

**San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS208: Seminar in Punishment**

Fall 2013

Instructor:	Sara Benson
Office Location:	TBD
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Email:	sara.benson@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday, 4:30-7:15
Classroom:	CCB 101

Course Description

Examination of a range of penal ideas and practices; includes historical analysis of punishment, overview of theoretical perspectives and empirical social science research on punishment and alternative sanctions and implications for contemporary penal policy.

Course Overview

This course examines the history and future of punishment by drawing from the fields of feminist critical race and ethnic studies, political science, history, and law. The course begins with a critical theoretical account of prisons as sites of justice and as legal borders, and moves to an analysis of how the prison, as an institution of state violence, has come to be seen as a symbol of democracy. The course focuses on punishment practices in the U.S. through a translational lens, and therefore traces the legacies of U.S. punishment practices in Native American nations and migrant communities. The course also examines debates about the relationship between prisons and slavery as both an economic system and a peculiar legal status. In studying the legal conditions that the prison produces, the course also asks students to consider the relationship between domestic prison practices and forms of wartime punishment in the aftermath of 9/11.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

As a graduate seminar, the primary learning objective is to prepare M.A. students for doctoral training and policy work. In this interactive course, students will be responsible

for presenting the course readings in class, writing response papers, collectively mapping U.S. prisons, and crafting a final reflection piece that draws together the course readings into a component of the thesis project. Student success in the course is dependent on an active and critical engagement with the material.

SLO1: Upon successful completion of the weekly readings and engaged participation in seminar, students will be able to critically engage law and legal thinking.

SLO2: Upon successful completion of the course presentation assignments, students will be able to read scholarly critique as a conversation and to narrate that conversation through the literature.

SLO3: Upon successful completion of the final reflection paper and short midterm research paper, students will be able to identify the major historical and political shifts in punishment policy and to write comprehensive research essays that reflect deep thinking and critical modes of inquiry.

Classroom Protocol

Students should attend all class meetings. Students should be respectful of their colleagues in class discussions and during presentations. Cell phones and other disruptive devices should be turned off. Computers and other gadgets are not allowed in class.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Required Texts/Readings

Course Reader (available at Maple Press, 481 E San Carlos)

Textbooks (available online, on course reserve, and at the SJSU bookstore)

Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* ISBN 1583225811

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* ISBN 0679752552

Waziyatawin, *What Does Justice Look Like?* ISBN 0972188657

Scott Reynolds Nelson, *Steel Drivin' Man* ISBN 9780195341195

Benjamin Cloyd, *Haunted by Atrocity* ISBN 9780807136416

Jenny Lloyd et al, *Beyond Walls and Cages* ISBN 9780820344126

Victor M. Rios, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*
ISBN 9780814776384

Caleb Smith, *The Prison and the American Imagination* ISBN 9780300171495

Assignments

Assignment 1: Course Presentation 20% of grade

Students will present a synthesis of the readings for approximately 20-30 minutes at the beginning of each class meeting (introduce the author, synthesize the primary arguments, and offer some points of discussion). Students should not feel limited by these guidelines, but they are the basic essentials of an excellent grade. Students will select their presentation topics during the first class meeting. Depending on enrollment, these may be partner presentations. It is highly recommended that you write out your talk.

Assignment 2: Recorder Project 15% of grade

The week before the presentation, a student should plan to spend less than five minutes summarizing the discussion from the previous class. This gives us continuity as we move through the course.

Assignment 3: Prisons and Regionalism Project 20% of grade

In the early part of the course, our readings will focus on debates within prison studies about the origins of American prisons and their relationship to slavery and regionalism. Students will each choose a different “location” from which to examine the system of American punishment and compose a 5-page essay that briefly surveys or synthesizes the secondary literature, the available (or unavailable) historical archive, specific patterns of racialization and gender, and the various legal particularities of the location. On the day the written component is due, each student will offer a few comments (5 minutes) on their research. We will combine our research to collectively map appropriate levels of analysis in studies of American punishment.

