

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY (CRJ 715)**  
**Fall 2016**

“There ain’t no answer. There ain’t gonna be any answer. There never has been an answer. That’s the answer.”

- Gertrude Stein

“You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.”

- Winston Churchill

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**Instructor:**

**Office:**

**Office Hours:** T, Th 1pm-3pm; W 11am-12pm; or by appointment

**Email:**

**Classroom:** CRJ Conference Room (GUA 5126) – Tuesdays, 4:00-6:45pm

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**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**Course Description:**

This course is directed toward graduate students with an interest in public policy issues related to crime and criminal justice in the United States. The course begins with an overview of the policy-making process, the various influences on that process, and the numerous actors involved in that process. The course then covers major policies related to policing strategies, court administration, and correctional procedures. Policies related to other contemporary issues, such as gun violence and drug control, are also covered. Throughout the course, particular attention is given to the influence of ideology and the role of research on crime policy.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to: 1) critique the various aspects of the policy-making process, 2) identify and describe the major influences on the policy process, 3), describe the debates over contemporary crime policies, 4) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of research on crime policy, 5) recognize various ideological perspectives and how they relate to research and crime policy.

**Required Books:**

Nancy E. Marion and Willard M. Oliver (2012). *The Public Policy of Crime and Criminal Justice* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Amy B. Thistlethwaite and John D. Wooldredge (2014). *Forty Studies that Changed Criminal Justice* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

## **Grading Policy:**

The course grade is based on two exams (total of 70%), 10 short written assignments (total of 20%), and class performance (total of 10%).

Exams: The exams consist of a mid-term and a final. Both exams will cover materials from lectures and readings. The final will be cumulative and therefore draw from all course materials. The exams will consist of short answer and essay questions that are similar in style to the questions on the Master's Comprehensive Exam. The exams are worth 35% each for a total of 70% of the final grade.

Short written assignments: Throughout the semester there will be 10 short written assignments. These assignments will take place at the beginning of the class and will be based on information discussed during the previous class session. Each assignment will consist of short answer questions. Assignments will be graded on a simple three-point scale: 0 = no effort; 1 = satisfactory effort (answers are too brief or inaccurate information is provided); 2 = commendable effort (answer is complete and accurate). The assignments are worth 2% each for a total of 20% of the final grade.

Class performance: The course will be conducted as a seminar with students expected to read materials in preparation for class discussions. Class performance will be based on in-class participation. Class performance is worth 10% of the final grade.

## **Course Schedule:**

### **8/30: INTRODUCTION, COURSE REQUIREMENTS, COURSE OVERVIEW**

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#### **9/6: CJ Policy Ideology, Process, Opinion, and Research**

Readings: a) Marion and Oliver (2012) - Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 8

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#### **9/13: Police Policy, Officer Behavior, and Officer Discretion**

Readings: a) Marion and Oliver (2012) - Chapter 10  
b) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 1-47; 114-124

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#### **9/20: Police Operations and Proactive Policing**

Readings: a) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 48-96  
b) Austin, J. and M. Jacobson (2013). *How New York City Reduced Mass Incarceration*, Brennan Center for Justice, VERA Institute of Justice.

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9/27: **Police Use of Force**

- Readings:
- a) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 97-113
  - b) Fyfe, J. (1989). "Split-second syndrome and other determinants of police violence." In Roger Dunham and Geoffrey Alpert, eds. (2001), *Critical Issues in Policing: Contemporary Readings*.
  - c) Ariel, B. (2013). "Self-awareness to being watched and socially-desirable behavior: a field experiment on the effect of body-worn cameras on police use-of-force." Police Foundation.
  - d) Sousa, W., J. Ready, and M. Ault (2010). "The impact of TASERs on police use-of-force decisions: Findings from a randomized field training experiment." *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 6, 1.
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10/4: **Court Policy, Bail, Prosecutorial Discretion, Plea Bargaining**

- Readings:
- a) Marion and Oliver (2012) - Chapter 11
  - b) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 125-181
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10/11: **Juries and Sentencing**

