

**Punishment and Corrections**  
CRIM 402  
Fall 2022

**COURSE INFORMATION**

August 22 - December 14  
Monday (on your own) and Wednesday (with the class on Zoom) 9:00am - 10:15am

This is an online class. Mondays you will use the class time to watch videos and/or do the readings. We will meet as a group on Wednesdays to discuss the videos and readings. Students are required to participate weekly and complete assignments by the deadlines listed in the syllabus. A computer with an Internet connection is required.

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Heather Toronjo (Roberts), M.A., MPP  
Office Location: Vernon Smith Hall, Arlington campus  
Office hours: By appointment on zoom  
Email: htoronjo@gmu.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to Punishment & Corrections! This course covers theories on forms of punishment systems; punishment and corrections as a product of historical, cultural, and political changes; differences by race and gender in punishment and corrections; problems of social control and violence in prisons; alternative rehabilitation; and community prevention strategies.

Most broadly, this course serves as an in-depth examination of how and why the American criminal justice system punishes offenders. We will consider the theoretical underpinnings of various forms of punishment and corrections, and we will evaluate the historical, social, and political conditions that shape who is punished and how. We will cover a wide range of topics and debates related to punishment and corrections but there are many still we will not have time to cover (e.g., the child welfare system, immigration, and juvenile justice). I hope that this course spurs in you a curiosity about all the ways we attempt to punish and correct behavior, as well as *what* we punish and correct, *why* we punish and correct, the *ways* in which we've chosen to punish and correct, and *who* we punish and correct.

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

1. Describe how the socio-political landscape affects whom, why, and how we punish. In other words, students should have developed a sociological understanding of punishment and corrections in the United States.
2. Assess critically specific punishment and corrections policies (e.g.—police patrols, laws, judges decisions, sentencing policies, incarceration, solitary confinement, etc.) by referring to social science research on the ethics and effectiveness of these policies.

3. Understand the structure and subculture of correctional facilities in the United States.
4. Grasp how the punishment and correctional systems in America reflects and perpetuates social inequalities based on race, class, and gender.

### **REQUIRED VIDEOS AND READINGS**

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 and check those instructions prior to reading. It is important that you complete the videos and readings prior to class on Wednesday. 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 simply requires being engaged and demonstrating critical thinking.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Attendance and Class Participation (15 points):** Attendance is required for this class. If you miss class, this will reflect on your final grade. Participation requires that you attend class prepared for each lecture (having read the material), engage in class discussions, and arrive on time. If you are unable to attend a class session, please email me before class.

**Reflection Essays: 20 points (10 points each):** You will complete 2 (3 page) reflection essays

- Essay 1 due by 11:59pm October 15th will cover all the readings and media from week 2 to week 7 inclusive.
- Essay 2 1 due by 11:59pm December 3rd will cover all the readings and media from week 9 to week 14 inclusive.

**Weekly Flipgrid Videos 50 points (Max 5 points each week) :** By 11:59 p.m. on Thursday each week, you will submit one short (10 minutes max.) video on Flipgrid [Here](#) in which you informally reflect on the readings for that week. By 11:59 p.m. on Sunday each week, you should also submit video responses to two of classmates' videos. These videos will be graded as follows:

- 5 pts: you submitted your video and responded to two of your group members' videos.
- 3.75 pts: you submitted your video and responded to one of your group members' videos.
- 2.5 pts: you submitted only your own video.
- 0 pts: you did not submit any videos that week.

### **Infographic assignment 15 points**

Infographics are a great way to disseminate research findings to the broader public. In this assignment, students will develop policy recommendations on a topic related to punishment and corrections in a visually appealing way. Students will:

- Review the academic research related to the topic they choose.

- Create an infographic summarizing the main findings on their topic and providing policy recommendations.
- Students must rely on at least 5 academic sources in this assignment
- Submit infographic on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. We will cover more details on the assignment during the semester.

### **LATE WORK POLICY**

“Life Happens Pass” each of you has 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.

### **GRADING SCALE**

Students will be graded on the following scale:

A: 93-100  
A-: 90-92  
B+: 87-89  
B: 83-86  
B-: 80-82  
C+: 77-79  
C: 73-76  
C-: 70-72  
D: 60-69  
F: <60

### **LEARNING DURING A PANDEMIC**

We are living through a period of immense disruption, anxiety, and stress. Expecting normalcy in the classroom during a time of crisis is not reasonable, and as we learn together during the pandemic, please feel free to approach me with suggestions about how to support you if you are struggling with the unique difficulties that the pandemic has generated—whether these involve extra care burdens, financial issues, mental health challenges or anything else. While I may be unable to offer direct assistance with some of these issues, I am happy to support your learning in my class however I can, and to connect you with resources that may help with issues beyond the classroom.

### **SUCCEEDING IN AN ONLINE COURSE**

- Please email me at [htoronjo@gmu.edu](mailto:htoronjo@gmu.edu) with any questions/concerns and/or if you wish to meet with me online. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24-48 hours, except for weekends and holidays.
- Please note that the schedule is tentative, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you are receiving and reading ALL emails from me. This is especially important in an online course.
- All assignments should be submitted on Blackboard.

