

CAPSTONE IN CRIMINOLOGY, LAW AND SOCIETY
CRIM 495, Section 001
Recitation Sections 301 and 302
Spring 2019

INSTRUCTOR

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(email to confirm)

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

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LECTURE

Tuesdays, 1:30-2:45pm
Music/Theater Building 1005

RECITATION SECTIONS

301: Thursdays, 1:30 pm - 2:45 pm
302: Thursdays, 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm
Robinson Hall B122

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this capstone course is for students to reflect upon, evaluate, and apply the knowledge they have gained as a criminology, law and society major while exploring the theme of inequality in the criminal justice system. Throughout the semester we will examine disparities in criminal justice processing and outcomes and will discuss how experiences with and perceptions of the justice system vary across social groups. The course will focus on contemporary issues in policing, courts, and corrections that have received significant attention from researchers, policymakers, and the public, and which underlie current efforts to reform the criminal justice system and reduce inequality. The CRIM 495 Capstone course is designated as a *Writing Intensive*, *Synthesis*, and *Scholarly Inquiry* course. Each component carries specific goals, guidelines, and learning outcomes, as detailed below.

Writing Intensive Course

CRIM 495 fulfills the Writing Intensive course requirement in the criminology, law and society major. It does so through a research paper (developed via a process of drafting, feedback, and revision) and regular writing assignments throughout the semester.

According to the Senate Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, writing-intensive courses must “devote significant time to instruction on writing and how to complete assignments successfully. . . . Students are required to revise at least one substantive assignment in the course based on instructor feedback . . . [and that assignment should be] divided into sequenced sections that receive feedback and can be revised . . . All writing assignments in the course should count substantially toward the students’ final grades and students should write a minimum of 3500 words.” For more information on WI courses: <https://wac.gmu.edu/wi-course-resources/wi-course-criteria/>

Mason Core Synthesis Course

CRIM 495 meets the Synthesis course requirement in the Mason Core. Synthesis courses provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the Mason Core curriculum and strive to expand their ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across disciplines. Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)
- Use multidisciplinary perspectives to connect issues in Criminology, Law and Society to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns
- Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources.

For more information on Synthesis courses: <https://masoncore.gmu.edu/synthesis/>

Scholarly Inquiry

CRIM 495 has been designated a Scholarly Inquiry course by Mason's Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities and Research (OSCAR) as part of the *Students as Scholars* initiative. The *Students as Scholars* initiative encourages undergraduates to learn about and conduct scholarly research. Scholarly Inquiry courses are designed to teach students the content and skills that will make them capable of evaluating scholarly work and prepare them to conduct their own scholarly project. The general learning outcomes for Scholarly Inquiry courses include:

- Articulate a research question, problem or challenge that is generally relevant and appropriate in scope
- Communicate knowledge from a scholarly project through writing, presenting, or performing, employing some conventions appropriate to the audience and context.
- Identify some relevant ethical issues; demonstrates some attention to ethical principles at some stages of the inquiry process.

During this course, students will locate, evaluate, integrate, and use academic literature. They will engage in the scholarly process by:

- Articulating and refining a scholarly question.
- Following ethical principles.
- Gathering and evaluating evidence appropriate to the question or inquiry.
- Applying appropriate scholarly conventions when reporting.
- Assessing the reliability of key assumptions and evidence.
- Situating the scholarly inquiry within a broader context.

For more information about *Students as Scholars* and other programs offered by OSCAR: <https://oscar.gmu.edu/>

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- 1) Epp, C., Maynard-Moody, S., & Haider-Markel, D. (2014). *Pulled over: How police stops define race and citizenship*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. ISBN-13: 978-0226113999.
- 2) Van Cleve, N. G. (2016). *Crook county: Racism and injustice in America's largest criminal court*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1503602786.
- 3) Western, B. (2018). *Homeward: Life in the year after prison*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation. ISBN-13: 978-0871549556.
- 4) Additional readings available on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT EVALUATION

