

CRIM 100: Introduction to Criminal Justice

Mason Korea

Fall 2021

Professor Name: Dr. Deborah Kwak

Office Location: G668 @ Mason Korea

Class Time & Location: Wednesdays, 9am - 11.40am @ Art Building

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12pm - 1.30pm via Zoom; Please email me to schedule a meeting

COURSE FOCUS

In this course, we will examine the American criminal justice system including crime, law, police, courts, corrections and restorative justice. We will discuss the nature and prevalence of crime as well as critically evaluate the criminal justice responses to crime. By the end of class, we will be able to assess the extent to which the American justice system succeeds in accomplishing its goals.

Briefly: What is the point of taking this class?

Cops in the United States are currently getting heavy media attention. The American criminal justice system holds 2.2 million people in correctional facilities today. President Biden promised to end private prisons during his election campaign. Protesters are pointing to racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

If you are interested in exploring any of these topics, this might be a good introductory course to take. As we examine American criminal justice together, you will soon realize that the system consists of multiple components that interact with each other to achieve the system's goals. This course will basically give you an overview of the *whole*, by studying the *parts*.

What does this course have to do with The Mason Core?

This course contributes towards The Mason Core's mission to cultivate **The Mason Graduate: an Engaged Citizen and Well-Rounded Scholar who is Prepared to Act**. The Mason Core is Mason's general education program that builds the foundation for The Mason Graduate. CRIM 100 (3 credits) fulfills

requirements for Social/Behavioral Sciences in the *Exploration* category of The Mason Core.

The following three learning outcomes are required goals as part of The Mason Core:

1. Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors;
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs;
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.



This course is also a Mason Impact course, which means that the course intentionally seeks to generate social change in a community, the nation, or the world. Ideas are powerful and the classroom is a dangerous place. Throughout assignments and discussions in this class, we will critically evaluate the criminal justice system and develop constructive proposals to bring change in the field of criminal justice.

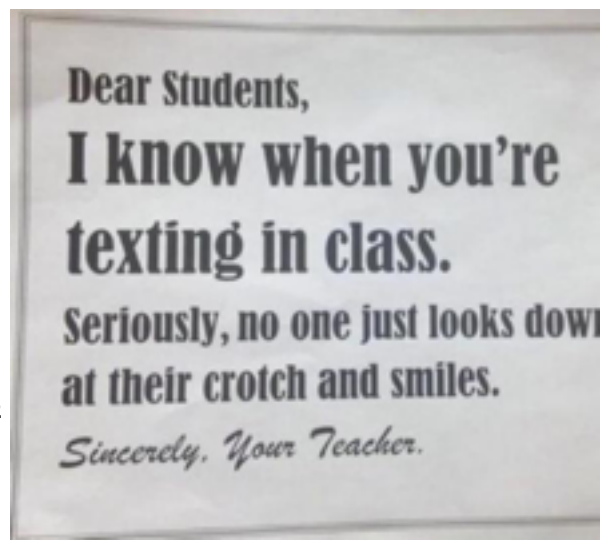
REQUIRED TEXTS

Lab, Steven P., Marian R. Williams, Jefferson E. Holcomb, Melissa W. Burek, William R. King, and Michael E. Buerger. 2018. *Criminal Justice: The Essentials* (5th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

What can we expect from each other?

What you can expect from me, the instructor:

Every time I enter discussion, I will come prepared, which means that I will have read the assigned materials for the day and thought carefully about what we are trying to accomplish that day. I will be fully present during class and will treat each of you with respect and integrity. I am also available outside of our Zoom meetings



and more than willing to discuss your concerns and any aspects of this course.

What I can expect from each student:

Because you have chosen to enroll in this course, you agree to have the same expectations as the instructor. In other words, you agree to come to each class (via Zoom) having read all assigned materials and thoughtfully prepared for class. You also agree to be fully present during class and to treat fellow students and the instructor with respect and integrity. Finally, as students in this course, you agree to thoughtfully engage in discussions and conversations in every class and make every effort to empathize with and respect the perspectives of others.

What we can expect to happen in class:

Every time we meet via Zoom, this class is an opportunity for us to become a learning community. This means that each student is required to be an active participant in this class—asking questions, contributing to discussion by sharing their perspectives, and critically thinking about the issues we address in this class. Half-baked ideas and thoughts are welcome; often times, just trying to say what you’re thinking allows you to further develop your ideas and arguments.

What we can expect in regards to electronic devices:

As part of cultivating a space for discussion, please use your laptop *only* for the purpose of participating in our Zoom meeting. Obviously, I can’t check if you’re doing anything else on your laptop. But please note, the appearance of being distracted during our Zoom meeting will be enough to negatively affect your participation grade and attendance.

Overview of Course Grade

Your learning will be evaluated in the following ways:

15% Class Participation (Attendance via Zoom, Large Group Discussion, in-class activities)

15% Class Participation (Breakout Rooms via Zoom)

15% Journals

10% YouTube/Video Analysis and Presentation

15% Crime Paper

15% Mid-Term Exam

15% Cumulative Final Exam

1. Attendance & Class Participation

This course depends upon your attendance. Two or more absences of our Zoom meetings during the semester will *lower* the student’s final grade by two thirds of a letter grade (e.g. a B+ will become a B-), and more than four absences will result in a failing grade. If a student joins the meeting after attendance is taken or leaves the

meeting early, the student may be counted absent (unless student contacts the professor prior to class to make arrangements).

