

CAPSTONE IN CRIMINOLOGY, LAW AND SOCIETY

CRIM 495, Section 001

Recitation Sections 301 and 302

Fall 2021

INSTRUCTOR

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TEACHING ASSISTANT

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10am-11am (virtual)

LECTURE

Tuesdays, 9:00am-10:15am

Enterprise Hall 276

RECITATION SECTIONS

301: Thu, 10:30am-11:45am, Horizon Hall 3008

302: Thu, 12:00pm-1:15pm, Horizon Hall 4000

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 explore disparities in criminal justice processing and outcomes related to policing, courts, and corrections. We will also consider efforts to reform the justice system to reduce inequality. Students will write a research paper on inequality in the justice system. The Capstone in Criminology, Law and Society is designated as a *Mason Impact*, *Writing Intensive*, and *Synthesis* course. Each component carries specific goals, guidelines, and learning outcomes, as detailed below.

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 (<https://masoncore.gmu.edu/synthesis/>).

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Communicate effectively in 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

Writing Intensive Course

CRIM 495 fulfills the Writing Intensive course requirement in the criminology, law and society major. Writing Intensive courses devote significant time to writing instruction and how to complete assignments successfully; they include writing assignments that count substantially toward the students' final grades (<https://wac.gmu.edu/wi-course-resources/wi-course-criteria/>). Students in CRIM 495 complete a research paper (developed via a process of drafting, feedback, and revision) and regular writing assignments throughout the semester.

During this course students will:

- Use writing to explore and respond to texts or other content in ways that deepen their awareness of criminology, law and society
- Develop strategies appropriate to scholarly writing in criminology, law and society for revising, reorganizing, and proofreading based upon feedback they receive as they engage in a recursive writing process
- Gain familiarity with scholarly writing in criminology, law and society and be able to explain some of its major conventions, including structure, content, language use, and citation practices

Mason Impact Course

CRIM 495 has been designated a Mason Impact course in the Research and Creative Activities area by Mason's Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities and Research (<https://oscar.gmu.edu/>). Mason Impact courses are designed to develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. Students explore how knowledge is created and used, investigate local and global challenges from multiple perspectives, and help students develop relevant questions.

By participating in this course, students will:

- Understand how knowledge is generated and communicated, and how it can be used to address questions or problems in disciplines and in society
- Be able to identify and negotiate multiple perspectives, work collaboratively within and across multiple social and environmental contexts, and engage ethically with their subject and with others
- Use inquiry skills to articulate a question; engage in an inquiry process; and situate the concepts, practices, or results within a broader context
 - Students will be able to ask increasingly complex questions about significant problems, debates, or challenges
 - Students will be able to evaluate and choose inquiry methods that are appropriate to a project
 - Students will be able to explain how a project has value to local, civic, professional, scholarly, or global contexts

COURSE FORMAT

The lecture and recitation sections for this course will be taught in-person, in a classroom setting. The Blackboard learning system will be used for assignments and virtual class-related activities.

Tuesday Lecture: Professor Johnson will lead the Tuesday lectures, which focus on the course texts and related topics. Lectures will include presentations on reading materials, interactive discussions (some virtual), videos, and other activities. Regular attendance and participation are strongly encouraged.

Thursday Writing Lab: Teaching Assistant Clay Drummond will lead the Thursday writing labs, which focus on the research paper. The writing labs will include presentations, individual and group activities, and assignments designed to assist students with the research paper. Regular attendance and participation are strongly encouraged.

The **course structure** is relatively consistent so there is a routine to the class most weeks. Generally, reading reviews are due Monday, lectures are on Tuesday, research paper assignments are due Wednesday, and writing lab/assignments are on Thursday. There are a few weeks when this pattern differs, as indicated in the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Special Note for Fall 2021: *Conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic can change quickly, and flexibility is paramount. This course has been designed so that the whole class can pivot to a virtual synchronous format at any point in the semester, should conditions warrant. In addition, it is designed so that individual students will be able to complete the course requirements virtually if they become ill or are required to quarantine.*

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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT EVALUATION

