

San José State University
CASA/Department of Justice Studies
JS189, Senior Seminar Contemporary Problems, Section 1, Fall 2015

Instructor:	Harold W. Peterson, JD
Office Location:	MacQuarrie Hall, Room 509
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Office Hours:	Tuesday & Thursday 12:00 pm to 1:15 pm
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday – Thursday 10:30 am to 11:45 pm
Classroom:	MacQuarrie Hall 520
JS Competency Area:	C: Critical Inquiries

Course Catalog Description

Historical development of philosophy of law and constitutional provisions, legal definitions, classifications of crime, case law, methodology and concepts of criminal as a social force.

Instructor's Course Description

The Justice Studies Department's Senior Seminar represents the culminating educational experience of the degree in Justice Studies at San Jose State University. The seminar's purpose is to create knowledge from research, which students then apply to society through changes in policy. The seminar's primary objective is to reinforce the importance of any university's foundational purpose - that is, the student becomes an agent of change in contemporary society, drafting a strategy of action informed by thorough and scholarly research.

This course will engage the student in the identification, discussion and analysis of selected problems in justice studies. A major policy paper on a selected topic is required. Throughout this course, students will have the opportunity to critically analyze contemporary criminal justice policies and practices.

Course Goals and Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- CLO1** Demonstrate substantive knowledge about the measurement of crime and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of major sources of crime data (including official statistics, victim surveys, and self report surveys)
- CLO2** Demonstrate substantive knowledge about the extent and severity of formal and informal responses to various types of crime and offenders.
- CLO3** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the prevalence of various types of crime, and the characteristics of likely offenders and victims.
- CLO4** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the prevalence of various types of crime, and the characteristics of likely offenders and victims.
- CLO5** Demonstrate an ability to integrate and apply different theoretical perspectives to explain a range of specific criminal offenses, and compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of those theories.
- CLO6** Students should read, write, and contribute to discussion at a skilled and capable level.

Course Requirements

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty- five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Textbooks: (Available at the Spartan Bookstore)

Walker, S. (2010). *Sense and nonsense about crime, drugs, and communities* (7th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

All other readings are available on the Canvas website

Justice Studies Reading and Writing Philosophy: The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more

effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

Course Prerequisites: Upper division standing is required. Students must prove that they have passed research methods (JS 105/JS114) and the writing workshop (JS100W) (or its equivalent) with a grade of C or better. The instructor will drop students who do not meet these requirements after the first class meeting.

Class Participation: To participate, one must attend class. Attendance alone however, is NOT class participation and does not factor into the course grade. In-class comments, which summarize, assess and reflect on the discussion topics **or** presentations, which exemplify knowledge of the subject matter **or** questions, which identify and probe the relevant course issues, are class participation. Beyond the completion of assigned readings, students must spend sufficient time contemplating the material for the sole purpose of class participation.

Classroom Protocol: 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. Students may enrich the learning process by discussion. Respect and professionalism are the guiding principles of this class. Tardiness will not be tolerated, if you are late, do not disturb class—wait until break to enter the classroom.

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones, pages, PDA's or any other electronic device that "makes noise". No text messaging in class, please turn off these devices, as they are disruptive. Students may take hand written notes during class; however, students may not use computer and/or other recording devices without instructor's permission.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Written Assignments: All writing assignments must adhere to the *10 Rules of Formal Writing* and the instruction and description found on the **Canvas** website. Written Assignments not conforming to these rules will receive a significant reduction in grade. General formatting requirements for written assignments include a cover page, page numbering, 1" margins, strict double-spacing, and Times New Roman 12pt. font. Students must draft assignments in formal English, with college-level writing mechanics and APA-style formatting, inclusive of in-text citations and references. Student will submit all written assignments to **Canvas** website and turn in a paper copy in class.

Written assignments uploaded to the **Canvas** website must be in one of the accepted word processing file formats; it is highly recommended that students use Microsoft Word (*.doc or *.docx) or Rich Text Format (*.rtf). Written work must be properly uploaded

to the **Canvas** website by the specified due date and time. The instructor will NOT accept late submissions without permission.