You will be granted an excused absence from class only in specific, unavoidable situations such as death in the family or health emergency.

In order to get a full participation grade, actively ask questions, share your perspectives, and engage in critical thinking about the material during *Large Group Discussions* and *Breakout Rooms*. Equally important, participate enthusiastically in class activities and writing assignments.

**"When everyone in the classroom, teacher and students, recognizes that they are responsible for creating a learning community together, learning is at its most meaningful and useful."
-bell hooks**

Note: If a student engages in actions which distract others and detract from the classroom's overall experience as a learning community, then his/her participation grade will be significantly reduced.

2. Breakout Rooms via Zoom

We are a learning community and the success of this class depends on our active engagement with the class materials and with one another. Through the process of dialogue and discussion, we will gain a deeper and richer understanding of the issues discussed in this course. Difference in opinions, feelings and values are welcome and respected in this classroom.

I will remind you via email the reading schedule for the upcoming week every Friday. You should come prepared to discuss what you have read for every class. A specific type of discussion that we will have in each Zoom session is: *Breakout Rooms* (please see "Reading Roles & Journal Guidelines" which I will make available on our first day of class).

I will ask everyone to evaluate their fellow group members several times during the semester regarding their participation and contributions to group discussions and project. However, if you have a problem with a group member who is not keeping up with the reading or not participating please notify me early in the semester so that I may discuss the issue with that individual.

3. Journals

Good writers are most often interested readers. For this class, please write a reflective journal responding to the day's readings prior to class. See the "Reading Roles & Journal Guidelines" handout for the requirements for journals. Students should post their journal entry on Blackboard by 9am the day of class. Late journals will not be accepted. Please have your journals with you for breakout rooms.

4. YouTube Analysis & Presentation

Students will form groups for this project. Each group will find a YouTube video or a movie clip that illustrates something covered in class or readings during the prior week. On the assigned presentation day, your group will show the video to the class, identify and discuss the sociological concept or theory it illustrates, and turn in a one-page summary of your video analysis. I will provide more instructions as the semester progresses.

5. Crime Paper

The paper assignment requires you to analyze a real world case using concepts and perspectives we've learned in class. I will provide more instructions as the semester progresses.

6. Mid-Term and Final Exam

The final exam in this course is cumulative.

Grading Scale

As instructor, I reserve the right to round up or down any course grade calculations at the end of the semester.

A	94-100	B-	80-83	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	C+	77-79	D	64-66
B+	87-89	C	74-76	D-	60-63
B	84-86	C-	70-73	F	0-59

Students should keep in mind that "A" level work should be outstanding and consistently exceed minimum requirements.

Answers to Other Important Questions

Turning in Late Work

All course work should be submitted by the assignment deadlines. There is no exception for group projects and presentations. Regarding individual papers, if you know that you will be unable to complete an assignment by the due date, you should make this clear to me by e-mail at least 24 hours before the deadline. A short extension without penalty is possible only if you notify me 24 hours in advance.

If not, assignments submitted *after* the deadline will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late: a B+ becomes a B, a B becomes a B-, and so on.

Academic Integrity

All of the work that you submit for this course must be your own. The university has a strict policy concerning academic integrity. The George Mason University Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this Honor Code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found on the Committee of Academic Integrity’s website at <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/cai/overview>.

Academic integrity is an essential part of personal integrity, and I expect you to demonstrate honorable behavior in all of your classes including mine. You should pledge to observe Mason’s Honor Code in all written and oral work including journals, papers, presentations and exams. Student who committed plagiarism in an assignment will at a minimum receive a failing grade for the assignment. As the instructor for this course, I will also report the student and instance of plagiarism to the Dean.

Ethical Discourse and Inclusivity

George Mason University is committed to social justice. I share that commitment and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this class we will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, economic class, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Disability Accommodations

If you are a student with a physical, learning, and/or psychological disability, I will gladly work with you to arrange academic accommodations for this class.

Please note that reducing assignments or reducing the class attendance requirement are not permitted as accommodations for a disability at the college level.

Meeting with the Professor about Your Grades

I won’t discuss grades over email. This is to protect your privacy, so please do not make such requests. Instead, set up a Zoom meeting with me.

Essay Formatting

I expect you to show that you take pride in every piece of written work that you submit. Always re-read your journals and essays (even if they are in draft form) for grammatical

errors and spelling mistakes. You should also read your essay aloud to yourself or to a friend. In addition, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Essays must be in 12-point Times New Roman or similar font with 1.0 in/2.54 cm spacing around the margins.
- Essays must have page numbers and a header that includes your name, the assignment name, and date.
- All of the formal assignments must be submitted via paper copy.

Rules for Citation

You can use this useful online resource for rules on citation. The *American Sociological Association Style Guide*:

for in-text citation: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/asa_style/in_text_citation_references.html

for references: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/asa_style/references_page_formatting.html