitation Strategies (cont.)  
Walker pp. 348-52, 361-64  
* Parole Group Presentation

8  
Reform  
Walker ch. 12

10, 15*  
Gun Strategies  
Walker ch. 10  
* Conceal/Carry Group Presentation

17  
Criminal Justice Career Day

22,** 24, 29*  
Drug Strategies  
Walker ch. 13  
** Research Paper Due  
* Marijuana Possession Group Presentation

May 1  
Conclude; Review

8**  
** Final Exam, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.