

CJ 736 Seminar in American Corrections
Spring 2008 – Tuesdays 12-2:50 in CJC A205

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Office Hours: By appointment M-F 9-3:30

Course Description

As per the graduate course catalogue this course consists of an in-depth examination of the various issues and problems in corrections as they relate to administration and management. A variety of problems is explored, including the philosophical justification for prisons, personnel management, sentencing and its implications, community-based corrections, rehabilitation, judicial intervention, and correctional reform.

Goals and Objectives

Primary goals for students in this class include:

- Understanding the meaning of evidence based corrections
- Becoming critical consumer of knowledge within the field of corrections
- Understanding recent significant trends in correctional research
- Improve oral discussion skills of correctional research
- Refine oral presentation skills
- Successful complete a literature review on a significant topic in corrections

Books

Petersilia, J. (2003). *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole & Reentry*. Oxford University Press: NY.

MacKenzie, D. (2007). *What Works in Corrections: Reducing the Criminal Activities of Offenders and Delinquent*. Cambridge University Press: NY.

MacKenzie, D., & Armstrong, G. (200). *Correctional Boot Camps*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Additionally, students will be responsible for obtaining the empirical articles located in peer reviewed journals that are listed in the course calendar and others to be determined as the course proceeds.

Other Suggested Books (will not be covered in class)

Prisons: Crime and Justice. (1999). Edited by: Michael Tonry and Joan Petersilia. The University of Chicago.

Palmer. *Constitutional Rights of Prisoners* (8th Edition).

Del Carmen, Ritter & Witt. *Brief of Leading Cases in Corrections* (4th Edition).

Tonry. *Sentencing Matters*.

Course Requirements

This course is based on a seminar format with an emphasis on active discussion of assigned readings. It is expected that students will have read and studied the materials assigned for each meeting. Final grades will be computed as follows:

- 30% Mid-term exam
- 20% Research paper
- 5% Research presentation based on policy paper
- 35% Final exam
- 10% Quality Participation in Class

1. Class Attendance: Regular and punctual attendance at each meeting is expected. As per university policy, attendance will be recorded for each class session. The student is expected to notify the professor in advance of any anticipated absence. The student is responsible for obtaining materials and notes resulting from missed classes from other students.

A portion of the course grade is based on class participation; as such any class absence will have a negative effect on this portion of the grade. Students will be expected to present their policy paper toward the end of the semester. With the exception of a documented emergency, students who miss their assigned presentation time and date will NOT be allowed to make up their research presentation to the class as the course schedule does not provide ample time.

2. Quality Participation in Class: A high level of professionalism is expected in class as demonstrated through individual preparation for each class. It is expected that each student will thoroughly read and study the assigned materials. Much of the classes will be based on discussion questions posed to the class and facilitated by the professor. For a student to gain the full benefit of the ensuing discussion, they must be prepared. Quality participation in the class encompasses active sharing but also active listening. The student grade for this component will be subjectively based on quality of comments made across the semester with consideration of quantity of comments, a demonstrated willingness to listen and engage in discussion through responding to questions and comments of others, and participation in sharing of relevant articles, information or knowledge beyond the assigned readings.
3. Research Paper: A 10 page (double spaced) literature review that focuses on a current correctional issue, policy, or practice is required. Paper topics must be approved in advance and should not overlap significantly with any previously written or current papers. Students may choose to write this paper as part of an original research project to be conducted over the course of the semester and future months as time is needed on a voluntary basis. Please meet with me early in the semester if this is your intent.

Specific paper requirements: Title page, abstract and references are not included in the 10 page requirement. Papers should be no longer than 11 pages. APA style must be used. The deadline is 12:00 p.m. (noon) on the date noted in the course calendar. Late papers will not be accepted. If students choose to submit their paper electronically, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that it is received by the instructor. The student might consider the literature review of a peer reviewed journal article from journals such as Justice Quarterly or Criminology as an example for their final product.

The research paper will be graded as a peer review panel would judge it. Specifically, 100 points are possible and are allocated as follows:

1. Quality and technical merit (50 points)
 - a. Soundness of technical approach (in this instance review of literature)
 - b. Innovation and creativity
 - c. Clarity and organization
2. Awareness of existing research and related materials (25 points)
3. Impact of the paper (25 points)
 - a. Understanding the importance of the project.
 - b. Potential for advancement of scientific understanding of the problem area.

