

**San José State University**  
**Justice Studies Department**  
**“Advanced Seminar in Justice”**  
**JS-216 (section 01 #27635)**  
**Spring 2011**

**Instructor:** Alessandro De Giorgi

**Office Location:** McQuarrie Hall: 508A

**Telephone:** (408) 924.2967

**Email:** [degiorgi@casa.sjsu.edu](mailto:degiorgi@casa.sjsu.edu)

**Office Hours:** MON: 10.30am-1.30pm  
WED: 7pm-8pm (online)

**Class Days/Time:** M: 4.30pm-7.15pm

**Classroom:** MH-526

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Identification of contemporary areas in justice related to theory, empirical research, and policy analysis, leading to comprehensive examinations.

Prerequisite: 21 units in residency, instructor consent and classified graduate standing. Students must have a cumulative ‘B’ average (3.0) in the following courses: JS 201, JS 202, JS 203, and JS 204. Course cannot be repeated.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This advanced seminar offers a critical analysis of recent transformations in American penal politics, with particular reference to the war on crime, the war on drugs, and the rise of mass-incarceration. More specifically, throughout the semester students will read, analyze, discuss, and criticize three groundbreaking works in the field of “punishment and society” studies, which have described the American punitive turn of the last three decades respectively as the emergence of a new rationality of government, as the rise of a neoliberal paradigm of class control, and as the construction of a colorblind system of racial domination. Participants will also engage in theoretically grounded scholarly critiques of specific policy developments, legislative measures, and institutional changes in the field of American penal politics.

## **CLASSROOM PROTOCOL**

*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.

## **DROPPING AND ADDING**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html). [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

## **REQUIRED READINGS:**

- 1) Wacquant, L. (2009) *Punishing the Poor. The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham NC: Duke University Press.
- 2) Simon, J. (2007) *Governing through Crime. How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 3) Alexander, M. (2010) *The New Jim Crow. Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.
- 4) Any readings distributed in class or in electronic format.

## RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS

PLEASE NOTE: *What follows should not be read as a list of ready-made titles for your research paper, but only as a catalogue of broad topics on which research papers can be specifically focused. The specification of a particular object for your paper – as well as of its theoretical perspective, methodological approach, historical and/or geographical context – is part of your research process itself.*

- 1) THREE STRIKES LAWS
- 2) ORDER-MAINTENANCE/QUALITY OF LIFE POLICING
- 3) GANG INJUNCTIONS/CURFEWS
- 4) DRUG COURTS
- 5) PRISONER REENTRY
- 6) THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF PAROLE IN CALIFORNIA
- 7) RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN THE USA
- 8) VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENTS
- 9) TRUTH IN SENTENCING
- 10) THE DEATH PENALTY TODAY
- 11) FELON DISENFRANCHISEMENT LAWS
- 12) WELFARE BANS FOR DRUG OFFENDERS
- 13) THE USE AND MISUSE OF PLEA BARGAINING
- 14) HEALTH CARE IN CALIFORNIA PRISONS
- 15) JUVENILE TRANSFER TO CRIMINAL COURT
- 16) RACIAL PROFILING IN POLICING
- 17) PRISON GANGS
- 18) EFFECTS OF IMPRISONMENT ON THE LABOR MARKET
- 19) THE GUN CONTROL CONTROVERSY

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

1) IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS/DEBATE	<i>Ongoing</i> (in class)	20%
2) IN-CLASS TEST I (2 questions)	3/7/2011 (in class)	20%
3) IN-CLASS TEST II (2 questions)	4/11/2011 (in class)	20%
4) RESEARCH PAPER	5/9/2011 (at home)	40%

## SPECIFICATIONS ON COURSEWORK

### 1) IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS/DEBATE (max 20 points / 20% of total grade)

Each week, participants will offer an in-class presentation based on the readings assigned for that week. Depending on the total number of participants, presentations will be given *individually* or *in couples* (the calendar of presentations will be available by the second week of class). In their presentations, students are required to summarize the reading, but also to elaborate some meaningful critique of its arguments, and to introduce three questions to be debated in class. At the end of each presentation there will be a debate, moderated by the instructor. Students will be graded both on their presentations and on their contribution to the debate.

### 2-3) IN-CLASS TESTS (max 40 points / 40% of total grade)

These tests will be done in class, and will consist of 2 questions about any of the topics/readings discussed in class. Each question will receive a grade ranging between 0 and 10 (for a maximum of 40 points). You are kindly requested to *come to class with your own blue-book* on the dates the test are due ( 3/7/2011 and 4/11/2011 ).

PLEASE NOTE: during the tests *no notes, books, or laptops* will be allowed.

