

# **Justice Organizations and Processes-CRIM 509**

Spring 2024; Section 1 Course Syllabus – Professor Marc Meyer

## **Class Schedule**

Wednesdays from 7:20 pm to 10:00 pm – KH 209

January 17 through April 24, 2024

**[NO CLASS JANUARY 31, March 13]**

## **Course Description**

The United States criminal justice system is a labyrinth that is equally difficult to navigate for victims of crimes and their alleged criminal offenders as it is for the law enforcement officers who investigate criminal behavior, the attorneys who prosecute and defend the accused, and the juries and judges who adjudicate the conduct. This is further complicated by myriad systems – local, state, federal, and international – and their respective organizations and processes. This semester we will use the Socratic method for discussion-based learning as we explain the multitude of existing structures, practices, and performance of organizations involved in the administration of justice: law enforcement, courts and legal agencies, corrections, regulatory and related agencies, and private organizations; and how they might reform.

## **Suggested Reading Material**

*Criminal Justice in America (10th Edition)*

George F. Cole/Christopher E. Smith/Christina DeJong

ISBN:978-0-357-45633-0

**(You will read at least one of these this semester)**

*Doing Justice: A Prosecutor's Thoughts on Crime, Punishment, and the Rule of Law*

Preet Bharara

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

Michelle Alexander

*The Chickenshit Club*

Jesse Eisinger

*Misdemeanorland: Criminal Courts and Social Control in an Age of Policing  
Broken Windows Policing*

Issa Kohler-Hausman

*Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*

James Forman Jr.

## Course Policies

### Electronics:

While I understand modern demands, personal electronic devices must remain in a silent or "do not disturb" mode. If you have a device out, even if used to enhance your classroom experience, you must convince me and your classmates that you are actively engaged in the discussion. I reserve the right to ask you to cease and desist from using any electronic device during class, so have a notebook and pen ready.

### The Honor Code:

In accordance with the Mason Honor Code: student members of the GMU community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

### Accommodations for students with disabilities:

Should you need accommodations due to a disability or another reason, please consult the Office of Disability Services at (703) 993-2474 or [ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu).

### Grading:

Grades will be determined based on four components:

**Attendance** (Pass/Fail): You are allowed two absences during the semester and you are responsible for making up missed work and catching up on notes. Any absences beyond the two authorized are considered unexcused and each absence will lower your grade by a third of a letter grade (e.g. If your grades average to an A, on your third absence (two excused and one unexcused) you will receive an A- for your final grade; on your fourth absence you will drop to a B+, and so forth).

**Participation** (100 points): Your participation in class is paramount for a successful semester in the Socratic method. Meaningful participation includes, but is not limited to:

- Arriving at class having completed any readings and prepared for discussion.
- Listening attentively to others during discussions.
- Contributing your insights to discussions frequently.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for everyone and their views.
- Maintaining a distraction-free environment.

**Midterm Examination** (200 points): At the midpoint in the semester there will be a multiple choice exam testing your knowledge to date.

**Written Product** (200 points): You will read at least one of the four award-winning books listed above and complete a written product explaining how the respective author's thesis might be incorporated into a holistic federal justice reform program on the level. More on this in class.

### Grading Scale:

A+: 97-100	A: 94-96	A-: 90-93
B+: 87-89	B: 84-86	B-: 80-83
C+: 77-79	C: 74-76	C-: 70-73
D+: 67-69	D: 65-66	F: 0-64

### Final Grades:

GMU requires instructors to submit final grades within two days of final examinations. Given that our final product is a written product, and assuming they are submitted on time, I will ensure grades are in by the end of the examination period.

### Course Schedule:

Please note that the course schedule detailed below is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. We have a lot to cover and depending on where our conversations take us, we may want to spend more time on a topic. Please check your GMU e-mail account regularly for course updates including reading material designated for each week.

Date	Topics
<b>January 17</b>	Introductions; Overview (preread: syllabus and <i>The Invention of the Police</i> )
<b>January 24</b>	The players – LEOs, attorneys, probation, judges and their staffs
<b>January 31</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
<b>February 7</b>	Policing and Investigating (pretext stops/stop and frisk)
<b>February 14</b>	Prosecutions – local/state; federal
<b>February 21</b>	Prosecutions – violent crimes; white collar offenses
<b>February 28</b>	Adjudication (and first half semester review)
<b>March 6</b>	MIDTERM EXAM
<b>March 13</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
<b>March 20</b>	Forfeiture, Corrections, Reentry
<b>March 27</b>	Theories – social control; broken windows; stop and frisk

<b>April 3</b>	Technologies and the “Right” to Privacy
<b>April 10</b>	Challenges, Reform, and International Rule of Law
<b>April 17</b>	Putting it all together
<b>April 24</b>	Semester Review and Close-out; Final paper due