- 1) Reading Reviews (28% of final grade): Nine reading reviews will be assigned (three for each book). Students must complete at least seven reviews; if more than seven are submitted, the highest seven scores will count toward the course grade. Each review will require a short summary and assessment of the reading. Each reading review is worth 4% of the course grade.
- 2) Virtual Activities (17% of final grade): In Weeks 5, 10, and 14, students will engage in a class activity on Blackboard related to the lecture material and readings. Additional virtual activities may be assigned periodically, including in Week 15. Each activity will be worth up to 5% of the course grade.
- 3) Writing Lab Assignments (5% of final grade): Students will complete ten writing lab assignments to help them with the research paper. Each assignment is worth 0.5% 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 (minimum 3,500 words). The paper will be drafted and submitted in sections, and students will receive 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 |

POLICIES ON STUDENT WORK

Special Note for Fall 2021: *We are living in extraordinary times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and faculty are operating under increased stress and are facing exceptional circumstances which necessitate greater flexibility, understanding, and support. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the instructor or teaching assistant if you need additional accommodations beyond those described here.*

Late Assignments: 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 possible). In most cases, late submissions will be accepted; in some cases, there may be a grading penalty. These decisions are at the discretion of the instructor.

Make-Up Opportunities: Opportunities to make-up missed work may be available in some circumstances. These decisions are at the discretion of the instructor.

Keep Copies of Submitted Work: Students are expected to retain an electronic copy of all work submitted; it is a good idea to keep a copy of all Blackboard submission confirmation notices as well. If transmission of the work fails, students are expected to "resend" the document according to the instructor's directions. Students are expected to verify their own Blackboard submissions by returning to the appropriate place in Blackboard after the work has been posted.

Turnaround Time for Grading: Grading for an assignment usually does not begin until on or after the due date. In most cases, assignments submitted on time will be graded within 7 days of the due date (go to the "My Grades" section of Blackboard for scores and feedback). Grading and feedback on research paper drafts may take longer.

Final Course Grades: Final course grades that are within 0.5 points of the next higher grade will automatically be rounded up to the higher grade (for example, a 79.5/C+ will become an 80/B-). Final course grades that are on the borderline between two grades may be bumped up to the next grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

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.

BLACKBOARD AND COURSE COMMUNICATION

Students will need to login to Blackboard regularly to review and complete assignments. Changes to the course schedule, assignments, and other important information will be posted on Blackboard and sent to your Mason email address. To login to Blackboard go to: <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, click on the Courses tab, and locate the link to CRIM 495 in your course list. For technical assistance with Blackboard, go to: <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>

Students must use their Mason accounts for all email communication with the instructor and TA. Students should check their Mason email account regularly for course announcements and other information.

Students with questions or concerns about the course are encouraged to reach out for assistance. Both the professor and the TA will hold weekly drop-in office hours (in person and/or virtual). Students can also post a question in the public “Got a Question?” discussion board forum on Blackboard or email the instructor or TA. Please see the “Contact Your Instructor” page on Blackboard for information.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Special Note for Fall 2021: All students taking in-person classes are required to follow the university’s public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). These include vaccinations, Mason’s daily COVID Health Check, face coverings, testing, and isolation or quarantine. Only individuals who receive a “Green” email notification are permitted to attend this course in-person; students may be asked to show their Green email. Mason’s policy on face coverings requires all individuals to wear a face covering (mask) in all indoor settings, including classrooms. Only individuals who wear a mask are permitted to attend this course in-person.

Consistent with Mason’s emphasis on diversity and inclusion, everyone in this course is expected to be respectful of others and open to learning. Your classmates may have different perspectives and experiences related to the course topics than you (or the instructor), and views may be strongly held. Students and instructors are encouraged to speak thoughtfully, listen carefully, and be self-reflective. Students and instructors are expected to follow courteous Internet etiquette. All members of the class are expected to help promote a learning space 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 volume on your cell phone and refrain from non-course-related activities during lectures and writing labs. Please be mindful that images on laptop and smartphone screens may be distracting to your peers, especially if you are engaged in activities like chatting, gaming, shopping, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT PRIVACY

Technology requirements for online classes are available under “Policies & Expectations” on Blackboard. If we need to pivot to an asynchronous virtual class format, students will need reliable access to a laptop or desktop computer with an updated operating system and a stable broadband Internet connection. A functional camera and microphone are also highly recommended, though students will not be required to have their video cameras turned on during synchronous class meetings.

