

JS 159: Senior Seminar

Course Syllabus
M, W: 9:00-12:15

Professor: Mark E. Correia, Ph.D.
Office: MacQuarrie Hall 521
Hours: W: 8:00-8:50
Telephone: 924-2941
Email: markcorreia@mac.com

Course Description

The primary purpose of this course is to identify, analyze and discuss selected problems in the criminal justice system.

This course will provide the student with an opportunity to critically analyze contemporary problems and policies regarding the criminal justice system. This will be achieved through in-class discussion of the assigned readings, as well as the preparation of and presentation of a paper on criminal justice policy.

Required Materials

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

Suggested Materials

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (1994). 4th Edition. (Or any other manual on APA writing style). These are available in the reference section of the bookstore or can be found online at www.apastyle.org.

Course Requirements

Lectures: Since this is a capstone course, lectures will be interactive; that is, students will be required to participate throughout the course. The lectures will be based on the material listed by the corresponding date.

Participation: While attendance is not required (you can't participate if you are not here), it is assumed that you are prepared and willing to answer course-related questions when called upon and, when appropriate, to take part in class discussions. You will be required to discuss and critique the assigned readings and to prepare a *Most Important Topics (MIT)* list of 3 topics per chapter.

Obviously, in order to participate, you must be in attendance, however, merely attending does not constitute participation and is not factored into your grade. Actual discussion showing your knowledge of the subject matter and/or asking probing, intelligent questions is considered participation (note: this means that you should have read the material prior to each class meeting).

The participation requirement requires that you read each chapter and identify three *MITs* that can be discussed in class—these are topics that you believe to be particularly insightful and important. For each *MIT*, you will need to both describe your topic and explain why you have chosen this topic. In terms of description, you will need a minimum of one paragraph that utilizes key words and phrases that help to identify the topic. As for explanation, you will need to defend why you have chosen the topic. The purpose of the *MITs* is to assist you in participating in class discussion. I will randomly collect the *MITs* in class—hence, if you are not in class, you cannot turn them in. Your *MITs* for each chapter will be on separate pages and points will be based on the number of insightful comments for each topic.

Policy Paper: You will be required to prepare a paper on criminal justice policy (which must be approved by the professor). This 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 policy implications based on these relationships. This paper must be an original paper written specifically for this course. The paper should not exceed 15 pages, must be double-spaced and should be completed in APA style, 12-point Times New Roman Font. Deviations from these requirements are not suggested and will result in a failing grade.

Presentation: A formal presentation (15-20 minutes) of your policy paper will occur on the date's outlined in the syllabus. The purpose of the presentation is to describe the research reviewed with respect to methodology, findings, limitations and policy implications. Your presentation may include the use of note cards, charts and graphs. It is strongly suggested that you do not read your presentation to the class, this will result in a failing grade. You are required to distribute a brief outline (1-2 pages) and a reference page to the class prior to the presentation. You should be prepared to answer questions regarding your paper after the presentation.

Email: I will accept assignments via email according to the following protocol. **Deviations from this protocol will not be accepted and your email will be bounced back to you:**

1. ***Subject Line:*** This line will contain the student's name, course and the assignment number. For example, Mark Correia, JS 159, Policy Paper.
2. ***Format:*** All papers sent electronically must be saved in .doc or .rtf. I will not accept papers saved in .wps, .wpd or pasted into an email.
3. ***Email Address:*** markcorreia@mac.com.
4. ***Confirmation:*** I will send out a confirmation receipt for those emails with assignments that I have received within 24hrs. If you do not receive a confirmation, your assignment was not received.
5. ***Responsibility:*** It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the assignment is properly attached to the email. If the assignment is not attached and received by the due date, the assignment will be considered late.

Grades: Course grades are based on the criteria listed below. Please note that a grade of C- must be earned to fulfill this course requirement.

Policy Paper	40%
Paper Presentation	10%
Participation	30%
MITs	20%

Note to Students: I have listed my email address and office hours for your convenience. At all times, I will be available via email. If you cannot make my office hours, nor have access to email, please set up an appointment. While I may be in my office at other times, I may not be available to meet.

Course Outline

Week #1

June 20: Course introduction and syllabus overview

June 22: Thinking About Crime

Required Reading: Walker: Preface and Chapter 1

Week #2

June 27: Still Thinking About Crime

Required Reading: Walker: Chapters 2, 3 and 4

June 29: Get Tough On Crime: The Conservative Attack

Required Reading: Walker: Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8

Week #3

July 4: NO CLASS

July 6: The Middle Ground

Required Reading: Walker: Chapters 9 and 10

Week #4

July 11: Individual Topic Meetings

July 13: Individual Topic Meetings

Week #5

July 18: Reform: The Liberal Prescription

Required Reading: Walker: Chapters 11 and 12

July 20: Sense and Nonsense About Drugs

Wrapping Things Up

Required Reading: Walker: Chapters 13 and 14

Policy Paper Presentations

Week #6

July 25: Policy Paper Presentations

July 27: Policy Paper Presentations

Final Paper Due by 12:00 p.m.

