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CRIM 403: Community Corrections

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

January 16th – April 23rd
Tuesday (with the class on Zoom) 10:30 am - 11:45 am

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This is a virtual class. We only meet as a group on Tuesdays to discuss the videos and readings, but you should treat this as if there are two classes each week. This means you will need to watch recorded lectures and complete the readings or assigned videos/podcasts ***before*** attending class. Students must participate weekly and complete assignments by the deadlines listed in the syllabus. You should be prepared to have your camera on. Discussion is the lifeblood of engagement. To foster a seminar-like atmosphere I will call on you to participate. If you cannot have your camera on, you should let me know.

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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

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There are roughly 5.5 million adults under correctional supervision in the U.S., the majority of whom (~67%) are on probation (2.9 million) or parole (803,000). Probation and parole are commonly known as *community corrections*—so-called because they keep individuals under correctional supervision in the community, rather than in prison or jail. Once a radical experiment, community corrections has become the most common way people experience the corrections system.

This course will introduce you to community corrections, covering traditional forms of community-based supervision (e.g., probation and parole) in addition to reentry and reintegration systems—some well-established and others novel. Throughout the course, we will consider community corrections at both the macro level (situating it within a wider social and political context) and micro level (what it looks like and how it works). At the end of the course, I want you to envision both what community corrections is, and what it can be.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe how the socio-political landscape affects community corrections in the United States. In other words, students should have developed an understanding of the broader social, economic, and political forces that shape community corrections in the United States.
2. Assess critically specific corrections policies (e.g.—contact standards, electronic monitoring, sanctions and incentives, probation and parole conditions, violations, referrals to treatment, etc.) by referring to social science research on the ethics and effectiveness of these policies.
3. Grasp how the community correctional systems in the U.S. reflect and perpetuate social inequalities based on race, class, and gender.

<u>REQUIRED VIDEOS AND READINGS</u>

There is no required textbook for this course; all videos and readings are available on Blackboard. I also note on Blackboard where you might skim certain articles or which parts of various articles to pay particular attention to, so be sure to check those instructions before reading. You must complete the videos and readings before class on Tuesday. You can find on Blackboard discussion questions that will help guide your watching/reading. We will discuss some of these questions during our class time and you will reflect on some of these questions for your Flipgrid videos. Success in this class requires being engaged and demonstrating critical thinking.

<u>COURSE ASSIGNMENTS</u>

Attendance and Class Participation (15% due weekly): We only meet 14 times! Attendance is required for this class. If you miss class, this will reflect in your final grade. **Please be prepared to have your camera on during class. and clear your calendar for class time. Do not schedule appointments or work during class time**. Class discussion is crucial to deepening our grasp of the concepts. Participation requires that you attend class prepared to engage in an in-class activity and arrive on time. If you are unable to attend a class session, please email me <u>before</u> class. Excuses such as doctor's appointments, trips to see family, or other such reasons do not count as "excused" because they are within your control and thus the absence is likely avoidable. Should your course grade be borderline at the end of the semester, your active, appropriate, and consistent participation in class discussions will push your grade toward a higher mark. You will be given points based on the rubric below. And remember that simply talking is not necessarily participation. If it is clear that you have not read the material you will not receive credit.

Missing four (4) or more class sessions = 0%; regularly present but inactive = 5%; regularly present and sporadically active = 10%; present and highly active = 15%.

Quizzes (20% due weekly): To encourage you to keep up with the course materials and come to class prepared to discuss them, you will have a quiz each week before class that week. The quizzes will be short. The questions are not meant to be tricky; they will focus on the main points, not the minute details. Nothing marked "Skim" will be included on the quizzes. I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

Weekly Flipgrid Videos (20% due weekly): Before class each week, you will submit one short (10 minutes max.) video on Flipgrid Here in which you reflect on the reading/listening assignments for that week and you will comment on one classmate's video with a question that their video promoted you to think about. Videos submitted after class will not be accepted. These videos will be graded as follows:

- 6 pts: you submitted your video and responded to one of your class members' videos.
- 3 pts: you submitted your video and did not respond to a classmate.
- 0 pts: you did not submit any video that week or did not submit it before the deadline.

