

Spring 2005

JUSTICE STUDIES 159
SENIOR SEMINAR

Instructor: Mona Lynch
office / phone: MH 513 / 924-2958
e-mail: mlynch@email.sjsu.edu
Class meetings: T-Th. 1:30-2:45 PM, MH 526
Office hours: T 3:00-5:30 PM; Th. 9-10:30 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The guiding conception behind this course is that it should serve as a senior capstone seminar for Justice Studies majors. It is designed as a seminar where students are offered the opportunity (in fact, they are required) to discuss their own understandings and educated opinions of justice policy with their peers in an interactive classroom context that is guided and moderated, but not controlled, by the professor. The assigned readings are not to be taken as authoritative gospel, but rather as points of departure for critical discussion. A wide range of viewpoints will be welcomed. Vigorous discussion will be strongly encouraged (within the limits of civility). The goal is for the students to exercise what they have learned at SJSU as emerging scholars in this field and to extend themselves as independent thinkers in conversation with their peers.

PREREQUISITES: Senior standing, successful completion of JS 105 and JS 100W. A minimum grade of C- in this course is required for graduation. In order to ensure that this course can serve its function as a capstone senior research seminar, the enrollment cap will be enforced.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Class participation: Students must attend class and come prepared to discuss and critique the assigned readings. Students must bring to class a minimum of two to three questions for discussion regarding the readings **typed** on a sheet of paper that will be submitted to the professor at the beginning of the class (students should bring another copy of their questions for their own reference during the discussion).
- 2) A formal class presentation of research & policy analysis on an approved topic in justice policy. The presenter must distribute an outline of the presentation and a list of sources at the beginning of the presentation. This requirement is described in detail below.
- 3) A research/policy paper of a minimum of 3000 words (not counting the bibliography, appendices, or any footnotes or endnotes) to be submitted no later than the final exam date of this class. This requirement is described in detail below.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Walker, Samuel (2001). *Sense and Nonsense about Crime and Drugs: A Policy Guide*
Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Available at Spartan and Roberts bookstores.

GRADING & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Only legitimately excused missed quizzes/exams can be made up. Only under extreme and unavoidable emergency circumstances will you be able to make up an exam for a legitimate excuse if you have NOT given notice of your absence before the actual scheduled exam period. You may only make up 1 scheduled test during the semester, so if you are not in attendance for more than 1 scheduled exam or quiz, you will receive zero points for any additional missed exams. Missed quizzes and midterms will be taken on the final scheduled day of class during the class period. The make-up tests may be in a different format than the original exams. The missed final period will be arranged if necessary, and may also be in a different format than the original final.

The assignment deadlines are FIRM deadlines. **NO LATE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED** unless there is a documented emergency that absolutely prevents you from turning it in. My policy for what constitutes legitimate excuses generally include the following: Your own serious illness or injury (documented by a physician); a documented death in your immediate family; unavoidable, documented, schedule conflict for SCHOOL related purposes (i.e., required by athletic team to be on the road). Computer / printer breakdowns are generally NOT legitimate emergencies. You are responsible for knowing any schedule changes for assignment due dates that were announced in class, even if you were not in attendance. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DUE DATE.**

Please familiarize yourself with the SJSU policy on academic dishonesty, available in pdf format at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/academic.html>. It is also published in the SJSU print catalog. Use those rules and definitions to guide your conduct in this class. Any work that is produced in violation of this policy will **at minimum** receive no credit, and will be referred to the office of judicial affairs.

Your final grade for the course will be based upon your performances on the in-class participation, the discussion questions, class presentation, and the final paper. The maximum possible points possible for each of these requirements is as follows:

Class participation:	300 pts.
Discussion questions:	100 pts.
Class presentation with documents (abstract, outline, references):	300 pts.
Final policy paper:	300 pts.