Synchronous class meetings may be recorded by the instructor and posted to Blackboard. Recordings will only be accessible to students taking this course during this semester. All course materials posted to Blackboard are private to this class; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

Synchronous class meetings that include audio, textual, or visual information from other students must be viewed privately; do not watch these live sessions with anyone who is not a member of this class. In addition, video recordings of the class meetings made by the instructor or a student that includes audio, visual, or textual information from other students are private; they must not be shared with anyone who is not a member of this class.

Please respect the privacy of any students (or instructor) who may disclose personal information in the class. Please respect everyone’s right to freely choose whether to disclose or not disclose personal 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/>). Posting instructor-created materials (such as assignments, exams, or grading rubrics) to public online “study” sites is considered a violation of Mason’s Honor Code.

All graded work for this class must be completed *independently* (do not work with or compare answers with anyone else). All writing assignments will be evaluated using anti-plagiarism software. 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Detailed guidelines for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard. The course schedule and assignments listed below are subject to change; any changes will be announced on Blackboard and sent to students' Mason email accounts.

CRIM 495 FALL 2021 COURSE SCHEDULE

Table Key: BB=Blackboard, WL=Writing Lab, RP=Research Paper

| Date | Topics | Assignments and Due Dates (see Blackboard for details) |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Week 1 Aug 22-28 | Lecture Tuesday 8/24 Course Introduction Writing Lab Thursday 8/26 Introduction | Thu: Post self-introduction on BB by Thu 8/26 at 11:59pm Sun: Complete survey by Sun 8/30 at 11:59pm Sun: Take syllabus quiz by Sun 8/30 at 11:59pm Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 8/28 <i>Pulled Over</i> Chapters 1 & 2 (pp 1-51) Skim Appendix (pp 167-173) |
| Week 2 Aug 29-Sep 4 | Lecture Tuesday 8/31 Police Contact and Interactions Writing Lab Thursday 9/2 Overview of Research Paper & Brainstorming Paper Topics | Mon: Submit Reading Review #1 by Mon 8/31 at 11:59pm Thu: Submit WL #1 assignment by Thu 9/2 at 11:59pm Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 9/4 <i>Pulled Over</i> Chapters 3 & 4 (pp 52-92) |
| Week 3 Sep 5-11 | Lecture Tuesday 9/7 Police Contact and Interactions Writing Lab Thursday 9/9 Developing Scholarly Questions | Mon: Submit Reading Review #2 by Mon 9/6 at 11:59pm Thu: Submit WL #2 assignment by Thu 9/9 at 11:59pm Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 9/11 <i>Pulled Over</i> Chapters 7 & 8 (pp 134-166) |

| Date | Topics | Assignments and Due Dates (see Blackboard for details) |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Week 4 Sep 12-18 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 9/14 Police Contact and Interactions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writing Lab Thursday 9/16 Conducting Library Research</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #3 by Mon 9/13 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Topic & Guiding Question by Wed 9/15 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #3 assignment by Thu 9/16 at 11:59pm</p> |
| Week 5 Sep 19-25 | <p style="text-align: center;">Class Activity On Blackboard</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writing Lab Thursday 9/23 Creating Outlines</p> | <p>Participate in Class Activity (TBA)</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Sources & Keywords by Wed 9/22 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #4 assignment by Thu 9/23 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 9/25 <i>Crook County</i> Introduction & Chapter 1 (pp 1-50) Skim Appendix (pp 195-216)</p> |
| Week 6 Sep 26-Oct 2 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 9/28 Courts and Colorblind Justice</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writing Lab Thursday 9/30 Discuss Section #1 of Research Paper</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #4 by Mon 9/27 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Outline by Wed 9/29 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #5 assignment by Thu 9/30 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 10/2 <i>Crook County</i> Chapters 2 & 3 (pp 51-125)</p> |
| Week 7 Oct 3-9 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 10/5 Courts and Colorblind Justice</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writing Lab Thursday 10/7 Discuss Section #2 of Research Paper & Citations</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #5 by Mon 10/6 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Draft of Section #1 (Introduction) by Wed 10/6 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #6 assignment by Thu 10/7 at 11:59pm</p> |

