

McGill University  
Department of Sociology

## COURSE OUTLINE

**Sociology 488—Punishment and Prison  
(in Leacock 721 from 9:35-11:25 on Mondays)**

**Fall 2019**

Professor Jason T. Carmichael  
Office: Leacock 814  
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-12:00  
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### **Course Overview:**

This class exposes each student to the historical, philosophical, theoretical and empirical work related to punishment, prisons, and more broadly, social control. Because an understanding of punishment is fundamental to the understanding of society, each student will gain a greater appreciation of the mechanisms through which a peaceful society is maintained through the fear or use of punishment. To accomplish this, we will examine in detail the development of the prison system over the last several hundred years and explore the rationales and effectiveness of for its massive expansion.

### **Course Requirements:**

***Final grades will be based on a relatively subjective assessment of your overall work in the course (presentations, participation, and final paper using the weights mentioned above). The grade weights outlined below only serve as a guide.***

***Attendance and Class participation (roughly 25% of final grade):*** Participation in class discussions and small group work is a vital component of the course. Students will be graded on participation, and you can't participate unless you **attend class** and do the readings. In order to promote useful class discussion, each student should have read all the required readings prior to class. Students should be prepared to share their thoughts and comments during class.

- ***Attendance:*** (roughly 5% of the grade) I will take attendance at the beginning of each class (after the first class). You will be allowed one absence during the term without penalty. Those arriving late to class will receive reduced credit for attendance that day.
- ***Class Participation and Presentations:*** (total of 20% of the overall course grade) – contains two components as follows:
  - 1) ***Presentations (50% of participation grade):*** **One-two student(s) will be required to present a brief summary (10-12 minutes) and lead the discussion for each of the articles outlined below.** The person assigned to the article will also be responsible for writing a 1-2 page single-spaced summary of the article or chapter and make this

available to the rest of the class **prior to your presentation**. This summary should include criticisms, limitations, and weaknesses of the theoretical argument. **Please bring on hard copy of the summary for me to look at during your presentation.**

- 2) *Class Participation* (50% of participation grade): There is a subjective element to participation but it must be considered in a seminar course. When determining your overall grade for the course, I will consider your level of overall ‘engagement’ in the class discussions to determine your score for this component of the grading.

**Important Note:** I would prefer you not have laptops out during the class. You may choose to ignore this preference but distracting laptop use will result in a reduction of your class participation grade up to a maximum of your entire class participation grade.

*Weekly Essays* (20% of final grade): You will be required to write 4 essays during the term. Students have discretion as to which weeks they do not turn in an essay. Each essay will be worth 25% of your total weekly essay grade. No accommodations will be made for students who do not turn in the required number of essays. Each essay should be **roughly 750 words in length but no more than 1,000 words** (please state the word count on each essay). In the essay, describe the broader argument of the set of readings for that week’s readings. Discuss whether you found the arguments of the work compelling (here would be a good place to discuss strengths and weaknesses of a theory and/or empirical work). **You must incorporate at least two readings into your discussion.** Essays are due at the beginning of class (hard copies, please).

Some IMPORTANT rules about weekly essays:

1. **Papers turned in after the beginning of the class will not be accepted.**
2. **I need a hard copy of the essay at the beginning of class.**
3. **Only one essay per week may be submitted.**
4. **Weekly essay may only be submitted on weeks you are not presenting a reading to the class.**
5. **Weekly essays may only be submitted on weeks where we are discussing readings (not during classes where we have the presentations of final papers).**
6. **Weekly essays must be on material we are discussing the week the essay is submitted.**
7. **You MUST be present on the day you submit a weekly essay**

*Final Research Paper* (50% of final grade): Students are required to complete a seminar length paper (roughly **7,000-8,000 words – 12-point font, 1-inch margins, double spaced.**). The paper will be due during the last class – **December 3rd**). Students will need to pick a topic relevant to prisons and punishment. **The first 3-4 pages of the paper are due on the 7<sup>th</sup> week of class.** This introduction to the paper must include at least 2-3 relevant academic sources.

*Presentation of Final Research Paper* (5% of final grade): Students will present a summary of their research paper to the class for roughly 10 minutes during the last two classes of the term.

**FINAL GRADES:** So, putting it all together the grading allocation will look like this.

Attendance and class participation	25% of total grade
4 Weekly Essays	20% of total grade
Final Paper	50% of total grade
Final Paper Presentation	<u>5% of total grade</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grading is as follows:

Grade	Grade Point	Percentages
A	4.0	85-100
A-	3.7	80-84
B+	3.3	75-79
B	3.0	70-74
B-	2.7	65-69
C+	2.3	60-64
C	2.0	55-59
D (Conditional Pass)	1.0	50-54
F (Fail)	0.0	0-49

### TEXTBOOKS:

**Note: All textbooks are available at Paragraph Books located at the corner of McGill College and Sherbrooke St.**

- 1) Garland, David. 1990. *Punishment and Modern Society*. University of Chicago Press.
- 2) Morris, Norval and David Rothman. 1995. *The Oxford History of Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. Oxford Press.

Articles listed below are available free online but will be placed on MyCourses.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

**Note: all dates are tentative and readings are subject to change during the term. Any changes will be announced in class.**

#### **Week 1: Sept 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Introduction to the course.

#### **Week 2: Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> –Punishment.**

-Ellis, Desmond P. 1971. "The Hobbesian Problem of Order: A Critical Appraisal of the Normative Solution." *American sociological Review* 36: 692-703.

