

**George Mason University**  
**Department of Criminology, Law and Society**  
**Spring 2024**  
**CRIM-405-DL1/DL2: Law and Justice Around the World**

**Online Asynchronous**

Instructor: Dr. Auzeen Shariati, email: [asharia@gmu.edu](mailto:asharia@gmu.edu)  
Office Hours: Online by appointment

**Course Overview**

This course will introduce diverse ways in which criminal justice systems are structured and implemented around the world. In order to understand a comparative perspective, the social, cultural, political, historical, and religious factors shaping different systems of justice will be examined. Four worldwide philosophies or legal traditions will be examined including: Common, Civil, Socialist, and Islamic Law. A comparison of crime prevention techniques, as well as processes of police, courts, and methods of dealing with convicted offenders in diverse nations will be undertaken.

**Expected Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, it is expected that each student will be able to:

- Describe the value of comparing systems and issues of criminal justice
- Identify the primary sources of international crime statistics and describe how to best compare crime rates of different countries
- Examine distinguishing characteristics of each legal family of law
- Understand the basic structures of the criminal justice systems in six model countries
- Discuss similarities and differences between the United States and our model nations in terms of police, courts, and corrections

This course fulfills the university requirements for **Mason Core, Global Understanding category**, and meets the following learning outcomes:

- Identify and articulate one's cultural values and how those values influence the principles and practices of justice, both locally and globally.
- Demonstrate understanding of how globalization impacts law and justice practices, limitations, and priorities in our constantly evolving world.
- Explore individual and collective responsibilities within a global society through analytical, practical, or creative responses to problems or issues, using resources appropriate to the field.

**Required Textbook:**

Harry R. Dammer and Jay S. Albanese, Comparative Criminal Justice Systems, Fifth Edition, ISBN-13: 978-1-285-06786-5

## Graded Course Requirements

### Online Discussions

**30%**

There will be five online discussions which will be used to assess students' knowledge and provide feedback to them throughout the semester. These assignments rely primarily on assigned textbook chapters and other supplemental learning materials which are made available on blackboard.

### Three Quizzes

**30%**

There will be three online quizzes that will be given in Blackboard. All quizzes will assume knowledge of ALL concepts discussed up to that point in the term but the focus will be on the recent chapters covered. Each quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions, but may also include true/false, short answer, or fill in the blank questions.

**Please note that having “Respondus Lockdown Browser” is required for taking online quizzes. Instructions will be provided in blackboard.**

### Research Project

**40%**

Each student will conduct a comparative study on an international or a transnational crime with a focus on two of our model nations (England, France, Germany, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia). The purpose of this assignment is to analyze contributing factors to the crime rates in each country, identify the similarities and differences between the two countries in their approach to criminal justice, and provide current specific examples (from the media) of the crime and societal reactions to the crime. The project will be delivered in three steps. The assignment instructions and rubric are provided in Blackboard within the “research project” module.

**Grading:** The course grade will be computed based on the following components:

Course Requirement	Points	Percent
Discussions x 5	30 each (150 total)	30
Quizzes x 3	50 each (150 total)	30
Research Project (step 1, 2, 3)	200	40
Total	500	100

### Grading scale

A	93.0 - 100	C	73.0 - 76.9
A-	90.0 - 92.9	C-	70.0 - 72.9
B+	87.0 - 89.9	D	60.0 - 69.9
B	83.0 - 86.9	F	Below 60.0
B-	80.0 - 82.9		
C+	77.0 - 79.9		

## **Policies and Requirements**

### **Blackboard**

Please make sure you visit our class blackboard shell and check your Mason email frequently to see announcements and grades, among other important information.

### **Internet Access**

Please note that lack of internet connection or problems with services are not acceptable excuses for not completing quizzes and/or turning-in assignments. If you have any internet issues or computer-related problems, please contact the ITS help desk for assistance.

### **Late Work**

Papers and assignments are to be turned in on Blackboard by midnight on the day they are due. Grades for late assignments and papers will be reduced one letter grade the first 24 hours late and for every additional 24 hours thereafter. Assignments or papers more than a week late will not be accepted except in the case of documented illness or emergency.

### **Extra Credit**

A list of movies relevant to the course content is available on blackboard. These movies are put on the library physical reserve in DVD form. You can watch any or all of these movies and answer the questions raised by the instructor. Your answers must be submitted during the final examination period. Each of these submissions is worth 1 point toward the final grade.

