

San José State University  
Justice Studies Department  
“Punishment, Culture, and Society”  
JS-128 (section 01 #28052)  
Spring 2018

<b>Instructor:</b>	Alessandro De Giorgi
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	MON/WED: 12pm–1pm MON: 7pm–8pm (online)
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	MON/WED: 10:30am – 11:45pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	MacQuarrie Hall 523

**COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Critical analysis of the cultural, political and economic dimensions of penal politics in contemporary American society, with particular reference to the relationships between criminal justice and social justice. Emphasis on issues of racial, economic, and gender inequality.

**NOTES:**

- Pre/Co-requisite: 100W
- A grade of “C” or better is required to fulfill Justice Studies major requirements.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course offers a critical reconstruction of some recent transformations of punishment in the United States. Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, the US penal system has been affected by what punishment and society scholars have defined as a *punitive turn*: rising incarceration rates, longer prison sentences, harsher drug laws, and increasingly punitive penal policies. As a consequence of this “tough on crime” approach, today more than 2.3 million individuals are detained in US prisons and jails, while more than 6.7 million people are either on probation or parole. With almost 1% of its residents currently behind bars, the US features the largest prison population in the world, despite a significant decline in crime rates during the last two decades. The current penal crisis is the result of two distinct wars that have been waged across American cities since the late 1970s: the “war on crime” and the “war on drugs.” The course offers a theoretically-informed analysis of these changes in penal politics and explores the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of punishment, with particular reference to the impact of mass-incarceration on socioeconomic and racial inequalities in US society.

## STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

**SLO#1:** Competently define and describe the multiple facets of current penal policies and critically reflect on the complex relationship between criminal justice and social justice. Students will also be able to undertake a theoretically grounded analysis of contemporary US penal politics, with particular reference to the impact of mass-incarceration on existing structures of racial, economic, and gender inequality in American society.

[RELEVANT ASSIGNMENT: MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST]

**SLO #2:** Engage in a critique of existing policies and reflect on possible alternative approaches to crime and drugs, as they emerge both from critical scholarship and social justice activism. Students will also be able to write an original paper documenting a scholarly appreciation of the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of penalty in contemporary US society.

[RELEVANT ASSIGNMENT: MOVIE COMMENTARY]

**SLO#3:** Engage in reflection and argumentation about the socioeconomic and political implications of penal policies, particularly from the point of view of racial, economic, and gender equality, human rights, and social justice.

[RELEVANT ASSIGNMENT: IN-CLASS TESTS]

**SLO#4:** Students should read, write, and contribute to discussion at a skilled and capable level.

[RELEVANT ASSIGNMENT: CHAPTER PRESENTATIONS]

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- 1) M. Bosworth (2010), *Explaining US Imprisonment*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- 2) M. Welch (2004), *Ironies of Imprisonment*. London: Sage.

## 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-dbggen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbggen/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.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Percent of grade</i>
IN-CLASS TESTS	2/19/18 – 3/19/18 – 4/30/18	60%
CHAPTER PRESENTATIONS	ONGOING (WEEKS 2-16)	20%
MOVIE COMMENTARY	5/14/18	10%
MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST	5/21/18	10%

## SPECIFICATIONS ON COURSEWORK

### 1) IN-CLASS TESTS: 60% (20%+20%+20%) OF FINAL GRADE

These tests will be taken in class. Each test will consist of 2 short-answer questions covering the readings assigned since the previous test. Each question will receive a grade ranging between 0 and 10, for a maximum of 20 points for each test. You are kindly requested to come to class with your own bluebook on the dates the tests are due. Please remember that *writing skills* (i.e., *correct use of grammar, syntax, and structure*) will be relevant components of the grade for this assignment: Students should always proofread their assignments before submitting.

**PLEASE NOTE:** during the tests, no open notes or books will be allowed. Dictionaries are welcome.

### 2) CHAPTER PRESENTATIONS: 20% OF FINAL GRADE

Throughout the semester, all students will offer *in-class presentations* (individually or in groups) on the readings assigned for each class. Each presentation should consist of:

- 1) Summary of the reading's content;
- 2) Analysis/critique of its relevance to contemporary social issues;
- 3) Three questions about the chapter's content, to be discussed in class.

Each presentation will receive a grade ranging from 0 to 20 points (20% of final grade).

The detailed calendar of chapter presentations will be circulated during the first week of class.