--- Braithwaite, J. 2003. "What's Wrong with the Sociology of Punishment?" *Theoretical Criminology* 7: 5-28.

-O'Malley, P. 1999. "Volatile and Contradictory Punishments" *Theoretical Criminology* 3: 175-96.

- Wortley, Scot. 2004. "Hidden Intersections: Research on Race, Crime and Criminal Justice in Canada." *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal* 35 (3): 99-117.

### **Week 3: Sept.23<sup>rd</sup> - Theories of Punishment**

Garland, David. 1990. Punishment and Modern Society. Chapters 1-4

### **Week 4: Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> – Theories of Punishment**

Garland, David. 1990. Punishment and Modern Society. Chapters 5-8

### **Week 5: Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> –Punishment**

- Welsh, B. C. & Farrington, D. P. (2004), “Surveillance and crime prevention,” *Criminology & Public Policy*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 493-545.

-Savelsberg, Joachim J. 1994. “Knowledge, Domination, and Criminal Punishment.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 99: 911-943.

- Chiricos, Theodore G., and Miriam Delone. 1992. “Labor Surplus and Punishment: A Review and assessment of theory and Analysis.” *Social Problems* 39: 421-446.

- Jacobs, David and Jason T. Carmichael. 2001. “The Politics of Punishment across Time and Space: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis of Imprisonment Rates.” *Social Forces*. 80: 61-89.

### **Week 6: Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> – Religious and Political Ideology**

- Grasmick, Harold G., Elizabeth Davenport, Mitchell B. Chamlin, and Robert Bursik. 1992. “Protestant Fundamentalism and the Retributive Doctrine of Punishment.” *Criminology* 30: 21-45.

- Curry, Theodore R. 1996. “Conservative Protestantism and the Perceived Wrongfulness of Crimes: A Research Note.” *Criminology* 34: 453-464.

- Langworthy. Robert H, and John T. Whitehead. 1986. “Liberalism and Fear as Explanations for Punitiveness.” *Criminology* 24: 575-91.

- Chambliss, William J., 1994. “Policing the Ghetto Underclass: The Politics of Law and Law Enforcement.” *Social Problems* 41: 177-194.

### **Week 7: Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> – History of Prisons - PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Morris and Rothman – Chapters 1-4

### **Week 8: Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> - History of Prisons**

Morris and Rothman – Chapters 5-8

### **Week 9: Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> – Sentencing**

-Daly, Kathleen. 1987. "Discrimination in the Criminal Courts: Family, Gender, and the Problem of Equal Treatment." *Social Forces* 66: 152-175.

-Steffensmeier, Darrell, Jeffery Ulmer, and John Kramer. 2006. "The Interaction of Race, Gender and Age in Criminal Sentencing: The Punishment cost of Being Young, Black and Male." *Criminology* 36: 763-798.

-Schlesinger, Traci. 2008. "The Failure of Race Neutral Policies: How Mandatory Terms and Sentencing Enhancements Contribute to Mass Racialized Incarceration." *Crime & Delinquency* 57: 56-81.

Kurlychek, M and B. Johnson. 2004. The Juvenile Penalty: A Comparison of Juvenile and young adult sentencing outcomes in criminal court. *Criminology* 42: 485-515

### **Week 10: Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> - Imprisonment and Release**

- Sutton, John. 2000. "Imprisonment and Social Classification in Five Common-Law Democracies." *American Journal of Sociology* 106: 350-386.

-Visher, Christy, A., & Jeremy Travis. 2003. "Transition from Prison to Community: Understanding Individual Pathways." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 89-113.

-Pager, Devah. 2003. "The Mark of a Criminal Record." *American Journal of Sociology* 108: 937-975.

Goffman, Alice. 2009. On the Run. *American Sociological Review*. 74: 339-357.

### **Week 11: Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> - Wrongful Convictions, Mass Incarceration.**

- Currie, Elliot. 1968. Crimes without Criminals: Witchcraft and Its Control in Renaissance Europe. *Law and Society Review* 3: 7-32.

- Huff, Ronald C. 2002. Wrongful Convictions and Public Policy: The American Society of Criminology 2001 Presidential Address. *Criminology* 40: 1-18.

-Western, Bruce and Becky Pettit. 2004. "Mass Imprisonment and the life course: Race and class inequality in U.S. incarceration." *American Sociological Review* 69: 151-169.

### **Week 12: Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> – Death Penalty**

-Radelet, Michael L., & Marian J. Borg. 2000. "The Changing Nature of Death Penalty Debates." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 43-61.

- Jacobs, David, Jason T. Carmichael and Stephanie L. Kent. 2005. "Vigilantism, Current Racial Threat, and Death Sentences." *American Sociological Review* 70: 656-677.

-Unnever, James D. & Francis T. Cullen. 2007. "The Racial Divide in Support for the Death Penalty: Does White Racism Matter?" *Social Forces* 1281-1301

**Week 13:**

**Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Day 1 of Final Paper Presentations

**Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Day 2 of Final Paper Presentations) **TERM PAPER DUE**

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS (Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>). THEY MUST BE TURNED IN DURING THE CLASS. ANY PAPERS TURNED IN AFTER THE END OF THE LAST CLASS WILL BE MARKED DOWN.**

**Important Notes:**

**No incompletes will be given in the course except in the most extreme cases and must be approved by Prof. Carmichael prior the last day of classes.**

**Additional Points:**

- 1) ***McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).***

*L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).*

- 2) ***In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.***

*Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

- 3) *In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.*
- 4) *If you have a disability that requires special accommodations, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) at 514-398-6009 before you do this.*

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