

CRIM 100
Introduction to Criminal Justice
Mason Korea
Spring 2022

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Office Location: G548 @ Mason Korea
Class Time: Tuesdays, 9am - 11.40am
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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 demand for change regarding 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 class 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 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, 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 turn off all electronic devices during class. Laptop use will *not* be permitted unless with special permission from the instructor. This rule is a non-negotiable; research shows that students rarely restrict the use of their laptops to note taking. Research also shows that use of laptops in class for anything other than note taking distracts the student as well as those around them. Using unauthorized electronics in the classroom will negatively affect the student's participation grade and attendance.

Overview of Course Grade

Your learning will be evaluated in the following ways:

15% Class Participation (Active Listening, Large Group Discussions, Activities in Class)

15% Class Participation (Small Group Discussions)

15% Journals

15% YouTube/Video Analysis and Presentation

15% Mid-Term Exam

20% Cumulative Final Exam

5% Peer Evaluations

1. Class Participation

This course depends upon your participation. More than two absences of our class 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 listen, ask questions, share your perspectives, and engage in critical thinking about the material during *Large Group Discussions* and *Small Group Discussions*. 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/their participation grade will be significantly reduced.

2. Small Group Discussions

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 every class is: *Small Group Discussions* (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 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 8am the day of class. 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 two to three short videos) related to crime and/or criminal justice that illustrates sociological concepts, theories or issues covered in our class discussions, readings, and/or weekly lectures. Using PowerPoint as your medium of presentation, your group will show the video(s) and offer a cogent and compelling analysis of them. I will provide more instructions as the semester progresses.

5. Mid-Term and Final Exam

The final exam in this course is cumulative and includes analyzing a real crime case.

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

Traditional (face-to-face) or Online Instruction

Based on the COVID-19 situation in Korea, we will start the semester completely in-person. Please note that the format of this class may change at mid-point of the semester if the health situation in Korea worsens. I ask that you be flexible with the format of instruction, and I will do my best to support you along the way.

Turning in Late Work

All course work should be submitted by the assignment deadlines. There is no exception for journals and group presentation. 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, papers 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. This rule does not apply to weekly journals because late submission for journals is not available.

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 participation 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 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

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Tentative Schedule of Topics

As the instructor for this course, I often make changes and adjustments to the course schedule. I post weekly readings on Blackboard and make weekly announcements via email. Please bring the required texts to our weekly classes.

Week 1 Introduction

2/22 Introduction & Syllabus

Week 2: Overview of the criminal justice system

3/1 *Independence Movement Day, No Class*

[Listen to Uploaded Lecture and take notes]

Week 3: Overview of the criminal justice system

3/8 Syllabus & Journal Guidelines Quiz; *Textbook*, Chapter 1; Lecture

Week 4: Purpose, types and sources of law

3/15 *Textbook*, Chapter 2; Lecture

Week 5: Nature and causes of crime

3/22 1) Real Life, Real Issues Documentary; 2) Read the cases of four kids

Week 6: Policing: Goals, structure, and methods

3/29 *Textbook*, Chapter 3; Lecture

Week 7: Policing: Goals, structure and methods

4/5 Policing the Police Documentary; Lecture; Mid-Term Exam Review

Week 8: Exam Week

4/12 Mid-Term Exam

Week 9: Pretrial and trial procedures; Jury decision-making

4/19 *Textbook*, Chapter 4; Lecture

Week 10: Pretrial and trial procedures; Jury decision-making

4/26 The Plea Documentary; Lecture (take notes on the six theories & upload)

Week 11: Class Exercise, Applying Theories Through Family Case

5/3 In-class exercise on hypothetical family case

Week 12: Corrections & Group Presentations of Applying Theories Exercise

5/10 Prison State Documentary; Group Presentations (extra credit for final exam)

Week 13: Corrections; Why do we punish? What is the purpose of punishment?

5/17 *Textbook*, Chapters 6; Give in-class time for Group Project

Week 14: Why do we punish? Rehabilitation

5/24 *College Behind Bars* Documentary, Part 1 and 2

Week 15: Why do we punish? Rehabilitation

5/31 Last Class; *College Behind Bars* Documentary, Part 3 and 4
Sociology YouTube Project Presentations due by 11.59pm

Final Exams, Wednesday 6/8 - Wednesday 6/15