Annotated Bibliography (40% due March 3rd and April 21st): You will make an annotated bibliography from the course readings. You will turn in one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester.

An annotated bibliography is a list of sources (books, articles, websites, etc.) with a short paragraph about each source. Each source in the annotated bibliography has a citation - the information a reader needs to find the original source, in a consistent format to make that easier. These consistent formats are called citation styles. You should use APA (American Psychological Association) style for social sciences.

Annotations versus Abstracts. Many scholarly articles start with an abstract, which is the author's summary of the article to help you decide whether you should read the entire article. This abstract is not the same thing as an annotation. The annotation needs to be in your own words, to explain the relevance of the source to your particular assignment or research question. We will discuss more in class. **(**Source: https://libguides.csun.edu/research-strategies/annotated-bibliography).

Annotations should address the following questions:

1. What is the main focus or purpose of the work? (e.g., what is the research question? why did the author(s) write this?)
2. What conclusions or observations did the author(s) reach? (e.g., what did they conclude? what are the key details?)
3. What are your conclusions or observations? (e.g., do you agree with the author's conclusion? Why or why not? You will be graded on your insights)
4. How does the paper relate to other papers across weeks (and outside of class)? You should make a minimum of three connections with readings/podcasts/videos from OTHER weeks and explain how they connect.

Concept Map (5%, due April 26th). Concept maps are a graphic representation of your understanding of how concepts fit together. Concept maps include *concepts*, usually enclosed in circles or boxes, and *relationships* between concepts, indicated by a connecting line. Words on the line are *linking words* and specify the relationship between concepts. You will create a concept map answering the question: **What is community corrections (what purposes does it serve? How does it work? Why does it work that way?) and what should it be?** We will talk more about this in class.

Assignment	Points Possible	Grade Breakdown
Attendance	30	15%
Weekly Quizzes (10 total)	40	20%
Weekly Flipgrid (10 total)	40	20%
Annotated Bibliographies	80	40%
Concept Map	10	5%
Total	200	100%

GRADING SCALE

The course components (attendance/participation; reading summaries; weekly quizzes, and research paper) will be weighted as described above to determine your final grade, which will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ 97-100%
A 94-96%   *outstanding*
A- 90-93%

B+ 87-89%
B 83-86%   *good*
B- 80-82%

C+ 77-79%
C 73-76%   *average*
C- 70-72%

D 60-69%   *marginal*
F <60%   *failing*

CLASS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Contacting Me
The easiest way to contact me is via email. Please feel free to send me an email at any time during the semester if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Please use your GMU email account and be sure to include your name in all emails and indicate the course number in the subject line so they do not get confused for spam. In addition to general questions, you should always feel free to email me at any time to set up a virtual meeting.

Note: In general, I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours on Monday-Friday. If you email me on a Friday or over the weekend, you may not hear back until Monday. If you have not heard back from me after this period, feel free to send a reminder email. Please do not reach out to me via Blackboard Messenger. All course communications must be through GMU email.

Make-up and Late Work Policy
If you have a legitimate, excused reason for missing an assignment, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make alternative arrangements. Each of you has a "Life Happens Pass," which is an automatic 72-hour extension on a (major) assignment once per semester, no questions asked, as long as you inform me in writing before the assignment is due. You will not be allowed to make up any missing work from the first half of the semester after spring break.

Etiquette
We will be discussing many issues in this class that may be controversial and emotional. I encourage students to discuss, disagree, and debate one another. However, rudeness and hostility will not be tolerated. I want you all to be critical of arguments, not the individuals making those arguments. We can and will discuss opposing viewpoints and perspectives respectfully.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty
George Mason University's Honor Code requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by the Mason Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, stealing, and plagiarizing (https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). Familiarize yourself with this policy and remember your legal fundamentals: Ignorance of the rules is not a valid defense!