Assignment 4: Film Analysis 15% of grade

For this assignment, students will each choose a different documentary or fictive film on a topic related to prison studies. After screening the film, students will write a 3-page response to the film’s major arguments. Please refer to *Are Prisons Obsolete?* for an account of the prison’s place in visual culture and contextualize your reading of the film within that relationship.

Assignment 5: Final Paper 30% of grade

In the final paper, students should select one or two major themes from the headings on the syllabus and write through that theme for approximately 20 pages. An excellent paper will cite at least 6 different readings. Depending on where students are in the M.A. Program, it is entirely appropriate to use this assignment to begin or revise the thesis paper, provided that course readings are cited and given serious consideration as part of the project.

Grading Policy

No late papers will be accepted.

97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+

83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
63-69	D
60-62	D-
<60	F

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires 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 [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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 your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy on Accessible Education

[Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (AEC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/>.

Student Technology Resources

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

JS208: Seminar in Punishment, Course Schedule

Sara M. Benson
Fall 2013

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Tuesday August 27	Course Introduction and Discussion of Presentations Film: <i>The Prison: A Sign of Democracy?</i>
2	Tuesday September 3	Prisons and Democracy (Discussion of Map Project) Angela Y. Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>
3	Tuesday September 10	The Social and Intellectual Labor of Punishment Michel Foucault, <i>Discipline and Punish</i>
4	Tuesday September 17	The Search for Origins: Prisons, Slavery, Regionalism Rebecca McLennan, <i>The Crisis of Imprisonment</i> (CR) Robert Perkinson, <i>Texas Tough</i> (CR) Marie Gottschalk, <i>The Prison and the Gallows</i> (CR) Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> (CR) Mona Lynch, <i>Sunbelt Prisons</i> (CR)
5	Tuesday September 24	Prisons and Settler Colonialism Luana Ross, selections from <i>Inventing the Savage</i> (CR) Sarah Deer, “Federal Indian Law and Violent Crime” (CR) Audra Simpson, “Subjects of Sovereignty” (CR) Mishuana Goeman, “From Place to Territories...” (CR) Waziyatawin, <i>What Does Justice Look Like?</i>
6	Tuesday October 1	Prisons, Slavery, Democracy Scott Reynolds Nelson, <i>Steel Drivin’ Man</i> Kim Gilmore, “Slavery and Prison” (CR) W.E.B. Du Bois, “Jesus Christ in Texas” (CR) <i>Ruffin v. Commonwealth [of Virginia]</i> , 1871 (CR)
7	Tuesday October 8	Memories of Punishment as War Benjamin Cloyd, <i>Haunted by Atrocity</i>
8	Tuesday October 15	A Map of the Prison (Assignment Three Project) No readings.
9	Tuesday October 22	Feminist Critical Prison Studies Angela Davis & Gina Dent, “Prison as a Border” (CR) Julia Sudbury, Introduction to <i>Global Lockdown</i> (CR) Cassandra Shaylor, “Neither Kind Nor Gentle” (CR) Martin Geer, “Human Rights and Wrongs...” (CR)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
10	Tuesday October 29	Prisons, Borders, Globalization (Choose films for assign 4) Jenny Lloyd et al, <i>Beyond Walls and Cages</i>
11	Tuesday November 5	Queering Prison Studies (Assignment 4 Film Project Due) Eric Stanley, <i>Captive Genders</i> (CR) Regina Kunzel, <i>Criminal Intimacy</i> (CR) Joey Mogul et al, <i>Queer (In)Justice</i> (CR) Prison Rape Elimination Act (CR)
12	Tuesday November 12	NO CLASS
13	Tuesday November 19	Youth & Criminalization Victor Rios, <i>Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys</i> Class Film Screening: <i>The Last Graduation</i>
14	Tuesday November 26	Domestic Punishment and the Global War on Terror Amy Kaplan, "Where Is Guantanamo?" Lisa Hajjar, "Does Torture Work?"
15	Tuesday December 3	Prisons and Democracy Caleb Smith, <i>The Prison and the American Imagination</i>
Final		Final Papers Due Submit papers to my office no later than Friday, December 13th at 2:45 pm.