

Dr. R. Roberg
MH 512

(408) 924-2941
Office Hours:

AJ 159 - 2 Senior Seminar

Course Description

The identification, discussion and analysis of selected problems in the criminal justice system. Prerequisites are AJ 105 and 100 W or equivalent, and senior standing. A selected criminal justice issue will be explored through the preparation of a policy paper. Three units.

Course Objectives

To provide the student with an opportunity to critically analyze contemporary problems and policies regarding the criminal justice system through in-class discussion of assigned readings, and the preparation and presentation of a policy paper.

Text

Walker, S. (2001). *Sense and Nonsense About Crime and Drugs*, 5th ed. (Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth).

Course Requirements

1. **Participation:** come to class prepared to **discuss** and **critique** assigned readings; prepare a *Most Important Topics (MITs)* list describing **three** critical topics per chapter.
2. **Policy paper:** prepare a **literature review/policy analysis** paper of an *approved* criminal justice topic; must not have been previously written or researched.
3. **Presentation:** a **formal** class presentation of the policy paper, including topic outline and reference page.

Student Evaluation

Policy paper/Presentation = 50%
Participation = 40%
MITs=10%

Note: A **grade of C-** must be earned to fulfill this course requirement.

Class Participation

In order to participate, one must be in attendance. Attendance per se, however, *is not* considered to be participation, and cannot factor into the grade. Actual discussion indicating knowledge of the subject matter and/or asking probing questions *is* considered to be participation. This means that assigned materials must be read and "digested" prior to each class meeting.

As noted above, a participation requirement is that as you read each chapter you identify and describe three (3) Most Important Topics (MITs) that can be discussed in class. The description of each MIT will be at least one full paragraph (approximately 3 to 4 sentences). In this way, you will always be able to participate on any given day. The MITs will be collected **randomly in class** (i.e., if you are not in class on that day you cannot turn them in), and will be factored in as a part of your participation grade.

Participation will be assessed on a daily basis and a final participation grade will be determined at the end of the class. Points will be assigned as follows:

- 4 points= at least two intelligent or insightful comments on the topic.
- 2 points= at least one intelligent or insightful comment on the topic.
- 0 points= absent from class or no comments.

Policy Paper

A policy paper on a justice-related topic (on which you have not previously written) will be required. You, in consultation with the instructor, will choose an appropriate topic. The paper will review the empirical literature on the topic, and will formulate new or improved policies based on the empirical evidence.

The goal of the paper is to establish relationships between and among important variables and to draw conclusions and policy implications based on these empirical relationships.

Paper Requirements

1. **12 to 18 pages in length** (not including reference pages and appendices). Note: A page is considered to be 250 words in length; thus, the paper must be a **minimum of 3,000 words**.

2. Include a **minimum of five (5) total references**; at least **two (2)** of which must be **empirical** in nature (that is, you are looking for significant relationships between and among variables), and reviewed from a **research journal**. The articles must be contemporary in nature, since 1995. **All empirical journal articles must be selected from the *CJ Abstracts*.**

Internet references may not be used except from government sources like the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) or the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), and these **do not** count as empirical references; generally, government sources are used for descriptive purposes.

3. **American Psychological Association (APA)** citation style is to be used. This includes a **References Cited** section at the end of the paper containing **all the sources** used in the paper.

4. The paper **must** be organized according to the **Paper Format** (i.e., Parts I, II, and III) described on the last page. The paper **must** also be written in **formal English** (i.e., avoid contractions such as can't, don't, won't, and abbreviations such as vs., etc). **Spelling and grammar** are also considered important; too many of these errors will lead to a mandatory grade point deduction (see below).

Based on these criteria, it is imperative that you **Proofread** the paper (more than once?) prior to handing it in.

5. **No plagiarism** or prior work on topic (this will result in a failing grade).

6. **Meeting minimum requirements 1 through 5** means that the paper is at the C level. **Higher grades** require additional empirical and total number of references.

Grade Point Deductions: A **one grade penalty** will be assessed if requirements 2 through 4 are not met; a **failing grade** will be assigned if the paper does not meet requirements 1 or 5.

Paper Presentation

A **formal presentation** of approximately 20 minutes is also required (in order that others may share in the knowledge you have gained). **3 X 5 or 5 X 7 Note Cards are required** and the presentation will be from the podium (i.e., **do not** read from your paper). A brief outline (1-2 pages) and reference page of sources used will be distributed to the class prior to the presentation.

