

Values, Ethics & Criminal Justice Policy / CRIM 700.001

Online synchronous / asynchronous / in-person hybrid

Tuesdays, 12:00 pm to 1:15 pm

Room: Enterprise Hall 274

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm, or by appointment

About the Instructor

I am term assistant professor of criminology, law and society at George Mason University. My research is primarily on the death penalty, human rights, and comparative law. I have an M.Sc. in African Politics (London), a J.D. (Boston), and a Ph.D. in law (Middlesex). I am licensed to practice law in New York and Washington, DC.

Email: anovak2@gmu.edu

Grading scale for the class

I will not use the grades “D+” or “D-.”

98-100 A+

93-97 A

90-92 A-

88-89 B+

83-87 B

80-82 B-

78-79 C+

73-77 C

70-72 C-

60-69 D

<60 F

In addition, in the event that I must calculate grade fractions, I will always round up to the next highest point if you have a 0.45 or higher.

Grading rubric

12 weekly quizzes (15 points each) = 180 points

Discussion board posts (2 points each) = 24 points

First installment of final paper = 30 points

Final paper = 100 points

Class participation in discussions = 16 points

Total = 350 points

Attendance

We meet either synchronously online or in person 12 times in addition to the introductory class on August 25. Your attendance is expected. If this class meets in person, you will have the option of joining online instead of in person. An online attendance and an in-person attendance count the same.

Failing to attend 9 times will result in a 35 point deduction from your final grade (the equivalent of 10%). However, excused absences for medical reasons, including those that are coronavirus-related, will not count if you keep me apprised of the situation to the best of your ability.

Late work policy

If you are late taking a weekly quiz, please let me know as soon as possible and I will keep it open for up to 48 hours longer. All the quizzes must be completed before I grade them, because grading will reveal the answers. If you missed a quiz for which I have already released the answers, you may still take a portion of the quiz for partial credit at my discretion.

If you are late posting on the Discussion Board in a given week, your post will be subject to a 50% reduction. This is because the previous week's Discussion Board posts are designed to generate discussion in class, and a late post does not serve this purpose. Posts that are irrelevant, disrespectful, or toxic are not appropriate for the Discussion Board.

If your draft paper is late, it will be subject to a flat 5% grade reduction regardless of when it is submitted. I would rather read a good paper that's a week late than a bad paper that's a day late. If your final paper is late, it will be subject to a flat 10% grade reduction, regardless of when it is submitted. However, if it is not submitted by the time I calculate grades, you must ask me for an incomplete before your final grade is submitted. I cannot change a final grade unless I made a calculation error.

Finally, your research should not contain interviews or surveys that you have administered yourself. This constitutes research on human subjects and requires ethical clearance from the university.

Coronavirus and Diversity/Inclusion

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to take Safe Return to Campus Training prior to visiting campus. Training is available in Blackboard (<https://mymason.gmu.edu>). Students are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-plan). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, or Red email response. Only students who receive a "green" notification are

permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

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 1412. 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).

This course seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

Course schedule

Initial online class meeting (August 25, 2020)

Week 1: Normative Ethics (September 1, 2020)

Week 2: Pleasure, Pain, and Shame (September 8, 2020)

Week 3: Character and Drug Courts (September 15, 2020)

Week 4: Utility and Harm Reduction (September 22, 2020)

Week 5: Duty, Principle, and Capital Punishment (September 29, 2020)

Week 6: Divine Command and Mercy (October 6, 2020)

No class on October 13 for Fall Break

Week 7: Justice as Fairness and Hate Speech (October 20, 2020)

Week 8: Ethics of Care and Sex Offenders (October 27, 2020)

No class on November 3 for Election Day

Week 9: Social Contract and Disenfranchisement (November 10, 2020)

Week 10: Restorative Justice and Truth (November 17, 2020)

Week 11: Procedural Justice and Prisoner Litigation (November 24, 2020)

Week 12: Non-Western Theories of Justice and Compensation (December 1, 2020)

Honor Code

Sharing of instructor-created materials, particularly materials relevant to assignments or exams, to public online “study” sites is considered a violation of Mason’s Honor Code. For more information, see the

Office of Academic Integrity's summary of information about online study sites. The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

For the full Honor Code, see academicintegrity.gmu.edu.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should (1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office for Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and (2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs. I want to be helpful.