### 4) RESEARCH PAPER (max 40 points / 40% of total grade)

Students are required to write a 12-15 pages long (computer typed, double spaced) research paper on a topic of their choice among the ones listed under the “Research Paper Topics” section of this syllabus (see above). In the paper, students are asked to explore a specific issue making use of at least 5 scholarly sources (i.e., articles from peer reviewed journals, or academic books) on the topic of their choice. Papers must be written in APA style. In writing their paper, students should organize their work according to the following structure:

- 1) *Introduction*: (relevance of the topic, brief history, current policies or public debates, etc.)
- 2) *Literature review*: (analysis of scholarly sources, evaluation of findings, critiques)
- 3) *Critical analysis*: (evaluation of current policies in terms of effectiveness, social justice, etc.)
- 4) *Conclusions*: (summary of main arguments presented, possible alternative policies).

The evaluation and grading of the research papers will be broadly based on the following:

Originality (relating ideas to issues; reflexivity and critique, etc.)

Comprehension (use of concepts; knowledge of theoretical perspectives, etc.)

Structure (presentation of ideas, appropriate use of sources; internal consistency, etc.)

Clarity (proof-reading; correct use of APA format, etc.)

PLEASE NOTE: In order to get credit for this assignment, students are requested to follow the timeline specified in the “Course Schedule” (see below).

## GRADING SYSTEM

<i>Grading System</i>	<i>Grade</i>
98-100	A+
94-97	A
91-93	A-
88-90	B+
84-87	B
81-83	B-
78-80	C+
74-77	C
71-73	C-
68-70	D+
64-67	D
61-63	D-
<60	F

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\\_affairs/Academic Integrity Policy S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf).

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html). Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

## CAMPUS POLICY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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 that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

## STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

### **LEARNING ASSISTANCE RESOURCE CENTER**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

### **SJSU WRITING CENTER**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

### **PEER MENTOR CENTER**

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop-in basis, no reservation required. [Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/).

**JS-216 *Advanced Seminar in Justice***  
 MON: 4.30 pm – 7.15 pm (MH-526)

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
1	M: 1/31	INTRODUCTION/SYLLABUS/COURSE REQUIREMENTS <u>Readings:</u> Wacquant, <i>Prologue</i> ; Simon, <i>Introduction</i> ; Alexander, <i>Introduction</i>
3	M: 2/7	PUNISHMENT AND GOVERNANCE (1) <u>Readings:</u> Simon, <i>Governing through Crime</i> , Chapters 1-2
4	M: 2/14	PUNISHMENT AND GOVERNANCE (2) <u>Readings:</u> Simon, <i>Governing through Crime</i> , Chapters 3-4
5	M: 2/21	PUNISHMENT AND GOVERNANCE (3) <u>Readings:</u> Simon, <i>Governing through Crime</i> , Chapters 5-6 <b>Research topic due (Title + Abstract)</b>
6	M: 2/28	PUNISHMENT AND GOVERNANCE (4) <u>Readings:</u> Simon, <i>Governing through Crime</i> , Chapters (7-8)
7	M: 3/7	<b>IN-CLASS TEST I</b> (2 Questions / 20% of total grade)
8	M: 3/14	PUNISHMENT AND RACIAL CONTROL (1) <u>Readings:</u> Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Chapters 1-2 <b>Paper outline + Bibliography due (1-2 pages)</b>
9	M: 3/21	PUNISHMENT AND RACIAL CONTROL (2) <u>Readings:</u> Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Chapters 3-4
10	M: 3/28	NO CLASS: SPRING RECESS
11	M: 4/4	PUNISHMENT AND RACIAL CONTROL (3) <u>Readings:</u> Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Chapters 5-6
12	M: 4/11	<b>IN-CLASS TEST II</b> (2 Questions / 20% of total grade)
13	M: 4/18	PUNISHMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM (1) <u>Readings:</u> Wacquant, <i>Punishing the Poor</i> , Chapters 1-2
14	M: 4/25	PUNISHMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM (2) <u>Readings:</u> Wacquant, <i>Punishing the Poor</i> , Chapters 3-4 <b>Research paper draft due (5-6 pages)</b>

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
15	M: 5/2	PUNISHMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM (3) <u>Readings:</u> Wacquant, <i>Punishing the Poor</i> , Chapters 5-6
16	M: 5/9	PUNISHMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM (4) <u>Readings:</u> Wacquant, <i>Punishing the Poor</i> , Chapters 8-“Theoretical Coda” <b>Research paper due (12-15 pages)</b>
17	M: 5/16	LAST DAY OF CLASS / FEEDBACK ON RESEARCH PAPERS