Assignments and Evaluation: A student’s final evaluation shall consist of online discussions two (2) in-class prepared discussion, two (2) short essay assignments, a policy paper and a policy paper presentation. Each assignment shall consist of 100 point and is weighted as follows:

Grade Item	Weight
Online Discussions	10%
2 In-Class Prepared Discussions (CLO’s 1-5)	20%
2 Critical Thinking Essay Assignments (CLO 6)	25%
Policy Paper (CLO’s 1-3, 5,6)	5%
Policy Paper Presentation (CLO’s 1-6)	30%
Total	100%

Online Discussion: Students are required to post responses/replies to topics posted by the instructor on the **Discussion** section of the **Canvas** website. Students must post at least two (2) substantive responses/replies for each discussion topic. Failure to post at least two responses/replies for a discussion topic will result in zero points for this course component.

In-class Prepared Discussion: Each student will be responsible for offering one in-class presentation for a specific textbook chapter, topic, or assigned reading by the instructor the second week of class. Students must familiarize themselves with the reading assignments as well as do additional research the deem necessary for their in-class presentation. If necessary, some students will present on instructor chosen journal articles in lieu of a textbook chapter; this will be dependent on the number of students enrolled in the course. Should this become necessary, all students will be responsible for reading additional journal articles, which the instructor will post to the **Canvas** website.

Critical Thinking Essay Assignments: Students are required to write two (2) short critical thinking essays relating to a current issue in justice studies offered by the instructor. Students must identify the issue, summarize, assess and reflect on all the arguments relating to that issue. Students should then discuss and defend a chosen argument with research and reason.

Policy Paper Topics: This course requires students to draft a 10 to 12 page research paper analyzing a justice-related topic. Students may choose their topic based on their own research interests, but the students must receive instructor permission before drafting the paper. The instructor will NOT accept a paper without previous approval. Approval of a topic will be dependent on thorough preparation of the topic. Students are prohibited from writing on used for another course, or currently being used for another course. Any attempt to violate this requirement will result in an automatic “F” for the paper, which ultimately will result in failing the course. Such an attempt would constitute a violation of the Academic Integrity policy.

This paper will consist of a review of scholarly literature on an approved topic. Students will be required to analyze and critique existing policies, but propose new or amended policies. The research reviewed must come from high-quality justice-related journals, which establish and examine relationships between and among variables, concepts, theories, and policies.

Policy Paper Content Requirements:

1. Students will review and critically analyze a minimum of (10) scholarly journal articles (5 of which must be empirical studies) on a chosen justice-related topic. Student must reference articles published within the last five (5) years. Review articles that cover several studies will only count as one source.
2. Once a student has chosen and the instructor has approved a topic, they may NOT change it without instructor consent.
3. The instructor will NOT tolerate plagiarism. Any extent of plagiarism (intentional or unintentional) will result in a failing grade for this assignment. All assignment submitted to Canvas are subject to a plagiarism analysis.
4. Writing style and presentation: The paper must be written in formal English (i.e., no contractions, abbreviations or slang). Proper punctuation, tense, spelling, grammar, syntax, and neatness are of importance; too many errors will lead to an automatic point deduction.

Policy Paper Structure Requirements: The primary sections of the paper include an *introduction*, a *literature review*, *policy implications*, and *references*.

Introduction – This section includes a brief introduction of the topic, which may include historical information, relevance, concepts, definitions, overview of current policies, and the like. Students should provide a substantive explanation for why the topic is important, as well as a clear thesis.

Literature Review (This will be an integrated literature review) –This section primarily describes research on the topic, and focuses on defining the major relationships between and among variables, concepts, theories, and policies. Provide an in depth analysis of your chosen topic, identified in the introduction, utilizing information garnered from scholarly sources, combined with your own original thoughts (i.e., critical analysis). Students will summarize, critique, and present pertinent conclusions (in brief); more substantive conclusions will be addressed in the Policy Implications section of the paper.

Policy Critique and Implications – Based on the research findings reviewed, must discuss the creation and implication new and/or improved policies. Students must summarize, assess and reflect on the policy changes and/or improvements with respect to budget, time, resource allocation and constraints, politics and the practical implications of their implementation.