A question and answer period will follow the presentation; queries regarding the paper (e.g., research studies and findings, new policies and programs, etc.) will be asked by the class and instructor. The

presentation and discussion is considered an extension of the paper and is not normally graded; however, in extreme cases (either good or bad), *it may* impact the overall paper grade by one-half point. Also, **discussion** at this time is considered to be an important part of class participation and will contribute to the overall participation score.

Due Dates

Final papers are due on the last class meeting (see schedule). Papers can only be late if **excusable** (e.g., sickness, tragedy, etc.); otherwise, **one grade point per day late** will be deducted—no exceptions.

It is strongly encouraged that you turn in a partial paper (**limited to 4 pages**) for **early review** (see schedule). **Contents will include** one empirical study review and references only. The paper will be critiqued and handed back for final completion.

Paper Format

The paper **must be organized** according to the following format. Grade points will be deducted if the paper format is not precisely followed.

Part I Introduction

This section includes a relatively brief introduction to the topic; may include history of subject, relevance, concepts, definitions, and current policies.

Part II Review of Literature

This section primarily describes the research on the subject, and focuses on defining the major relationships (statistical) between and among important study variables (e.g., the relationship between a treatment program and recidivism). **Each empirical study will be** described with respect to:

- **Study Design** (survey, experimental, observation)
- **Sampling Method** (50 inmates, randomly chosen)
- **Variables Measured:**
 - *Independent* (recidivism) and *Dependent* (treatment program)
 - *Control* (age, race, gender, IQ, crime) and/or *Intervening* (motivation, officer style)
- **Results or Findings** (stat. sig. relationship between recidivism and treatment program)
- **Limitations** (variables for which study did not control; generalizability, etc.)

In this section, **each study reviewed** (i.e., design, sampling, variables, results and limitations) must be described separately.

It should also be noted that some research is more **valid** and **reliable** than other research; that is, the better **controlled studies**, which will receive the bulk of your attention. For instance, **academic journals** such as *Criminology*, *Crime & Delinquency*, *Justice Quarterly*, *Policing*, *Police Quarterly*, or the *Journal of Criminal Justice*, include empirical research while practitioner journals such as *Federal Probation* and *Police Chief* include program descriptions.

Part III Conclusions and Policy Implications

Overall conclusions of the studies reviewed are first drawn. **From these conclusions** the need for change and revisions with respect to **new or revised policies** are made. Such changes and revisions should be based on a realistic assessment of what can be accomplished with respect to budget, time, and resource constraints.

Class Schedule

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Jan. 23	Introduction: class prerequisites, participation, and policy paper.
Jan. 28 & 30	Introduction continued Policy Paper: Delimiting topic; CJ Abstracts; Paper Format Walker: Preface; Chaps. 1 & 2
Feb. 4 & 6	Discussion: Individual Paper Topics and Paper Examples Walker: Chaps. 3 & 4
Feb. 11 & 13	Discussion: Paper Examples and Questions <i>Determine Individual Topic Meetings</i> Walker: Chaps. 5 & 6
Feb. 18 & 20	Individual Topic Meetings Required: Working title and one empirical reference
Feb. 25 & 27	Individual Topic Meetings
Mar 4 & 6	Individual Topic Meetings
Mar 11 & 13	Individual Topic Meetings
Mar 18 & 20	Walker: Chaps. 7-9
Mar 25 & 27	SPRING BREAK
April 1 & 3	Walker: Chaps. 10-12
April 8 & 10	Walker: Chaps, 13 & 14 Determine Presentation Order
April 15 & 17	<i>Paper Presentations Begin on the 15h</i> <i>(Outline & Reference pages distributed by presenters)</i>
April 22 & 24	Paper Presentations <i>Early Review Papers due on 22nd</i>
April 29/May1	Paper Presentations Early papers returned on 29th
May 6 & 8	Paper Presentations
May13	Paper Presentations <i>Final papers Due</i>

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Request for Clerical Services

Name: Roberg Course/Other: AJ 159 Date: 1/18
 Xerox Typing Other Number of Copies: 25 Date Needed: 1/21

Options: (Please check all that apply)

- Single Sided
- Double Sided
- Stapled
- Blank sheet at back
- Exams/Confidential
- Transparency

Paper Colors:

- White
- Yellow
- Blue
- Coral

- Orange
- Green
- Pink
- Fluorescent Pink
- Other _____

Special Instructions:

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