- 1) Class Activities & Participation (11% of final grade): Beginning January 29, class participation will be earned by attending lecture and recitation sections, participating in class discussions, and completing in-class exercises. In-class activities will be varied and may be individual or group exercises. Arriving late, leaving early, or using unapproved technology is disruptive to the instructor and your peers and may affect your participation grade. Each class period (lecture or recitation) is worth 0.5% of the course grade. Students may miss two class sessions (lecture and/or recitation) without a negative impact on their participation grade; no excuse is required.
- 2) Reading and Movie Reviews (15% of final grade): Nine reading reviews will be assigned (three for each book). Each review will require a short summary and assessment of the reading. Students must complete seven reviews in total and at least two reviews per book. Thus, students may skip two reviews without a negative impact on their review grade; no excuse is required. Each of the seven reading reviews is worth 2% of the course grade. The movie review is worth 1% of the course grade.
- 3) Research Questions (24% of final grade): At the end of each section of the course (policing, courts, corrections), students will complete a written assignment in which they evaluate the reading and class material from that section and develop related research questions. Each of the three research question assignments is worth 8% of the course grade.
- 4) Research Paper (50% of final grade): Students will write a research paper on a topic of their choosing related to inequality in the criminal justice system. The paper will be drafted and submitted in sections, and students will receive a grade and feedback on each section draft to assist in the revision process as they produce the final paper. Students will also submit three assignments in preparation for drafting the paper. Collectively, the preparatory assignments and section drafts are worth 20% of the course grade. The final research paper is worth 30% of the course grade.

Final grades in the course will be based on the following breakdown:

Points	Percentage	Grade
93-100	93-100%	A
90-92	90-92%	A-
87-89	87-89%	B+
83-86	83-86%	B
80-82	80-82%	B-
77-79	77-79%	C+
73-76	73-76%	C
70-72	70-72%	C-
65-69	65-69%	D
0-64 points	0-64%	F

ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

Detailed guidelines for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Students must contact the instructor ahead of time if they cannot complete an assignment by the due date (in the case of an emergency, contact the instructor as soon as you are able). Late or e-mailed assignments will only be accepted in extraordinary circumstances, with appropriate documentation, and at the discretion of the instructor. Late assignments will receive a grading penalty.

If your final course grade is borderline, consistent class participation and completion of one extra reading review by the due date may help bump you up to the next grade.

COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS

Lecture and recitation sections will include interactive questions and discussion, activities, and videos. Class lectures will not merely re-cap the reading material but expand upon it. Regular attendance and student participation is essential to the success of the class overall.

We will cover sensitive and controversial issues in this course. Your fellow students may have different perspectives and experiences related to these topics than you (or the instructor), and views may be strongly held. Consistent with Mason's emphasis on diversity and inclusion, I expect everyone in the course to be respectful of others and to be open to learning. I encourage you to speak thoughtfully, listen carefully, and be self-reflective. Class will be a place where we can respectfully discuss opposing viewpoints and offer differing perspectives while focusing on the social scientific evidence.

To avoid disrupting your peers and/or the instructor, please turn off the ringers to all cell phones and do not access the Internet during class on your laptop or smartphone unless approved by the instructor. Laptops or smartphones should only be used to take notes or access course-related materials; please do not use electronic devices to email, chat, text, game, shop, etc.

BLACKBOARD AND COURSE COMMUNICATION

The course syllabus, lecture slides, reading assignments, and important announcements will be posted on Blackboard. Homework assignments will be posted to and submitted via Blackboard. To login go to: <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, click on the Courses tab, and locate the link to CRIM 495 in the course list. For technical assistance with Blackboard, go to: <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/Students/>.

Changes to the course schedule, assignments, and other important information will be announced during class and sent to your MasonLive email address. Be sure to check your email account regularly for updated information (if you choose to forward your Mason email to another email account, make sure that the forwarding is set up correctly). If you have questions or concerns about the course, you are encouraged to stop by my office hours or contact me via email to set up an appointment. I do my best to reply to emails within two business days (but usually sooner).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please inform the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. See <http://ds.gmu.edu> for more information.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND THE GMU HONOR CODE

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which 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/>). **All graded work for this class must be completed *independently* (do not work with or compare answers with anyone else).**

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. Suspected cases of plagiarism may be evaluated using anti-plagiarism software. 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.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

This course schedule is subject to change depending on student interest in specific topics, university closings due to weather, etc. Changes to the schedule or assignments will be announced in class, sent via email, and/or posted on Blackboard (BB).