Policy Paper Presentation: Students must lead a 20-minute formal presentation of their papers. The instructor will provide a schedule no later than the Sixth week of class. Before each presentation, presenters will distribute a 1-2 page outline of their presentation to both students and the instructor.

The presentation must include the following:

1. *Introduction:* Description of the specific topic, importance of the topic, and thesis
2. *Literature Review:* Relatively concise coverage of their literature review
3. *Policy Critique:* A critique of current policies, based upon the literature, in terms of the implications of their effectiveness/ineffectiveness, and suggestions about alternative policies. This critique should rely upon findings in the literature to support the presenter's point of view.

Paper Presentation Grading: The instructor will grade the presentation based on the level of competency and flow, knowledge of the subject, and conclusions. It is highly recommended that students practice their presentations. The instructor will maintain strict time limits. Failure to complete a presentation within the allotted time will result in diminished points.

Evaluation of written work is as follows:

- *Content (20%):* The overall content of the paper including details and reference information.
- *Style (20%):* The way the student composed the paper, specifically in terms of perspective.
- *Organization/Citations (20%):* The order by which the student presented information in the paper and paragraph structure.
- *Grammar/Sentence Structure (20%):* The grammatical elements of the paper and sentence structure.
- *Observations/Conclusions (20%):* The general and specific observations and conclusions drawn from the paper.

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

93 -100:	A	74-76:	C
90-92:	A-	70-73:	C-
87-89:	B+	67-69:	D+
84-86:	B	64-66:	D
80-83:	B-	60-63:	D-
77-79:	C+	0-59:	F

Please note, a "C" or higher is required to receive credit for this course toward a Justice Studies or Forensic Science Major.

Students must submit all assignments online at the **Canvas** website and submit a paper copy in class.

Required University Policies Statement

Academic Integrity:

www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/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 University will not tolerate instances of academic dishonesty. 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. Students must complete all assignments 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 the SJSU 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 of building evacuation, 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 AEC (Accessible Education Center) to establish a record of their disability. For more information call their office at 408-924-6000 (v) or 408-924-5990 (TTY).

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays: San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Expectations of Students' Effort: "Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

Student Resources

Library Liaison: Silke Higgins, *Assistant Librarian, University Library, San Jose State University*
Email: silke.higgins@sjsu.edu

Student Technology Resources: Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd 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.

Peer (Mentoring) Connections: Peer Connections offers free mentoring and tutoring services to undergraduate SJSU students. <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu>

Peer Connections has four locations on the SJSU main campus:

- Student Services Center (SSC) 600, on the corner of 10th and San Fernando (inside the 10th Street parking garage building)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Main Library in room LL 67, just off of the elevator lobby on the lower level
- Academic Success Center in Clark Hall, on the first floor next to the Computer Lab
- The Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village B.

SJSU Writing Center: The SJSU Writing Center located in Room 126 in Clark Hall offers a variety of resources to help students become better writers, including one-on-one tutoring sessions and numerous writing workshops. All of the services are free for SJSU students. <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>

CASA Student Success Center: The Student Success Center located in MacQuarrie Hall, Room 533 (top floor) provides advising for undergraduate students majoring or interested in majoring in programs offered by CASA Departments and Schools. The Student Success Center provides general education advising, assistance with changing majors, answers to academic policy related questions, meetings with peer advisors and/or various regularly scheduled presentations and workshops. 408-924-2910
<http://www.sjsu.edu/casa/ssc/>