### **Online Classroom Behavior**

It is expected that everyone treats one another respectfully at all times. Respectful behavior includes being prepared for class, approaching different viewpoints with open mind, and addressing each other respectfully in online discussions.

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity ([oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu)). See [oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu) for more detailed information.

### **Accessibility Resources**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at [osd@gmu.edu](mailto:osd@gmu.edu) or call 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

## Weekly Class Schedule

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### **Week One (Jan 16 – Jan 21)**

**Topic:** Introduction to the course, Why Compare Systems of and Issues in CJ?

**READ:** *Chapter 1: Introduction*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 1 (Ch 1, Prezi week 1, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB) **Online Discussion 1 Due Jan 21**

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### **Week Two (Jan 22 – Jan 28)**

**Topic:** Why Measure and Compare Crime Data?

**READ:** *Chapter 2: Measuring and Comparing Crime in and across Nations*

Homework Assignment: Review Modules 2, (Ch 2, Prezi week 2, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB)

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### **Week Three (Jan 29 – Feb 4)**

**Topic:** Major Families of Law: Common Law and Civil Law

**READ:** *Chapter 3: Families of Law (pages 38-51)*

**READ:** *Chapter 4: Six Model Nations (pages 66-80)*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 3 (Ch 3-4, Prezi week 3, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB), **Online Discussion 2 Due Feb 4**

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### **Week Four (Feb 5 – Feb 11)**

**Topic:** Major Families of Law: Socialist Law and Sacred Law

**READ:** *Chapter 3: Families of Law (pages 52-64)*

**READ:** *Chapter 4: Six Model Nations (pages 81-97)*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 4 (Ch 3-4, Prezi week 4, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB)

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### **Week Five (Feb 12 – Feb 18)**

**Review (Chapter 1-4) and Take Quiz 1**

**Online Quiz 1 Due Feb 18**

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### **Week Six (Feb 19 – Feb 25)**

**Topic:** Comparing Policing Practices Across Nations

**READ:** *Chapter 5: Law Enforcement: Organization, Functions, & Current Issues*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 6 (Ch 5, Prezi week 6, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB)

**Research Project Step 1 (Topic Selection, Introduction, and Methods): Due Feb 25**

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### **Week Seven (Feb 26 – Mar 3)**

**Topic:** Comparing Criminal Procedure Across Nations

**READ:** *Chapter 6: Criminal Procedure*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 7 (Ch 6, Prezi week 7, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB), **Online Discussion 3 Due Mar 3**

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**Week Eight (Mar 4 – Mar 10)**

**Spring Recess**  
**Enjoy your holidays!**

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**Week Nine (Mar 11 – Mar 17)**

**Topic:** Comparing Courts Across Nations

**READ:** *Chapter 7: The Courts & Legal Professionals*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 9 (Prezi week 9, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB)

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**Week Ten (Mar 18 – Mar 24)**

**Topic:** Comparing Sentencing Practices Across Nations

**READ:** *Chapter 8: After Conviction: The Sentencing Process*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 10 (Prezi week 10, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB), **Online Discussion 4 Due Mar 24**

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**Week Eleven (Mar 25 – Mar 31)**

**Review (Chapter 5-8) and Take Quiz 2**  
**Online Quiz 2 Due Mar 31**

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**Week Twelve (Apr 1 – Apr 7)**

**Topic:** Problem of Prisons Across Nations

**READ:** *Chapter 9: After Conviction: The Problem of Prisons*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 12 (Prezi week 12, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB), **Online Discussion 5 Due Apr 7**

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**Week Thirteen (Apr 8 – Apr 14)**

**Topic:** Transnational Organized Crimes

**READ:** *Chapter 11: Transnational Organized Crimes*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 13 (Prezi week 13, watch supplementary videos)

**Research Project Step 2 (Crime Control Strategies, Findings, and Implications): Due Apr 14**

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**Week Fourteen (Apr 15 – Apr 21)**

**Topic:** Juvenile Justice in International Perspective

**READ:** *Chapter 12: Juvenile Justice in International Perspective*

Homework Assignment: Review Module 14 (Prezi week 14, watch pre-recorded lecture and supplementary videos on BB)

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**Week Fifteen (Apr 22 – April 28)**

**Review (Chapters 9-11-12) and Take Quiz 3**  
**Online Quiz 3 Due Apr 28**

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**Final Week (May 1 – May 8)**

**Research Project (Final Paper) Due May 5**

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