Readings and assignments should be completed before class on the date they are listed.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Due</i>	<i>Assignments Due (see Blackboard for details)</i>
Week 1			
Lecture Tue, Jan 22	Course Introduction	Start <i>Pulled Over</i>	
Recitation Thu, Jan 24	Introduction to Recitation		
Week 2			
Lecture Tue, Jan 29	Police Contact and Interactions	<i>Pulled Over</i> Chapter 1 & 2 (pp 1-51) Skim pp 167-173 in Appendix	Reading Review #1
Recitation Thu, Jan 31	Overview of Research Paper & Brainstorming Paper Topics		
Week 3			
Lecture Tues, Feb 5	Police Contact and Interactions	<i>Pulled Over</i> Chapters 3 & 4 (pp 52-92)	Reading Review #2
Recitation Thu, Feb 7	Developing Scholarly Questions		
Week 4			
Lecture Tue, Feb 12	Police Contact and Interactions	<i>Pulled Over</i> Chapters 7 & 8 (pp 134-166)	Reading Review #3
Recitation Thu, Feb 14	Conducting Library Research (Librarian visit)		Research Paper: Topic and Guiding Question

Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due (see Blackboard for details)
Week 5			
Lecture Tue, Feb 19	Flex Day – Topic TBA	Start <i>Crook County</i>	Research Questions #1 on <i>Pulled Over</i>
Recitation Thu, Feb 21	Creating Paper Outlines		Research Paper: Sources and Keywords
Week 6			
Lecture Tue, Feb 26	The Courts and Colorblind Justice	<i>Crook County</i> Intro & Chp 1 (pp 1-50) Skim Appendix (pp 195-216)	Reading Review #4
Recitation Thu, Feb 28	Discuss Section #1 of Research Paper		Research Paper: Outline
Week 7			
Lecture Tue, Mar 5	The Courts and Colorblind Justice	<i>Crook County</i> Chapter 2, 3 & 4 (pp 51-156)	Reading Review #5
Recitation Thu, Mar 7	Discuss Section #2 of Research Paper		Research Paper: Draft of Section #1 (Introduction)
Week 8			
Lecture Tue, Mar 12	<i>No Lecture – Spring Break</i>		
Recitation Thu, Mar 14	<i>No Recitation – Spring Break</i>		
Week 9			
Lecture Tue, Mar 19	The Courts and Colorblind Justice	<i>Crook County</i> Chapter 5 & Conclusion (pp 157-190)	Reading Review #6
Recitation Thu, Mar 21	Discuss Section #3 of Research Paper		Research Paper: Draft of Section #2 Nature of the Problem)

Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due (see Blackboard for details)
Week 10			
Lecture Tue, Mar 26	Documentary: 13 th (first half)	Start <i>Homeward</i>	
Recitation Thu, Mar 28	Documentary: 13 th (second half)		Research Questions #2 on <i>Crook County</i> Movie Review (due Friday)
Week 11			
Lecture Tue, Apr 2	Mass Incarceration and its Consequences	<i>Homeward</i> Chapters 1 & 3 (pp 1-10 and 26-45) Skim Chp 2 (pp 11-25)	Reading Review #7
Recitation Thu, Apr 4	Discuss Section #4 of Research Paper		Research Paper: Draft of Section #3 (Solutions and Reforms)
Week 12			
Lecture Tue, Apr 9	Mass Incarceration and its Consequences	<i>Homeward</i> Chapters 6 & 9 (pp 83-100 and 139-155)	Reading Review #8
Recitation Thu, Apr 11	Discuss Section #5 of Research Paper		Research Paper: Draft of Section #4 (Conclusion)
Week 13			
Lecture Tue, Apr 16	No Lecture This Week		
Recitation Thu, Apr 18	Recommendations for Research Paper Revisions		Research Paper: Draft of Section #5 (References)
Week 14			
Lecture Tue, Apr 23	Mass Incarceration and its Consequences	<i>Homeward</i> Chapters 10 & 11 (pp 156-189)	Reading Review #9
Recitation Thu, Apr 25	Individual Meetings (optional)		<i>Optional for Research Paper: 2nd Chance Review</i>

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Due</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i> <i>(see Blackboard for details)</i>
<i>Week 15</i>			
Lecture Tue, Apr 30	Course Wrap Up		Research Questions #3 on <i>Homeward</i>
Recitation Thu, May 2	Individual Meetings (optional)		
<i>Finals Week</i>			
Wed, May 8			Research Paper: Final Paper Due by 5pm