| Date | Topics | Assignments and Due Dates (see Blackboard for details) |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Week 8 Oct 10-16</p> | <p>NO LECTURE TUES 10/12 (Fall Break)</p> <p>NO WRITING LAB ON 10/14 (Optional Office Hours)</p> | <p>Work on RP Draft of Section #2 (Nature of the Problem) due next week.</p> <p>Meet with TA during office hours for questions (optional)</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 10/16 <i>Crook County</i> Chapters 4, 5 & Conclusion (pp 127-190)</p> |
| <p>Week 9 Oct 17-23</p> | <p>Lecture Tuesday 10/19 Courts and Colorblind Justice</p> <p>Writing Lab Thursday 10/21 Discuss Section #3 of Research Paper & Style/Tone</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #6 by Mon 10/18 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Draft of Section #2 (Nature of the Problem) by Wed 10/20 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #7 assignment by Thu 10/21 at 11:59pm</p> |
| <p>Week 10 Oct 24-30</p> | <p>Class Activity On Blackboard</p> <p>NO WRITING LAB ON 10/28 (Optional Office Hours)</p> | <p>Participate in Class Activity (TBA)</p> <p>Working on RP Draft of Section #3 (Solutions and Reforms) due next week</p> <p>Meet with TA during office hours for questions (optional)</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 10/30 <i>Homeward</i> Chapters 1 & 3 (pp 1-10 and 26-45) Skim Chapter 2 (pp 11-25)</p> |
| <p>Week 11 Oct 31-Nov 6</p> | <p>Lecture Tuesday 11/2 Incarceration and Inequality</p> <p>Writing Lab Thursday 11/4 Discuss Section #4 of Research Paper & Writing Mechanics</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #7 by Mon 11/1 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP: Draft of Section #3 (Solutions and Reforms) by Wed 11/3 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #8 assignment by Thu 11/4 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 11/6 <i>Homeward</i> Chapters 6 & 9 (pp 83-100 and 139-155)</p> |

| Date | Topics | Assignments and Due Dates (see Blackboard for details) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Week 12 Nov 7-13 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 11/9 Incarceration and Inequality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writing Lab Thursday 11/11 Discuss Section #5 of Research Paper & References</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #8 by Mon 11/8 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Draft of Section #4 (Conclusion) by Wed 11/10 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: Submit WL #9 assignment by Thu 11/11 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Sun: Complete Reading Assignment by Sun 11/13 <i>Homeward</i> Chapters 10 & 11 (pp 156-189)</p> |
| Week 13 Nov 14-20 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 11/16 Incarceration and Inequality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VIRTUAL Writing Lab Thursday 11/18 Discuss Recommendations for Research Paper Revisions & Title Page</p> | <p>Mon: Submit Reading Review #9 by Mon 11/15 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Wed: Submit RP Draft of Section #5 (References) by Wed 11/17 at 11:59pm</p> <p>Thu: View Virtual Presentation and Submit WL #10 assignment by Thu 11/18 at 11:59pm</p> |
| 10- | | |
| Week 14 Nov 21-27 | <p style="text-align: center;">Class Activity On Blackboard</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NO WRITING LAB THU 11/24 (Thanksgiving Break)</p> | <p>Participate in Class Activity (TBA)</p> <p>Continue Writing/Revising Research Paper</p> |
| Week 15 Nov 28-Dec 4 | <p style="text-align: center;">Lecture Tuesday 11/30 Course Wrap Up</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NO WRITING LAB ON 12/2 (Optional Office Hours)</p> | <p>Continue Writing/Revising Research Paper</p> <p>Meet with TA during office hours for questions (optional)</p> <p>Thu: Submit Journal Assignment by Thu 12/2 at 11:59pm</p> |
| Finals Week | | Tue: Submit Final Research Paper by Tue 12/7 at 11:59pm |