

Fall 2007  
Corrections and Society JS-104  
Monday/Wednesday 13.30-14.45 (MH 520)

Instructor  
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Office Hours  
Mon/Wed 12.30-13.15

### Course Description

This course will explore the main developments of penal practices in the United States between the XIX and XXI centuries, particularly as they relate to the transformations of Western capitalism. In this context, we will critically analyze the main historical trajectories shaping the rationalities of punishment, from the birth of the prison to the advent of mass imprisonment. In a contemporary perspective, the course will scrutinize the causes and consequences of the ongoing American "penal experiment", with particular reference to its role in the reproduction of racial, economic, and ethnic hierarchies. In this course, several sociological and theoretical approaches will be introduced, and students will be expected to apply them to the analysis of past and present transformations in Western penal politics.

### Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students should be aware of the different sociological dimensions of penalty, as well as of the main theoretical approaches to past and present transformations of punishment in Western societies.

Most importantly, participants will be expected to develop a critical knowledge of the economic, social, and cultural forces driving the current US experiment of mass-imprisonment, and of the significance of penal politics in contemporary neoliberal societies.

### Graded Coursework

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Date Due</i>	<i>Percent of Total Grade</i>
Test ONE (5 Short Answer Questions)	10/17 (in class)	30%
Test TWO (5 Short Answer Questions)	12/10 (in class)	30%
Final PAPER (5-10 pages Written Essay)	12/10 (at home)	40%

### Important Note on Coursework

TESTS: These will be done in class, and will consist of 5 short answer questions. If you miss one test, there is the possibility of a makeup test reserved to the students who justify their absence with a doctor's certificate.

PAPER: This will be done at home, and will consist of a written essay on a topic freely chosen by each student, but consistent with the course program. The essay should be 5-10 pages long, double-spaced and typed in Word, Times New Roman (12pts). In order for the paper to be accepted, students are requested to discuss their projects and drafts at least twice with the instructor, during office hours. The first discussion should take place before Week 10 (31<sup>st</sup> October 2007). No papers will be accepted without previous discussions!

Please consider that having office hours is a student's right: take advantage of it and feel free to come and see the instructor as you need.

#### Grading Method for Assignments, Term Papers, and Coursework

A [90 – 100]

Excellent, demonstrates original thought, superior command of written and classroom material, clarity and erudition in a structured presentation.

B [80 – 89]

Above average, some originality of thought, solid command of written and classroom materials, developed structure.

C [70 – 79]

Below average, little or no originality of thought, faltering command of written and classroom materials, awkward structure.

D [60 – 69]

Well below average. No creative response. cursory attention to detail. No appreciation for scholarship.

F [59 or below]

Does not meet minimum expectations for this course.

#### Required Readings

- David Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society: A Study in Social Theory*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1990.
- JS-104 Reader (available on CD-Rom and in printed form).

#### Recommended Readings

Nichelle D. Tramble, *The Dying Ground. A Hip-Hop Noir Novel*, New York 2001.

Philippe Bourgois, *In Search of Respect. Selling Crack in El Barrio*, Cambridge 2002.

Adrian LeBlanc, *Random Family. Love, Drugs, Trouble, and Coming of Age in the Bronx*, New York 2004.

Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York 2003.

#### Recommended Viewings

Tom Fontana, *OZ* (Seasons 1-6), 1997-2003.

Tony Kaye, *American History X*, 1998.

Milos Forman, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, 1975.

Spike Lee, *Clockers*, 1995.

## Class Topics and Assignments

### Week 1 – Introduction

- Mon 08/27* General Introduction/Course Requirements/Syllabus/Exams  
[No readings]
- Wed 08/29* Our Topic: Penal Politics in Contemporary Western Societies  
[No readings]

### Week 2 – The Sociology of Punishment

- Mon 09/03* No lecture
- Wed 09/05* An Introduction to the Sociology of Punishment  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Chapter 1]

### Week 3 – Punishment and Solidarity

- Mon 09/10* Durkheim and the Functionalist Theory of Punishment (Part I)  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Chapter 2]
- Wed 09/12* Durkheim and the Functionalist Theory of Punishment (Part II)  
[Reading: Godoy, *When Justice is Criminal*, JS-104 Reader]

### Week 4 – The Birth of the Prison: Alternative Histories

- Mon 09/17* Marxism and Penal History (Part I)  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Chapter 4]
- Wed 09/19* Marxism and Penal History (Part II)  
[Reading: De Giorgi, *Rethinking the Political Economy*, JS-104 Reader]

### Week 5 – The Birth of the Prison: Alternative Histories

- Mon 09/24* Michel Foucault and the Birth of the Prison (Part I)  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Chapter 6]
- Wed 09/26* Michel Foucault and the Birth of the Prison (Part II)  
[Reading: Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, JS-104 Reader]