Note: Please be sure that the work you submit in this class is your own, and that you provide proper citations when referencing another person's words or ideas. Instructors are required to report all violations of the Honor Code to the Mason Honor Committee. Violations of the Honor Code may result in a failing grade for the assignment or exam, a failing grade for the course, or any additional penalties determined by the committee, including dismissal from the university. We have multiple writing assignments in this class. Because the act of composing a response in your own words actually increases your learning, it is important that you complete the task yourself, rather than rely on an artificial intelligence (AI) tool. Completing these writing assignments yourself will help strengthen your performance in this class on later assignments and activities, as well as help you develop professionally and succeed in your career goals. You should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. If you do choose to experiment with AI text generation, you are expected to indicate your usage of it and give credit for text that has been generated by AI. The use of AI-generated text without proper attribution is a violation of academic integrity. *AI statement language from the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning*

Accommodations for Special Needs
If you need academic accommodations, please inform the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services (703-993-4306; https://ds.gmu.edu). All academic accommodations must be made through that office.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence
George Mason University is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination, sexual misconduct, and other acts of interpersonal violence to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted, or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students (https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/sexual-harassment-policy/).

As a faculty member and designated "Responsible Employee," I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per university policy. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Counseling and Psychological Services
If you are facing significant life stressors and feeling overwhelmed, there are resources available to help you. These include Counseling and Psychological Services (703) 993-2380, which provides confidential psychological services, including 24/7 crisis intervention. There is also Student Support (703) 993-5376, which helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate resources. Student Support also has an online referral system (for non-emergencies only): https://ssac.gmu.edu/. The non-emergency number for the GMU police is (703) 993-2810. See https://ulife.gmu.edu/about-us/offices-of-university-life/ for a full listing of service areas and contact information.

The Writing Center and Mason Library
The Writing Center at Mason (https://writingcenter.gmu.edu) is a fantastic and free resource providing information and one-on-one tutoring for all your writing needs. The Writing Center is available throughout your Mason career should you need assistance before submitting any assignments. They can help with any part of the writing process, from planning and organizing your paper to proofreading and revising. Their website also has guides on best practices for reading, note-taking, and citing sources. Mason Library also has excellent tutorials on writing, reading, note-taking, giving presentations, time management, and academic integrity. See https://library.gmu.edu/tutorials for a full list.

Purdue OWL
As a general resource for any college student, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a great resource for tips on writing and citations. In particular, if you are unsure of how to cite materials in your work, be sure to check their website, which is available at https://owl.purdue.edu/.