- The rules that apply to a regular classroom apply to the online classroom as well. I encourage debate in my classroom (whether online or face-to-face), but I also work hard to create a space where students do not feel attacked or uncomfortable. Please give other students' opinions the respect you think your own opinion deserves.

### **RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

It is my intent that students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives will be well served and well-respected in my classroom. I want students' diversity to be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit in this course. I encourage students to approach me with questions, comments, and suggestions related to respecting every form of diversity. If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via email. I use she, her, hers for myself and you may address me as Professor Toronjo in email and verbally.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All submitted course work should be your own. When using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations. When in doubt, cite! You are bound by the George Mason University Honor Code. Violations will be referred to the University Honor Committee.

### **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**SCHEDULE**

Week	Date	Topic	Required Videos	Required Readings	Turn In
1	22 Aug	Introductions	Pfaff, J. & Brown, C., 2021. (30 minutes)		Flipgrid
2	29 Aug	Why punish?	Erin Kelly TED Talk: Who Belongs in Prison (14 minutes)	Miller, J. G. (1989); Gorga, J. M. (2020); Carlsmith, K. M., Darley, J. M., & Robinson, P. H. (2002).	Flipgrid
3	5 Sept	Law	Crime Without Punishment: Fighting for Justice   CBS Reports (26 minutes)  Forgiving Her Son's Killer: 'Not An Easy Thing' (3 minutes)  Gary Slutkin: Let's treat violence like a contagious disease (14 minutes)  After 50 years of the War on Drugs, 'What Good is it Doing for Us?' (7.5 minutes)	Eisen, L. B. (2019); <b>[Read recommendations]</b> Justice Policy Institute. (2016).	Flipgrid
4	12 Sept	Police	James Baldwin Discusses Racism   The Dick Cavett Show (17 minutes)  Cops   James Baldwin & Nikki Giovanni   1971 (45 seconds)	Fassin, D. (2019); <b>[Executive summary and recommendations only]</b> Branas, C., Buggs, S., Butts, J. A., Harvey, A., Kerrison, E. M., Meares, T., ... & Webster, D. (2020)l <b>[Optional]</b> Ramsey, C. H. (2014).	Flipgrid
5	19 Sept	Prosecutors	When a 16-Year-Old Is Locked Up in a Supermax Prison   Stickup Kid   FRONTLINE (28 minutes)  What prosecutors and incarcerated people can learn from each other, Jarrell Daniels (12 minutes)	Campbell, M. C. (2012); Bellin (2019)	Flipgrid
6	26 Sept	Sentencing & Judges	What Manafort's light sentence says about criminal justice disparities (6.5 minutes)  Serving time: Excessive sentencing "haunts" former judge (6 minutes)	Ulmer, J. T., & Kramer, J. H. (1996);Clair, M., & Winter, A. S. (2016)	Flipgrid
7	3 Oct.	Life Sentences	Angola Prison Hospice: Opening the Door (22 minutes)	Gross & Matheson (2003); Nagin (2022); Nellis (2021)	Flipgrid
8	10 Oct.	Reflections	None	None	3-page Reflect essay

9	17 Oct.	Mass Incarceration	<p>Mass Incarceration: Pathways to Prison (10 minutes)</p> <p>Mass Incarceration, Visualized (2.5 minutes)</p>	Gottschalk, M. (2013); <b>[SKIM. Read Conclusion]</b> Petrich, D. M., Pratt, T. C., Jonson, C. L., & Cullen, F. T. (2021).	Flipgrid
10	24 Oct.	Prisons and Jails	<p>Re-humanizing inmates   Anthony Wyatt (8 minutes)</p> <p>Two Years After Kalief Browder's Suicide, His Brother Recounts Horrifying Ordeal at Rikers (38 minutes)</p> <p>Institutionalized: Mental Health Behind Bars (23 minutes)</p>	Western, B. (2021); Ingel, S., Smith, L., Magnuson, S., & Rudes, D. (2022); Higgins, Smith, Swartz	Flipgrid
11	31 Oct.	Reentry	Searching for Justice - Making reentry work after incarceration   PBS Newshour (60 minutes)	<b>[Read Social Integration After Prison, Adjusting and Coping, and Discussion]</b> Western, Braga, A. A., Davis, J., & Sirois, C. (2015); Maruna, S. (2011).	Flipgrid
12	7 Nov.	Probation and Parole	<p>Adult Probation Officer Recruitment Video (3.5 minutes)</p> <p>Life on Parole (full documentary)   FRONTLINE (53 minutes)</p>	Executive Session on Community Corrections (2017); Murcia, E. A. (2022).	Flipgrid
13 no class	14 Nov.	Fines and Fees	The Economics of Bail, Fines, and Fees in the U.S. Criminal Justice System (60 minutes)	Menendez, M., Crowley, M. F., Eisen, L. B., & Atchison, N. (2019).	Infographic Due
14 no class	21 Nov.	Restorative & Transformative Justice	<p>Until We Reckon (18 mins)</p> <p>What is Transformative Justice? (10.5 minutes)</p>	Van Ness & Strong (2015)	
15	28 Nov.	Wrap Up and Class Reflection	None	None	3-page reflect essay