### Week 6 – Visions from Inside

- Mon 10/01* Movie: *The Farm – Angola, USA. 1988* (Intro/Part I)  
[Reading: Introduction to the movie]
- Wed 10/03* Movie: *The Farm – Angola, USA. 1988* (Part II/Discussion)  
[Reading & Thinking: Questions about the movie]

### Week 7 – Civilized Punishments?

- Mon 10/08* Norbert Elias and Penal Sensibilities (Part I)  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Chapter 10]
- Wed 10/10* Norbert Elias and Penal Sensibilities (Part II)  
[Reading: Pratt, *Towards the Decivilizing of Punishment?*, JS-104 Reader]

### Week 8 – Question Time/Recapitulation/Test

- Mon 10/15* Question Time and Recap  
[Reading: Garland, *Punishment and Modern Society*, Ch. 1/2/4/6/10]
- Wed 10/17* Test One: Five Short-Answer Questions [30% of total grade]

Week 9 – Visions from Inside

Mon 10/22 Movie: *Redemption. The Stan Tookie Williams Story*. 2004 (Intro/Part I)  
[Reading: Introduction to the movie]

Wed 10/24 Movie: *Redemption. The Stan Tookie Williams Story*. 2004 (Part II/Discussion)  
[Reading & Thinking: Questions about the movie]

Week 10 – Mass Imprisonment in the United States (Part I)

Mon 10/29 Mass Imprisonment in the US. In Search of Explanations?  
[Reading: Tonry, *Thinking about Crime*, JS-104 Reader]

Wed 10/31 The “Governing Through Crime” Hypothesis  
[Reading: Simon, *Governing Through Crime*, JS-104 Reader]

Week 11 – Mass Imprisonment in the United States (Part II)

Mon 11/05 The “Culture of Control” Hypothesis  
[Reading: Garland, *The Culture of High Crime Societies*, JS-104 Reader]

Wed 11/07 Ghetto and Prison: A Deadly Symbiosis?  
[Reading: Wacquant, *Deadly Symbiosis*, JS-104 Reader]

Week 12 – Mass Imprisonment in the United States (Part III)

Mon 11/12 No Lecture.

Wed 11/14 The “Prison Industrial Complex” Hypothesis  
[Reading: Davis, *Globalism and the Prison Industrial Complex*, JS-104 Reader]

Week 13 – Visions from Inside

Mon 11/19 Movie: *Brubaker*. 1980 (Intro/Part I)  
[Reading: Introduction to the movie]

Wed 11/21 Movie: *Brubaker*. 1980 (Part II/Discussion)  
[Reading & Thinking: Questions about the movie]

Week 14 – Mass Imprisonment in the United States (Part IV)

Mon 11/26 The “Political Economy of Punishment” Hypothesis  
[Reading: Beckett & Western, *Governing Social Marginality*, JS-104 Reader]

Wed 11/28 The War on Immigrants across Europe and the US  
[Reading: Wacquant, *Suitable Enemies*, JS-104 Reader]

Week 15 – The Prison Inside-Out

Mon 12/03 Women and Prisons  
[Reading: Comfort, *Papa’s House*, JS-104 Reader]

Wed 12/05 Toward a New Abolitionism?  
[Reading: Davis, *Racialised Punishment & Prison Abolition*, JS-104 Reader]

Week 16 – Final Test and Hand in Paper

Mon 12/10 Test Two: Five Short-Answer Questions [30% of total grade]  
Hand in Final Paper [40% of total grade]

## Student Conduct

*Attendance:* According to University policy F69-24 "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading". Attendance is taken at each class meeting using sign-in sheets.

*Etiquette:* While in class please turn your cell phone off. If your laptop has wireless access you may use it to access information relevant to the discussion, but please do not read emails, newspapers or other non-class related material during class. Students are encouraged to speak up with questions and comments, and to respond to points raised by other students. However, the maintenance of an effective discussion space in class requires all of us to act with respect for everyone else in the room.

## University Policies

### *Course Add/Drop Statement*

Instructors are permitted to drop students who fail to attend the first scheduled class meeting and who fail to inform the instructor prior to the second class meeting of the reason for any absence and their intention to continue in the class. Some instructors will drop students who do not meet the stated course prerequisites. However, instructors are not required to drop a student from their course. It is the student's responsibility to make sure classes are dropped. You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at: [http://sa.sjsu.edu/student\\_conduct](http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct)

### *Academic Integrity Statement*

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work without the use of any outside resources. Academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment which practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: [http://sa.sjsu.edu/student\\_conduct](http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct). To better understand plagiarism and to aid you in making sure that you are not plagiarizing, please see the instructor and visit: <http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm>

### *American with Disabilities Act*

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

### *Student Rights and Responsibilities*

The full statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities may be found at: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/s90-5.htm>