Course Schedule

Week	Day	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
1	Thursday 8/20/15	Reading: None Lecture & Discussion: Introduction; Syllabus; Class Mechanics; The Nature of Policy
2	Tuesday 8/25/15	Reading: None Lecture & Discussion: Critical Thinking Presentation
	Thursday 8/27/15	Reading: None Lecture & Discussion: 10 Commandments of Formal Writing; Assign In-Class Prepared Discussion
3	Tuesday 9/1/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part I – Thinking Clearly About Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Crime and Policy – A Complex Problem
	Thursday 9/3/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part I – Thinking Clearly About Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Models of Criminal Justice
4	Tuesday 9/8/15	Reading: None Lecture & Discussion: Silke Higgins, Academic Liaison Librarian Meet at MLK Library, Room 213 at 10:30AM
	Thursday 9/10/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part I – Thinking Clearly About Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: The Going Rate
5	Tuesday 9/15/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part I – Thinking Clearly About Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: The Prediction Problem
	Thursday 9/17/15	Reading: Canvas Module: The IRS & Religion (Scientology) Lecture & Discussion: IRS Churches defined; Religion; Scientology (Dianetics); IRS Exemption
6	Tuesday 9/22/15	Film: “Going Clear”
	Thursday 9/24/15	Lecture & Discussion: “Going Clear” and IRS Policy
7	Tuesday 9/29/15	Reading: Canvas Module: The IRS & Religion (Scientology) Lecture & Discussion: IRS and Religion – The Scientology Debate
	Thursday 10/1/15	Reading: Canvas Module: The IRS & Religion (Scientology) Lecture & Discussion: IRS and Religion – The Scientology Debate (Continued) Due: Critical Thinking Essay #1
8	Tuesday 10/6/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part II – “GET TOUGH”: The Conservative Attack on Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Unleash the Cops
	Thursday 10/8/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part II – “GET TOUGH”: The Conservative Attack on Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Deter the Criminals

9	Tuesday 10/13/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part II – “GET TOUGH”: The Conservative Attack on Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Lock ‘em Up
	Thursday 10/15/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part II – “GET TOUGH”: The Conservative Attack on Crime</i> Lecture & Discussion: Close the Loopholes
10	Tuesday 10/20/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part III – The Middle Ground: Guns & Victims</i> Lecture & Discussion: Protect Crime Victims
	Thursday 10/22/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part III – The Middle Ground: Guns & Victims</i> Lecture & Discussion: Control Gun Crimes
11	Tuesday 10/27/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part IV – Reform: The Liberal Prescription</i> Lecture & Discussion: Treat ‘em; Gain Compliance with the Law
	Thursday 10/29/15	Reading: Canvas Module: <i>Mental Health and the Justice System – Mental Health in the Prison System Policy & Practice – Callous & Cruel</i> Lecture & Discussion: Use of Force against Inmates with Mental Disabilities in US Jails and Prisons
12	Tuesday 11/3/15	Reading: Canvas Module: <i>Mental Health and the Justice System – Mental Health in the Prison System Policy & Practice – The Processing and Treatment of Mentally Ill Persons in the Criminal Justice System</i> Lecture & Discussion: Mentally Ill Persons – Processing & Treatment
	Thursday 11/5/15	Reading: Canvas Module: <i>Mental Health and the Justice System – Mental Health in the Prison System Policy & Practice – Growing Up Locked Down</i> Lecture & Discussion: Youth in Solitary Confinement in Jails & Prisons
13	Tuesday 11/10/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part V – The Drug Problem</i> Lecture & Discussion: Sense and Nonsense About Drugs and Crime
	Thursday 11/12/15	Reading: Walker: <i>Part VI – Putting It All Together: Crime and Community</i> Lecture & Discussion: The Big Picture Due: Critical Thinking Essay #2
14	Tuesday 11/17/15	Lecture & Discussion: Policy Paper Presentations
	Thursday 11/19/15	Lecture & Discussion: Policy Paper Presentations
15	Tuesday 11/24/15	No Class: Paper Presentation Preparation
	Thursday 11/26/15	No Class: Thanksgiving
16	Tuesday 12/1/15	Lecture & Discussion: Policy Paper Presentations
	Thursday 12/3/15	Lecture & Discussion: Policy Paper Presentations
17	Tuesday 12/8/15	Lecture & Discussion: Policy Paper Presentations

	Wednesday 12/16/15	<u>Lecture & Discussion:</u> (12:15pm to 2:30pm) <i>Policy Paper Presentations</i> TBA - Assuming there are no emergency late adds, class will not need to meet this day; however, until further notice, all students are REQUIRED to keep this day available.
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