Syllabus Addendum

Grading: In order to receive a grade for this course, all the course requirements must be completed. Failure to complete them will result in a failing grade for the course.

Academic Dishonesty: The “I got caught cheating” policy for this class is swift, severe, and certain: that is, if you cheat, chances are very good that you will be caught, then publicly shamed, and punished with a failing grade for the course. In addition, plagiarism is absolutely unacceptable. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please contact the professor—while many students are ignorant of this offense, ignorance is not an excuse. I have several speeding tickets that prove this point!

Grades: Paper and course grades may be disputed at the instructor’s convenience (or during office hours). It is important to note, however, that upon review, the instructor reserves the right to increase as well as decrease the grade in question. Late papers will not be accepted nor any extra credit provided.

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones, pages, PDA’s or any other electronic device that “makes noise”. While I commend those of you who have mastered text messaging, the use of these devices during class is disruptive and will not be tolerated.

Classroom Etiquette: Class motto: “Treat others as you think they would like to be treated”. Yes, this is a spin on the ever popular, but not so empathetic phrase. This is a time to open your minds to new ideas, to explore new concepts, so please take advantage of this opportunity. Further, please be respectful of others and show them common courtesy. I firmly believe that the learning process is enriched by discussion, but damaged by arguments. Respect and professionalism are the guiding principles of this class.

Written Work: I understand that many of our students have very busy life’s, filled with work and family obligations. I understand that “school work” is difficult to fit in to an already full schedule. With this said, I do expect quality work from everyone. Write every paper as though it is your best paper ever and be proud of your paper and work that you complete for this seminar.

As a side note: I am well aware of the websites that offer papers to students and have software that allows me to compare papers I receive to the thousands of databases of papers that exist. Trust me, it is not worth your effort, chances are, I will find out.

+/- Grading: This course will be using the +/- system on final grades based on the following percentages:

95-100:	A
90-94:	A-
87-89:	B+
84-86:	B
80-83:	B-
77-79:	C+
74-76:	C
70-73:	C-
67-69:	D+
64-66:	D
60-63:	D-
0-60:	F

Paper Requirements

1. 12 to 15 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** and a maximum of 3,750. **Required font:** Times New Roman with a 12 font.
2. Include a **minimum** of five (5) total references with a **minimum** of two (2) which must be **empirical** in nature; that is, articles from research journals that identify significant relationships between and among variables. These are minimum requirements; **higher grades** will include additional citations. Note: Internet references **may not** be used as one of the required cites. Internet cites must follow the APA format.
3. The articles must be contemporary in nature and published within the last **seven** years. It is strongly suggested that you use the *CJ Abstracts* to find your sources.
4. **American Psychological Association** (APA) citation style must be used. This includes a *References Cited* section at the end of the paper containing **all** the sources used in the paper. No other style will be accepted.
5. The paper must be organized according to the *Paper Format* section (i.e., Parts I, II, and III) described on the last page.
6. The paper must be written in formal English (i.e., avoid contractions such as can't, don't, won't, and abbreviations such as vs.), using proper punctuation, tenses and so on. Spelling and grammar are also considered important; too many of these errors will lead to a mandatory one grade point deduction. Based on these criteria, it is imperative that you **proofread** the paper (more than once) prior to handing it in.
7. **No plagiarism or prior work** on topic.
8. The research must be **described in your own words**; not simply paraphrased or through the use of lengthy quotes from the articles authors (of course, direct quotes—which should be few—must be in quotation marks).
9. **Paper Grade:** Meeting minimum requirements 1 through 8 means that the paper is at least at the C level. **Grade Point Deductions:** A **failing grade** will be assigned if requirements 1, 2, 7, or 8 are not met. Grade point deductions may be assigned if the other requirements are not met.
10. **Common errors include:** (1) APA format not followed (in paper or reference section); (2) cites in the paper do not match those in the reference section; (3) inadequate description of studies; (4), weak policy implications; and (5), policy implications not matching the research reviewed.

Paper Format

The paper **must be organized** according to the following format:

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:

Authors last names

Type of study (e.g., survey, experimental, observation)

Sample (e.g., random, snowball, questionnaire, personal interview)

Variables Measured (e.g., independent and dependent variables.; control variables; for example, age, race, gender, education, etc.)

Findings: (statistically significant relationships between and among study variables).

Limitations: (variables for which study did or did not control)

In this section, each empirical study will be described separately.

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

Part III Policy Implications

From the research results, the need for new and/or improved policies will be described. These policy changes and revisions must be based on a realistic assessment of what can be accomplished with respect to budget, time, resource constraints, and politics. This suggests that the policies should be aimed specifically at program developments with respect to the research reviewed.