SCHEDULE

Week	Turn In before class	Class Date	Topic	Watch/Listen (minutes)	Read [pages]
1	Flip Quiz 1	1/16	Introductions and the state of things	What's the difference between probation and parole? (1)	Punishment Beyond Prisons (2023) Incarceration and supervision by state [18] Introduction to concepts [5]
2	Flip Quiz 2	1/23	How did we get here?	Almost 4 million people are on probation and parole. Here's why that matters (36)	Lodahl & Garland (2009) "The Evolution of Community Corrections" [23]
3	Flip Quiz 3	1/30	Shrinking or squeezing the balloon?	Justice in America Episode 22: Probation and Parole (50)	Phelps (2013) "The Paradox of Probation" [26]
4	Flip Quiz 4	2/6	You don't know me: Assessing individuals	Tool Helps Probation Officers Reduce Future Criminal Behavior (10)	Walsh, et al (2020) "The Presentence Investigation Report." [23] Pew (2011) "Risk/needs assessment 101." [8] Ruhland, (2020) "Philosophies and Decision Making in Parole Board Members" [22] *SKIM: Goddard (2021) "The Trouble with Using Risk Assessment Instruments to Quantify the Chance of Future Offending"*
5	Flip Quiz 5	2/13	U.S. Probation: Speak softly and carry a big stick?	Adult Probation Officer Recruitment Video (3.5)	Klockars (1972) "A theory of probation supervision" [6] Phelps & Ruhland (2022) "Governing marginality: Coercion and care in probation" [13]
6	Flip Quiz 6	2/20	U.S. Parole: You feel you've been rehabilitated?	Life on Parole (full documentary) | FRONTLINE (53)	Mackey & Rudes (2021) "Discretion in the U.S. Parole System" [27] Schwartzapfel (2015) "Nine things you probably didn't know about parole" [3] *SKIM: Old Law Parole Letters (2015)*
7	Flip Quiz 7	2/27	It is cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps	Why Life After Incarceration Is Just Another Prison, with Reuben Jonathan Miller (37) Emily Wang, Physician and Health Justice Leader | 2022 MacArthur Fellow (2)	Prison Policy Initiative (2020) "What You Should Know About Halfway Houses" [8] Miller (2014). Devolving the carceral state: Race, prisoner reentry, and the micro-politics of urban poverty management. [30] *SKIM: Western & Harding (2022). "Careers in criminalization"*
8	**A. Bib wks 1 -7 due March 3rd**	3/5	Spring Break		
9	Flip Quiz 8	3/12	Introduction to EBP supervision practices		Latessa & Schweitzer (2020) "Community Supervision and Violent Offenders: What The Research Tells Us and How to Improve Outcomes" [29] The Principles of Effective Intervention [7]

					SKIM: Toronjo & Taxman (2018) "Supervision face-to-face contacts: the emergence of an intervention."
10	Flip Quiz 9	3/19	EBP supervision practices under the microscope	Shaming the Sick: Substance Use and Stigma (19)	Appleton (2020) "Understanding Rapport in Supervision Settings." [11] Maruna & Mann (2006) "A fundamental attribution error? Rethinking cognitive distortions" [20] *SKIM: Lovins & Lovins (2021) "Rethinking Community Corrections"* *SKIM: Lovins et al (2018) "Probation Officer as a Coach: Building a new professional identity"*
11	Flip Quiz 10	3/26	Where is the love?	Transforming Cultures of Care - Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (10) Juvenile probation (3)	Di Giorgi (2017) "Back to Nothing: Prisoner Reentry and Neoliberal Neglect" [38] Salisbury & Van Voorhis (2009) "Gendered pathways: A quantitative investigation of women probationers' paths to incarceration." [22] *SKIM: Mendel (2018) "Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right."* *SKIM: Western (2018) Lifetimes of Violence*
12	Flip Quiz 11	4/2	Follow the Money	Debtors' Prisons: Life Inside America's For-Profit Justice System (Part 2/2) (10)	Latessa & Lovins (2019) "Privatization of Community Corrections" [16] Ruhland (2020) "Social worker, law enforcer, and now bill collector: Probation officers' collection of supervision fees" [16] *SKIM: Ramachandra (2018) " Set Up to Fail": The Impact of Offender-funded Private Probation on the Poor.*
13	Flip Quiz 12	4/9	Obey all laws and be good	Judge refuses to release Michigan teen who violated probation by not completing virtual class work (3)	Western (2018) "Back to Jail" [18] Freeman et al (2021) "Reducing Probation Revocations in Pima County, Arizona." [3] *SKIM: Rudes (2012) "Getting Technical"* *SKIM: Doherty (2015) "Obey all laws and be good"*
14	Flip Quiz 13	4/16	The future of community supervision		Harding, Western, & Sandelson (2022) "From supervision to opportunity: Reimagining probation and parole." [14] Executive Session on Community Corrections (2017) [28]
15	**A. Bib wks 9-14 Due April 21st**	4/23	So, what did you learn?		**Concept Map Due April 26th**