CRIM 1300: The Death Penalty

Course Time: T 5:15-8:30 PM
Office Location: 410 Churchill Hall

Course Location: 200 Churchill Hall
E-mail: rose.kr@husky.neu.edu

Office Hours: T 4:30-5:00 PM, W 12:00-1:00 PM & by appointment

Course Catalog Description: Reviews the history of the death penalty in the United States from colonial times through the present. Among Western democracies, the United States stands alone in its continued use of capital punishment as a sanction. Examines the contemporary death penalty and the many controversies surrounding its continued use (focusing on U.S. Supreme Court decisions around the constitutionality of the death penalty). Discusses historical and contemporary controversies around the administration of the death penalty including potential innocence, special populations, methods of execution, race and gender biases, costs, deterrence, and international relations.

Required Texts:
• Additional readings will be made available via Blackboard

Supplemental Resources
• The Death Penalty Information Center:
  • http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/
• ACLU Capital Punishment Project:
  • https://www.aclu.org/issues/capital-punishment?redirect=capital-punishment
• The Supreme Court:
  • http://www.supremecourt.gov/
  • www.scotusblog.com

Blackboard
I will be making extensive use of the Blackboard system during the semester. For example, links to cases and readings, assignments and grades will all be posted on the Blackboard system. Additionally, I will use Blackboard to send out class e-mails and
announcements. Please be sure that you can access this course on your Blackboard account.

**Class Expectations:**

1. Attend class regularly and be on time for class. It is ultimately your responsibility to know the material presented in lectures and class discussions. If you must miss class, please make arrangements to get the notes from someone else in class. I will not provide notes to you if you miss class.

2. Be respectful to others in class. There is not always a “right” or “wrong” and people are entitled to hold differing opinions. In this course, you should be prepared to see things from a point of view that is different from your own. Disrespect towards any student in the class or myself will not be tolerated. This includes behavior that is distracting to others, including sleeping, phone calls/text messages, listening to headphones, talking out of turn, using a laptop (for purposes beyond note-taking), etc.

3. Participate in class discussions and lectures. You should be actively listening to lectures and class discussions. Please also feel free to ask questions when/if you are unclear on something or if you feel you have something to add to the discussion. It is important to me that the material is clear to you and that I respond to your questions and observations during class time. I want and enjoy your participation.

4. Read the assigned material before each class. This makes it easier to follow and understand the material covered in class lectures and discussions.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are responsible for honestly completely their own work and for the appropriate citation of sources. Please review the academic integrity policy of Northeastern University: [http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academichonesty.html](http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academichonesty.html)

**Disability Services:**

If any member of the class feels s/he has a disability, please advise me of the desired accommodations by the end of the first week of class or as soon as you have written
documentation from the Disability Resource Center (http://www.northeastern.edu/drc/). I will work with you and the staff from the Disability Resource Center to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform and participate in class.

Course Requirements:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Questions/Responses</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal Written Assignment</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Exams:

This course will include three exams, each worth 100 points (300 total). These exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. The exams will include material from lectures, discussions, assigned readings, and class videos. The exams will not be comprehensive, though they may contain concepts covered in earlier sections of the course. Review sheets will be provided to aid in your studying, however, these are meant to serve as a supplement to your class notes and readings, not as a substitute.

Make-up policy for Exams:

If you miss an exam due to a situation beyond your control (medical, legal, scholastic, university athletics, or a family emergency) you may meet with me on or before the day that you return to class to schedule a time for your make-up exam.

You may receive a zero for a missed exam if you DO NOT:

- schedule the make-up exam on or before your immediate return to class, or
- fail to show up for the scheduled make-up exam.

I may require you to provide documentation that justifies your absence when you request a make-up exam. If you cannot provide such documentation, you may not be able
to make-up the exam and may receive a zero for that exam. I will be very strict about missed exams and make-up schedules, so, assume the responsibility of being here for them.

**Formal Writing Assignment:**

During this semester, you will be required to complete one formal writing assignment. This assignment is worth 100 points. The details of this assignment will be posted on Blackboard under Course Materials and will also be discussed in class. Since you will have plenty of notice of when this paper is due, no extensions will be granted. However, exceptions will be made for documented medical emergencies (i.e. doctor’s note). Late papers will be accepted with a deduction of 10 points per day. For example, if the paper is due on a Monday and I receive your paper on Wednesday, 20 points will be deducted. As such, it is perfectly acceptable (even advisable) to check in with me to ensure that your paper has been submitted properly through the Blackboard system.