- Readings:
- a) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 182-240
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10/18: **TBD – Special Topics Assignment**

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10/25: **MID-TERM EXAM**

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11/1: **Correctional Policy, Prison Crowding, Public versus Private Prisons**

- Readings:
- a) Marion and Oliver (2012) - Chapter 12
  - b) Zimring, F. and Hawkins, G. (1997). "Lethal violence and the overreach of American imprisonment." Paper presented at the 1996 National Institute of Justice Annual Research and Evaluation Conference, Washington, DC.
  - c) Block, M. (1997). "Supply side imprisonment policy." Paper presented at the 1996 National Institute of Justice Annual Research and Evaluation Conference, Washington, DC.

- d) Thomas, C. (2003). "Correctional privatization: the issues and the evidence." In S. Decker, L. Alarid, and C. Katz (Eds.) *Controversies in Criminal Justice: Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press. (Original work published 2003, Roxbury Press).
- e) Hogan, R. (2003). "McPrisons are McFailures by most if not all objective measures." In S. Decker, L. Alarid, and C. Katz (Eds.) *Controversies in Criminal Justice: Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press. (Original work published 2003, Roxbury Press).
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#### 11/8: **Correctional Goals and Community Corrections**

- Readings:
- a) Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2014) - pp. 241-297
  - b) Mitchell, O., D. Wilson, A. Eggers, and D. MacKenzie (2012). "Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: A meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts." *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40, 60-71.
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#### 11/15: **TBD – Special Topics Assignment**

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#### 11/22: **Juvenile Justice Policy, Juvenile Waivers, Youth Violence**

- Readings:
- a) Marion and Oliver (2012) - Chapter 13
  - b) Myers, D. (2003). "The house of last resort: incarcerating juveniles in adult prisons." In S. Decker, L. Alarid, and C. Katz (Eds.) *Controversies in Criminal Justice: Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press. (Original work published 2003, Roxbury Press).
  - c) Roush, D., Dunlap, E., and Rinella, J. (2003). "Arguments against the confinement of juveniles with adult offenders." In S. Decker, L. Alarid, and C. Katz (Eds.) *Controversies in Criminal Justice: Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press. (Original work published 2003, Roxbury Press).
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#### 11/29: **Drug Policy and Gun Control Policy**

- Readings:
- a) Nadelmann, E. (1989). "Drug prohibition in the United States: costs, consequences, and alternatives," *Science*, 245, 939-947.
  - b) Wilson, J.Q. (1990). "Against the legalization of drugs," *Commentary*, 9(2), 21-28.

- c) McDowell, D., Loftin, C., and Wiersema, B. (1995). "Easing concealed firearms laws: effects on homicide in three states," *The Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 86:1: 193-206.
- d) Polsby, D. (1995). "Firearms costs, firearms benefits and the limits of knowledge," *The Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 86:1: 207-220.
- e) Police Foundation (2015). "Colorado's legalization of marijuana and the impact on public safety: a practical guide for law enforcement," Washington, DC: Police Foundation.
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## **12/6: Course Review**

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## **12/13: FINAL EXAM**

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### **General Course Policies:**

Make-up Work: Make-up exams and assignments will not be given. In the case of a medical or family emergency please contact me and we can discuss the scheduling of a make-up assignment.

Website Demeanor: Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate professional manner. Email and other course correspondence should be formal. When officially communicating with other students or the instructor, students should refrain from using abbreviations that are common when texting or using other forms of social media.

Any form of racial, ethnic, and/or other demeaning slurs directed at others will not be tolerated and students guilty of such behavior will be dismissed from the class. The website is also not an open forum for complaints. If you wish to speak with me about the class or your grade, contact me and we can discuss the matter further.

Academic Misconduct – Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Copyright – The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC) – The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895- 0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy – Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching – The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Incomplete Grades – The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three- fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted

accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Tutoring and Coaching – The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

University Library — Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the subject librarian is Susie Skarl ([https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians\\_by\\_subject](https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject)). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always [@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:@unlv.nevada.edu). **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations – The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.