An overall ranking of the paper for information will also be given according to:

- [] Accept as is, pending routine editing
- [] Accept with revisions
- [] Revise and resubmit – strongly encourage resubmission
- [] Revise and resubmit – needs major re-working
- [] Reject – has merit but not appropriate for mainstream journal _____
- [] Reject

4. Research presentation based on policy paper: Student will make a research presentation based on their policy papers during the last two classes prior to the final exam as per the course calendar. Students are expected to develop a 15 minute presentation similar to a conference presentation and allow an additional 5 minutes for questions and discussion. It is anticipated that students will utilize PowerPoint or similar technology for their presentations.
5. Mid-term and Final Exam: Both exams will be essay format taken in a computer lab. No handwritten tests will be allowed. Students will answer multiple essay questions with some limited choices. Dates for these exams are noted in the course calendar.

Make up Exams

Make up exams will be given only if a student has [1] contacted the instructor prior to or on the day of the exam (before 5 p.m.); **and** [2] has a University recognized absence which include illness documented by a physician, religious observance, and participation in University activities at the request of University authorities. Official documentation must be provided.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to do their own work on all exams. Violations of academic integrity will result in a grade of "F" on parts of the course, a failure of the entire course, or a recommendation for suspension from the University. See the university academic dishonesty policy for further information at: www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty.

Students with Disabilities

If you are visually, hearing or physically impaired, have a learning disability, and/or have a communication disorder that may affect your performance in this class, please schedule an appointment with the professor as soon as possible so that provisions may be made to better ensure that you will have an equal opportunity to meet the requirements of the class. Also see www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.html for the disabled student policy and www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html for services available for disabled students.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Day Policy

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student who is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

Course Calendar Spring 2008

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
January 22	Introduction and Opening Discussion	
January 29	Understanding the Issues in Corrections	Petersilia 1 MacKenzie 1, 3
February 5	A Focus on the Offenders	Petersilia 2, 7
February 12	Jails & Prisons: An Overview	Petersilia 5, 6, 8 *Begin MacKenzie & Armstrong
	Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Howard, J. State of Prisons, 1777. De Beaumont & Tocqueville. On the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application in France. Brockway, Z. (1910). The American Reformatory Prison System. 	
February 19	Supervision: An Overview	Petersilia 3, 4, 9 MacKenzie 14
February 26	Offender Issues I: Substance Abuse Offender Issues II: Mental Illness	MacKenzie 11, 12
March 4	Offender Issues III: Lack of Skills/ Reintegration Offender Issues IV: Health and Illnesses	Petersilia 6
March 11	SPRING BREAK/ ACJS Conference	
March 18	Midterm Exam	
March 25	Understanding Effective Rehabilitation Risk Assessment	MacKenzie 2, 4 *articles to be assigned:
	Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martinson, R. (1974). What Works? Questions and Answers about Prison Reform, The Public Interest, 35, 22-54. Andrews, D., Zinger, I., Hoge, R., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F.T. (1990). Does correctional treatment work? A clinically relevant and psychologically informed meta-analysis. <i>Criminology</i>, 28, 369-404. Andrews, D., Bonta, J., & Hoge, R. (1990). Classification for Effective Rehabilitation: Rediscovering Psychology. <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i>, 17, 19-52. 	
April 1	An Era of Correctional Response: Boot Camps	MacKenzie & Armstrong MacKenzie 13
April 8	Correctional Responses: Substance Abuse & Mental Illness (including sex offenders)	MacKenzie 8, 9, 10 *articles to be assigned
	Article: Hanson, R.K., & Morton-Bourgon, K.E. (2007) The Accuracy of Recidivism Risk Assessments for Sexual Offenders: A Meta-Analysis.	
April 15	Correctional Responses to Lack of Skills, Health Issues **Papers due at noon**	Petersilia 5, 10 MacKenzie 5, 6, 7 H.R. 1704 "Second Chance Act"
April 22	Research Presentations (1-7)	
April 29	Research Presentations (8-13)	
May 6	FINAL EXAM	

***Additional empirical articles will be assigned during the course on a limited basis