**Reading Questions/Responses:**

For each class, you will complete a short writing assignment. For these assignments, you may write a short response to the week's reading, pose conceptual topics for class discussion, ask factual questions, or any combination of the above. Your assignment should be approximately ½ to 1 page in length. All assignments must be typed (not hand written) and turned in at the start of class. Your name and the date should be at the top of the page. While we have 12 class days, only 10 reading responses must be completed. This means each student is allowed 2 “freebie” class days in which a reading response is not required. As such, late assignments will not be accepted. These responses are worth 5 points each for a total of 50 points.

**Grading Scale:**

- **A =** 92.0% - 100.0%
- **A- =** 90.0% - 91.9%
- **B+ =** 87.0% - 89.9%
- **B =** 82.0% - 86.9%
- **B- =** 80.0% - 81.9%
C+ = 77.0% - 79.9%
C  = 72.0% - 76.9%
C- = 70.0% - 71.9%
D+ = 67.0% - 69.9%
D  = 62.0% - 66.9%
D- = 60.0% - 61.9%
F  = 59.9% or less

**Course Schedule:**

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. You will be made aware of any changes to assigned readings prior to any due dates or exams. Readings denoted with an * will be available for download via Blackboard.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>READ:</th>
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| SEPT 13  | • Course Introduction  
          • Overview of the topic and current state of the death penalty in the U.S. | • None                        |
| SEPT 20  | • Historical Roots  
          • Moral Justification                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Robinson Ch. 1  
          • Costanzo Ch. 8* | |
| SEPT 27  | • Constitutionality of Capital Punishment  
          • Modern Legal Process                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Robinson Ch. 2  
          • Furman v. GA*  
          • Gregg v. GA* | |
| OCT 4    | • Effectiveness of Capital Punishment  
          • Exam #1 Review                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Robinson Ch. 4  
          • Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 2 (#1 & 2)  
          • Goertzel*  
          • Murray* | |
| OCT 11   | • EXAM #1  
          • Is Capital Punishment Humane?                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Costanzo Ch. 3*  
          • Johnson Ch. 2*  
          • Lancet*  
          • Janek* | |
| OCT 18   | • Problems with Capital Punishment  o Racial Bias  
          o Sex/Gender Bias                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Robinson Ch. 5 (p. 175-182)(186-199)(204-206)  
          • Costanzo Ch. 5* (p. 79-86)  
          • Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 3 (#1 & 2)  
          • McCleskey v. Kemp* | |
| OCT 25   | • Problems with Capital Punishment  o Sex/Gender Bias (Continued)  
          o Social Class Bias                                                                 |
|          | READ:                                                                 | • Robinson Ch. 5 (p.182-185)(199-204)  
          • Costanzo Ch. 5* (71-79) | |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tr>
<td>NOV 1</td>
<td>• Problems with Capital Punishment</td>
<td>• Robinson Ch. 5 (p. 207-222)</td>
<td>• Formal Writing Assignment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Wrongful Convictions</td>
<td>• Costanzo Ch. 5* (p. 86-93)</td>
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<td>• Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 3 (#3 &amp; 4)</td>
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<td>• Francis*</td>
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<td>• Brasfield*</td>
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<td>NOV 8</td>
<td>• Problems with Capital Punishment</td>
<td>• Robinson Ch. 5 (p. 227-238)</td>
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<td>o Other Issues</td>
<td>• Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 2 (#3 &amp; 4)</td>
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<td>• Exam #2 Review</td>
<td>• Sjostrom*</td>
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<td>• Sorensen*</td>
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<td>NOV 15</td>
<td>• <strong>EXAM #2</strong></td>
<td>• DPIC: International*</td>
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<td>• Capital Punishment in Other Countries</td>
<td>• Amnesty International*</td>
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<td>NOV 22</td>
<td>• Capital Punishment &amp; Juvenile Offenders</td>
<td>• Streib*</td>
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<td>• Kennedy*</td>
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<td>• O’Connor*</td>
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<td>• Stanford v. KY*</td>
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<td>• Roper v. Simmons*</td>
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<td>NOV 29</td>
<td>• Mental Heath Issues and Capital Punishment</td>
<td>• Atkins v. VA*</td>
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<td>• Tobolowsky*</td>
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<td>• Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 3 (#5 &amp; 6)</td>
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<td>• Sharp*</td>
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<td>• Human Rights Watch*</td>
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<td>DEC 6</td>
<td>• Victims’ Rights in Capital Cases</td>
<td>• Blackburn et al.*</td>
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<td>• Future Directions</td>
<td>• Robinson Ch. 6</td>
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<td>• Final Exam Review</td>
<td>• Opposing Viewpoints Ch. 2 (#5 &amp; 6)</td>
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