Course Description and Goals:

The course analyzes the structures, functions, and operations of criminal justice agencies including the police, the courts, and corrections from the perspective of organizational and institutional change. The course reviews existing organizational theories and theories of change and examines the application of these theories within agencies of criminal justice. The course discusses inter- and intra-jurisdictional issues facing these organizations and ethical dilemmas facing public decision makers.

This course is focused on organizational change, complex organizational dynamics and how these forces shape and influence the delivery of criminal justice services. Additionally, the course focuses on “sensemaking” in complex organizations, as well as the role of larger institutional environments as they influence local agency actions and decisions.

The course has three (3) primary learning objectives.

1. To create a broad understanding of organizational dynamics and how they influence decision and policy making in the American justice system,
2. To situate the apparatus of criminal justice in its various organizational and institutional contexts, with particular concern for the current and future practice of justice, and,
3. To provide students with grounding in organizational analysis and the roles that organizations play in shaping criminal justice agency decision-making.

Required Texts:


**Blackboard:**

Blackboard technology is integrated into this class. You can access the main blackboard site at http://blackboard.neu.edu. Follow the directions for logging into the information for this classroom. You are responsible for checking this site regularly as course information will be added to the site. Blackboard training courses are offered for free through the University. See a representation from the “Help Desk” at the Info Commons in Snell Library.

**Communication:**

All seminar participants are expected to check their email account two to three times per week. I will use the email address supplied on the Blackboard website. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct email address is supplied.

**Class Format, Attendance and Participation:**

**Academic Integrity:**

Northeastern University’s academic integrity policy will be strictly applied (see http://www.judicialaffairs.neu.edu/academicintegrity.htm).

**Evaluation Methods:**

Seminar participant’s final grade will be based upon the following components:

1. **Mid-term Examination (25%)**: A take home essay mid-term examination will be handed out on February 25, 2015 and will be submitted through Blackboard by Monday March 2, 2015 5:00 PM Est. The examination will follow the class readings and discussions up to that point. By Friday, February 27, 2015, the instructor will email class participants with the questions they are to answer from the list of question provided.

2. **Weekly Discussion Points (25%)**: Seminar participants are required to prepare weekly discussion points for substantive areas as outlined in the course schedule. Beginning each week the discussion will focus on organizational issues from a theoretical point of view; the second meeting of the week, readings cover application of these ideas to criminal justice. **The weekly discussion points cover the criminal justice applications only.** Discussion points are not descriptions of what
the author(s) have said in the individual readings. Rather, they are the integration of the readings leading to points that should be further discussed in the class. Weekly you should identify 3 critical discussion points/themes from the readings and provide a one-paragraph summary of each issue (this should not exceed one typed page). Seminar participants must submit this document 24 hours before the topic is discussed and upload a copy of the discussion points to Blackboard. All class participants are required to read their colleague’s discussion points and to be prepared to discuss them in the weekly class meeting.

3. **Class Participation (10%)**: This course is a seminar format class. It will be a guided discussion of the reading materials and brief lectures supplementing class materials. In a seminar format class, the each student is responsible to reflect on the material for each class period. Seminar participants are expected to come prepared to address the material. This includes being prepared to make insightful comments on the material and/or ask questions that help clarify confusing points.

4. **Class Facilitation (15%)**: Individuals or pairs of seminar participants will serve as a class facilitator(s) for one class session during the semester. Class facilitators are responsible for leading the class discussion for that particular class. The facilitators for any given class period should coordinate presentations along critical themes identified in the material and linked to student responses to the discussion question on Blackboard. Facilitations should be generally structured as follows:

   a. Identify what you believe are critical points/themes that emerge from this material (this is not a review of what the author’s for the day have said, rather it is a quick synopsis of the major points they are making);
   b. Review others’ responses via Blackboard for the topic of that day.
   c. Come prepared with a series of “discussion questions” that will generate a discussion.
   d. You should focus on issues such as “Why does this matter?” “What impact does this have on understanding justice and the justice system?” “Have you experienced this issue while on co-op or in some other setting?”
   e. Where appropriate and necessary, seminar participants may draw on material outside the required readings.

*** Facilitators do not have to post on Blackboard on the day that they are assigned to facilitate the class. However, they will provide the instructor a brief outline addressing the points described above.

5. **Final Examination (25%)**: Following a similar format to the mid-term examination, a list of questions for the final examination will be provided on April 22, 2015, and will be submitted through Blackboard on April 27, 2015 by 5:00 PM Est.

**Grading Scale**: Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

- A 100%-95%
- A- 94%-90%
- B+ 89%-87%
- B 86%-84%
- B- 80%- 83%
- C+ 79%-77%
- C 76%-74%
- C- 73%-70%
- D+ 69%-67%
- D 66%-65%
- D- 64%-63%
- F 62%-0%

Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:
### Topic/Reading Schedule:

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<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Environments &amp; Organizational Behavior</td>
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<td>Policy Analysis as a Public Medium</td>
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<td>Institutional and Organizational Change</td>
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