CRIM 7214: CORRECTIONS THEORY AND PRACTICE
FALL 2015

PROFESSOR: Natasha A. Frost, Ph.D.
OFFICE: 413 Churchill Hall
CLASS SESSIONS: Mondays 10:30am – 1:00pm, 301 Churchill Hall
OFFICE HOURS: Mondays/Thursdays 8am – 9am, Thursdays 1pm – 2pm, or by appointment
EMAIL/PHONE: n.frost@neu.edu / 617.373.4076

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide an overview of corrections through a blend of theory, practice, and firsthand observations. The class will open with a review of the purposes of punishment and a discussion of the history of our correctional system. We will define the role of corrections in the greater spectrum of criminal justice, identify and discuss the issues and problems facing the system today, and evaluate the system’s intended purpose vs. how it actually functions. We will explore prison operations, from designing and staffing a prison to responsible reintegration. Students will be expected to engage in discussions regarding the political, social, and economic issues that have impacted penal policy and correctional operations, such as sentencing reform, fiscal crises, fluctuating political landscapes and public opinion, and so on.

EXPECTATIONS

This is a seminar course, not a lecture course. In order to provide for a rich learning experience for all involved, it is imperative that all students arrive at class having completed all of the readings for that week. Although I will, on occasion, offer some lecture style notes, students should arrive ready to discuss and critically assess the material provided in the readings for the week. I expect every student to have something to say during every class session. Accordingly, attendance, preparedness, and participation will account for a substantial portion of your grade.

REQUIRED BOOKS


REQUIRED ARTICLES


Other required articles/readings will be posted to Blackboard (BB) and/or placed on reserve (OR) in the library. I reserve the right to make changes to the required readings and/or class schedule as necessary over the course of the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS

Policy Paper and Presentation: Each student will be responsible for preparing an 8-10 page double-spaced paper (not including references) on an aspect of correctional policy (due on the date that you are scheduled to present. Schedule to be determined during the second class). In the term paper, the student will offer a policy proposition (e.g. “Abolish the Death Penalty” or “Limit Access to Criminal Records”) and will defend the policy proposition by reference to an accumulated body of research that supports her position. In the spirit of healthy policy debate, evidence that rebuts that position and arguments that could be made to the contrary should also be discussed in both the paper and presentation. Students should feel free to adopt controversial policy positions as long as they are prepared to defend them and can find support for the position in the literature. Each student will present and defend his or her policy proposition in a 10-15 minute presentation in class (submitting the presentation and/or related handouts).

Correctional Facility Design Group Project: The class will be divided into groups of three to four on the first day of class. Each group will be required to design a correctional facility adhering to the principles of a particular correctional model. Each group member will be individually responsible for a component of the overall design/project. The group project report is due on the last day of class. Each group will have approximately 30 minutes to present their design. See group project assignment sheet for further details.
Weekly grades will be posted on Blackboard. Assignment of the final grade is non-negotiable, and will be based on:

20%: Attendance, Preparedness, and Participation
50%: Policy Paper and Presentation (100 points)
30%: Group Project: Correctional Facility Presentations (50 points)

**Attendance, Preparedness, and Participation:** You will receive a weekly score (from 0-10) based on your level of preparedness and participation (10=exceptional, 9=very good, 8=acceptable, 7=needs improvement, 0=absent). Preparedness requires that you come to class having read and thought about the session’s material and participation requires that you actively contribute to the discussion during every session. At the end of the semester, weekly scores will be averaged. Any unexcused absence will obviously affect your overall preparedness and participation score. Excused absences will not count against you.

**Policy Paper & Presentation:** The policy paper and presentation will be graded separately. The policy paper will be graded out of 80 points – in addition to the substance (50pts), the organization of the paper (10pts), the quality of the writing (spelling/grammar) (10pts) as well as the number and quality of references and adherence to APA style (10pts) will be considered in the assigning of grades. The presentation of that paper will be graded out of 20 points for a total of 100 points.

**Group Projects:** Group projects will be graded using the following criteria: Overall Project Creativity, 10 points (Group Score); Final Product, 10 points (Group Score); Final Product, 30 points (Individual Score). TOTAL = 50 points.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY & INTEGRITY**

The highest standards of academic integrity are expected in this course. As such, all students should remind themselves of Northeastern University’s Academic Honesty and Integrity policy, which can be found in the Student Handbook. All written assignments will be processed through Turnitin®. Any instances of cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or other academic dishonesty, will be dealt with in accordance with Northeastern University’s official policies (also described in the Student Handbook).
Monday 9/14/2015  Introductions
Punishment and Social Control

- Introductions & Assignments
- Discussion:
  - Images of Social Control
  - Imagining a World without Prisons

Monday 9/21/2015  History of Punishment & Prisons
Policy Paper Topics Due


- Parts I & II: Chapters 1-6


- Chapter 1: The Spectacle of Suffering, *Pieter C. Spierenburg*
- Chapter 2: The Discovery of the Asylum, *David J. Rothman*
- Chapter 3: A Look at Prison History, *Thorsten Sellin*
- Chapter 4: Partial Justice: Women, Prisons, and Social Control, *Nicole Hahn Rafter*

Monday 9/28/2015  The Punitive Turn


- Parts III and IV: Chapters 7-13


- Chapter 17: *What Works: Questions and Answers about Prison Reform*, Robert Martinson
- Chapter 6: *Assessing the Penal Harm Movement*, Francis T. Cullen

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  - Chapters 1-3  
  
  - Chapter 29: *One in 100: Behind Bars in America in 2008*. PEW Center on the States.  
  
| Monday 10/12/2015 | No Class – COLUMBUS DAY       |                                                                                 |
  - Chapters 4-6  
  
  - Chapter 5: *Sentencing in the United States*. Lawrence F. Travis, III.  
  - Chapter 15: *Sex Offender Laws: Can Treatment, Punishment, Incapacitation, and Public Safety be Reconciled?* Mary Ann Farkas and Amy Stichmann  
  

- Chapter 21: Psychopathy: Etiology, Diagnosis, and Treatment.


**Monday 11/9/2015**  
**Imprisonment and the Prison Experience**  
**Policy Presentation**


- Chapter 7: *The Prison Community*, Donald Clemmer
- Chapter 10: *A-Block*. Ted Conover.

Characteristics of Total Institutions. *Erving Goffman*. (OR)

Varieties of Punishment. *Jack Henry Abbott*. (OR)


**Monday 11/16/2015**  
**Imprisonment and the Prison Experience**  
**Policy Presentation**


- Chapter 8: *Supermax Prisons: Panacea or Desperation?* Rodney Henningsen. W. Wesley Johnson, and Terry Wells.
- Chapter 14: *The Supreme Court and Prisoner’s Rights*. Jack E. Call.

Haney, Craig. ‘Infamous Punishment’: The Psychological Consequences of Isolation. (OR)


- Chapter 19: *Recidivism of Sex Offenders*. Tim Bynum et al.

- Chapter 28: *Putting Public Safety First: 13 Strategies for Successful Supervision and Reentry*. PEW Center on the States.


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- Chapter 7


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- Chapter 31: *This Man Has Expired: Witness to an Execution*. Robert Johnson.