### 3) MOVIE COMMENTARY: 10% OF FINAL GRADE

This will consist of a 3-pages long (double-spaced) critical reflection about one of the documentaries shown in class. In their commentary, *students are expected to use of at least three scholarly sources (i.e., journal articles, reports, or books)*. Assignments will be graded on *content, argumentation, and writing*. The movie commentary will receive a grade ranging from 0 to 10 points (10% of final grade). This assignment is due in class on **5/14/2018**.

### 4) FINAL EXAM—MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST: 10% OF FINAL GRADE

This test will take place on **5/21/2018 (9:45AM–12PM)** and will consist of 10 multiple-choice questions. The test will cover content from the assigned readings and lecture materials. Each correct answer will receive 1 point (wrong answers will receive 0 points), for a maximum of 10 points.

**PLEASE NOTE:** On the day of the test, students are expected to come to class with their own Scantron card.

## GRADING SYSTEM

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

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Extra credit opportunities might be available throughout the semester upon the exclusive discretion of the instructor.*

### 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-128 Penal Politics and Institutions  
SPRING 2018**

MON-WED: 10:30am–11:45am  
MH 523

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
1	W: 1/24/18	SYLLABUS/ASSIGNMENTS/DEADLINES  <u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Introduction</i> <u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>Introduction: Explaining US Imprisonment</i>
2	M: 1/29/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>The Origins of US Imprisonment</i> (Ch. 1)
	W: 1/31/18	<u>Reading:</u> Bosworth, <i>Penal Reform and Prison Science</i> (Ch. 2)
3	M: 2/5/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Discovery of the Penitentiary</i> (Ch. 2)
	W: 2/7/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>Prison Culture</i> (Ch. 3)
4	M: 2/12/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>An Era of Uncertainty</i> (Ch. 4)
	W: 2/14/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Critical Penology</i> (Ch. 3)
5	M: 2/19/18	<b><u>In-Class Test 1: 20% of total grade</u></b>
	W: 2/21/18	<u>Reading:</u> Bosworth, <i>The Punitive Turn</i> (Ch. 5)
6	M: 2/26/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>War on Drugs and Just War Theory</i> (Ch. 4)
	W: 2/28/18	<u>Documentary:</u> C. Herrman – K. Whalen, <i>Tulia, Texas</i> (USA, 2008)
7	M: 3/5/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>A Culture of Control</i> (Ch. 6)
	W: 3/7/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Health Care Crisis Behind Bars</i> (Ch. 5)
8	M: 3/12/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Reproducing Prison Violence</i> (Ch. 6)
	W: 3/14/18	<u>Documentary:</u> P. Zimbardo, <i>The Stanford Prison Experiment</i> ( USA, 2004)
9	M: 3/19/18	<b><u>In-Class Test 2: 20% of total grade</u></b>
	W: 3/21/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>Challenging the Culture of Control?</i> (Ch. 7)

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
10	M: 3/26/18	NO CLASS: SPRING RECESS
	W: 3/28/18	NO CLASS: SPRING RECESS
11	M: 4/2/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Ironies of Capital Punishment</i> (Ch. 7)
	W: 4/4/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>War on Terror and the Misuse of Detention</i> (Ch. 8)
12	M: 4/9/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>The New Detention: Securing the Border</i> (Ch. 8)
	W: 4/11/18	NO CLASS: LIBRARY RESEARCH DAY
13	M: 4/16/18	<u>Documentary:</u> R. Young, <i>Lost in Detention</i> (USA, 2011)
	W: 4/18/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Punitive Profit</i> (Ch. 9)
14	M: 4/23/18	<u>Documentary:</u> Ava DuVernay, <i>13<sup>th</sup></i> (USA, 2016) Part 1
	W: 4/25/18	<u>Documentary:</u> Ava DuVernay, <i>13<sup>th</sup></i> (USA, 2016) Part 2
15	M: 4/30/18	<b><u>In-Class Test 3: 20% of total grade</u></b>
	W: 5/2/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Welch, <i>Confronting Corrections</i> (Ch. 10)
16	M: 5/7/18	<u>Documentary:</u> A. Wunderlich, <i>The Corridor</i> (USA, 2017)
	W: 5/9/18	<u>Reading:</u> M. Bosworth, <i>Conclusion. Where To From Here?</i>
17	M: 5/14/18	LAST DAY OF CLASS: FEEDBACK / FINAL COMMENTS  <b><u>Movie Commentary due: 10% of total grade</u></b>
18	M: 5/21/18	<b>Final Exam (9:45AM–12PM)</b> <b>Multiple-Choice Test: 10% of total grade</b>