A range = 900 points or above

B range = 800-899 points

C range = 700-799 points

D range = 600-699 points

F = 599 points or below

Class Presentation: During the latter weeks of the term, each student will be required to make a formal presentation of approximately 20 minutes in length. This will be a preliminary presentation of the material that the student will ultimately develop into the required course research paper (see below). Each student will meet with the instructor

during the middle weeks of the term to submit an abstract that poses a research question and to develop a rough outline and a direction for further reading. The presentation is to be directed to an audience of similarly trained peers, much like a presentation in a professional setting (formal professional suits, ties, etc., are not required, but a professional-scholarly demeanor, clear organization, and coherent style ARE required). Each student must begin the presentation by handing out to the rest of the class an outline of the presentation, with a title, an order of topics, and a preliminary list of sources. The presentation should NOT simply be read, but should be presented in an expository fashion, working from three by five note cards or a detailed outline, with plenty of eye contact with the audience. At the end of the presentation, the presenter should accept questions from the audience and should take note of the questions, so that the final draft of the course paper can address the issues raised in the questions posed by the audience (some presenters may prefer to tape record the question and answer period). If a student commits to a presentation date and then does not show up that day, their presentation will be deferred to the end of the term (which poses the very real problem that they miss being able to present at all – an outcome that would have serious consequences for the course grade).

Course Paper: The paper should be at least 3,000 words in length. A typical page of double-spaced 12-point type has approximately 250 words, so a typical paper will be between 12 and 18 pages in length, not including the title page, the notes, references, or bibliography. The paper should be based upon a minimum of 5 scholarly references (books and/or journal articles). Good places to look are Criminal Justice Abstracts, PsycInfo, Sociological Abstracts, and the Lexis-Nexis full-text legal research database (law reviews only on this site), accessible through the SJSU library portal at: <http://www.sjlibrary.org/research/databases/index.htm>.

The paper MUST employ the American Psychological Association citation style and format. The APA guidelines can be found at: <http://www.wooster.edu/psychology/apa-crib.html>

Spelling, punctuation, and general logical clarity of expression will be taken into account in evaluating the paper. It is strongly recommended that each student have a peer read the paper at least once for clarity, spelling, and correct form. Given the nature of this senior seminar, the closest attention must be given to the originality of the work and any hint of plagiarism must be guarded against.

The paper must be structured as follows:

Introduction: This section will include a brief introduction to the topic and a framing of the research question; it may include a history of the topic, a description of its current relevance, conceptual or definitional debates, and policy importance.

Review of Literature: This section describes the state of research on the topic. It focuses on summarizing and evaluating the major sources that the paper will rely upon for its analysis of the topic. This section should consider empirical and theoretical significance. Students should draw upon their training in JS 105 as they describe and assess the strengths and weaknesses of each study they cite in their papers.

Conclusions and Policy Implications: Overall conclusions from the literature, suggestions for policy, socio-political relevance and importance.

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS / ASSIGNMENTS / DUE DATES:

January 27: Introductions; class prerequisites; plagiarism questions; policy paper preview; discussion of research resources; collection of students' names and email addresses.

February 1: Read and discuss Walker, preface and chapter 1.

February 3: **NO CLASS!**

February 8: Read and discuss Chapters 2 & 3.

February 10: Read and discuss Chapter 4.

February 15: Read and discuss Chapter 5.

February 17: Read and discuss Chapter 6.

February 22: Each student should be prepared to offer a brief description of her paper topic in class.

February 24: Read & discuss Chapter 7; schedule individual meetings for coming weeks.

March 1: Read & discuss Chapter 8; begin individual meetings with professor on paper topics, references, and structure.

March 3: Read & discuss Chapters 9; individual meetings with professor, continued.

March 8: Read & discuss Chapter 10; individual meetings with professor, continued.

March 10: Read & discuss Chapter 11; individual meetings with instructor, continued.

March 15 and 17: Individual meetings with professor; schedule the order of presentations for coming weeks

March 22: Presentations.

March 24: Presentations.

March 29 and 31: Spring break – no class..

April 5: Presentations.

April 7: Presentations.

April 12: Presentations.

April 14: Presentations.

April 19: Presentations.

April 21: Presentations.

April 26: Presentations.

April 28: Presentations.

May 3: Presentations

May 5: Presentations.

May 10: Presentations.

May 12: Presentations 26.

Final exam date, May 19: Final paper due.
