

Winter 2007 *JS 159 Senior Seminar: Contemporary Problems* MacQuarrie Hall 526
Class Period: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 11:00 to 3:30, January 2– 18, 2007
Professor Richard Perry, J.D., Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Class days 10:30 to 11:00, and after the class meeting period as needed

Catalog Course Description: The identification, discussion, and analysis of selected problems in the justice system. A major term paper on a selected topic is required.

NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS WILL MOST LIKELY BE ADJUSTED SLIGHTLY ONCE THE COURSE ENROLLMENT HAS BEEN FINALIZED IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE SCHEDULING OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Course Prerequisites: Senior standing, AJ 105 and AJ 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.

Other: The regulations in the current SJSU Catalog will be followed in regard to Add/Drop policies, Incomplete grades, and all questions of plagiarism and other issues of academic conduct. Emergency evacuation routes and procedures are posted adjacent to the classroom.

Course Add/Drop Policy

For information regarding adding and dropping a course, please refer to the Schedule of Instructions, Policies, and Procedures:

<http://info.sjsu.edu/cgi-bin/socfiles?command=ftok&arg=soc-spring-narrative>

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.*

Academic Integrity Statement

In accordance with University policy this course strives to uphold academic honesty. "Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs." A student may be reprimanded, receive a failing grade on their evaluation instrument (exam, paper, etc.), have their grade lowered, or receive an "F" in the course, and referred to administrative sanctions if they are suspected of plagiarism or cheating. The policy on academic integrity can be found at:

<http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>

Departmental Policy on Plagiarism

All students **are required to read** the following academic integrity policies. You must also go to <<http://130.65.109.143/plagiarism/index.htm>> for the academic policy and the plagiarism tutorial (<<http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org>> and read each document in its entirety. Your instructor may require you to document that you have read these policies by either electronic record or by handing in a signed, dated printout, of the policies and tutorials.

Any cheating or plagiarism will be treated as a very serious offense. Documentation of any case of violation of these policies will result in academic sanctions and will be placed in the student's record. The documentation of any violations will be kept on record with the Office of Judicial affairs, and may result in administrative disciplinary action. Furthermore, these violations may be discovered in any background checks for employment and may restrict violators from applying for jobs in the future.

Departmental Compliance with the Americans 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 your professor as soon as possible, during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires students with disabilities requesting accommodations to register with the Disability Resource Center in order to establish a record of their disability."

Required Textbook: Samuel Walker, *Sense and Nonsense about Crime and Drugs: A Policy Guide*, 6th edition (2006) is available at the campus bookstore.

Course Requirements:

1. Class participation: Students must come to class 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). These questions will be used to guide class discussion and to assess the student's grasp of the reading. They will not be given a letter grade. These questions may NOT be handed in after the beginning of the class period when they are due. Students should bring a second copy of their questions for their own reference during class discussion. Students should keep a copy of each week's questions in their JS 159 course writing portfolio. This portfolio, including all course writing must, be submitted at the last course meeting.
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.
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 meeting of this class. This paper should be submitted along with all other written materials from the course, in the student's writing portfolio.

Student Evaluation:

Class participation:	30%
Discussion questions:	10%
Class presentation with handout(s) (abstract, outline, references):	30%
Final policy paper:	30%

Participation: The guiding conception behind this course is that it should serve as a senior capstone seminar for Justice Studies majors. This 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. At the end of the semester, the professor will review each student's file of discussion questions as the first step in assigning a grade for participation (discussion questions may not be submitted late).

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 PsycInfo, Sociological Abstracts, Criminal Justice Abstracts, and the Lexis-Nexis full-text legal research database accessible through the SJSU library portal.

It is a departmental requirement that the research paper MUST employ the American Psychological Association citation style and format as you have been required to learn in the prerequisite class, JS 100WS. The APA guidelines can be found in your JS 100W texts and a summary 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:

- I. **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.
- II. **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 (and of the study's data) that they cite in their papers.
- III. **Conclusions and Policy Implications:** Overall conclusions from the literature, suggestions for policy, socio-political relevance and importance.

In order to earn credit, the term paper MUST be submitted BOTH electronically AND as a hard copy on paper.

Course Schedule:

Tuesday Jan. 2: Introductions; class prerequisites; writing portfolios; plagiarism questions; policy paper preview; discussion of research resources; collection of students' names and email addresses. Review and discussion of leading concepts of criminal justice scholarship.

Wednesday Jan 3: Read and discuss Walker, preface and chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. Instruction in library database research and APA style. Discussion of possible research topics.

Thursday Jan. 4: Submit first rough formulations of paper topics, outlines, and lists of scholarly citations. Read and discuss Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Tuesday Jan. 9: Read and discuss Chapter 9 and 10. Individual meetings with professor to discuss papers.

Wednesday Jan. 10: Discussion of Walker chapters 13 and 14. Individual meetings with professor to discuss papers.

Thursday Jan. 11: First set of individual paper presentations, assigned alphabetically by last name.

Tuesday Jan. 16: Second set of individual paper presentations, assigned alphabetically by last name.

Wednesday Jan, 17: Third set of individual presentations, assigned alphabetically by last name.

Thursday Jan. 18: Individual Paper Draft Consultations

Monday January 22: All final papers to be submitted, along with other course writings, in individual portfolios.