

Mississippi Valley State University
Department of Criminal Justice
CJ 564 – SEMINAR IN CORRECTIONS
Spring 2020

Instructor: O. Oko Elechi, Ph.D.
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Office Hours:

Tuesdays/Thursdays
9:00 am – 9:20 am/Tuesdays 1:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesdays: 1:00 to 7:00 pm
or by appointment

Course Materials

Textbook (Required):

Krisberg, B., Marchionna, S. and Hartney, C. (2015). American Corrections: Concepts and Controversies. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.

Textbook (Recommended Reading):

Clear, T.R.; Reisig, M.D.; Cole, G.F. (2016). American Corrections (11th Edition). Boston, MA.: Cengage Learning.

Cullen, F.T.; Jonson, C. L. & Stohr, M. K. (2014). The American Prison: Imagining a Different Future. Los Angeles, LA.: Sage.

Mears, D. P. & Cochran, J.C. (2015). Prisoner Reentry in the Era of Mass Incarceration. Los Angeles, LA.: Sage.

Any additional reading will be provided to you on the Blackboard or Class.

Course Description

Reviews history and the operations of corrections, including the future of corrections.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students who take this course will:

- Understand the range of purposes and functions served by the corrections system

- Understand the corrections systems role in advancing the cause of punishment and social control, the different forms of the criminal sanction and the factors that influence the sentencing process
- Identify the various components of the corrections system today and their functions
- Understand the major issues and challenges facing the corrections system today
- Understand the role the corrections system play in social control and the underpinning historical, social, economic and political forces
- Distinguish among the corrections systems during the progressives reform era, the medical and community model eras
- Understand the causes of mass incarceration in America
- Understand how we can reduce the incarceration rates while maintaining and promoting public safety
- Identify the different types of offenders in the corrections system and the kinds of problems they pose for the corrections system

Criminal Justice Graduate Program Student Learning Outcome (SLO):

- Upon completion of the graduate program in criminal justice, the student should demonstrate understanding of :
 1. The core issues and principles governing the operations of the criminal justice system.
 2. Evaluate the theoretical formulations that explain crime, its prevention and control, as well as the operations of the criminal justice agencies.
 3. Write professionally.

Learning Assessment & Course Requirements

Weekly Discussion Forums

Review of Weekly Reading Assignments

Midterm Examination

Final Examination Term Paper

Weekly Discussion Forums

Each week has at least one (1) required discussion question on the Discussion Board. You are required to respond to the question in about fifty words. You are also required to raise a question from the weekly discussion for other students to respond to. You must also respond to at least one question raised by another student. The goal is to make the process more interactive where all of us contribute materials to the learning objective. To get the full grade for the Weekly Discussion, you must respond to the question by the Instructor and to at least one question by one of your classmates by the due date.

Weekly Assignments

Please complete a two page review of the assigned weekly readings. The review should include a summary/generalization of the assigned reading. The review should identify at least five major arguments of the author and a brief critique of the reading. Support your position with at least one administrative law case example.

Examinations

There are two examinations for the course, a Midterm and Final examination. Each is in essay format. **Examinations will be available in the Quizzes/Exams Icon in Blackboard.**

Term Paper - (due on May 4, 2020).

Listed below are suggested topics for your term paper. The topic you choose for the term paper must be one of those listed below unless you had a prior approval from me to research a particular issue. It helps to choose a topic that touches you personally – that is one that you can relate with for one reason or the other. You may find it more motivating also to choose a topic that addresses a problem that is relevant to your political/social interests, community or gender interests or one that speaks to the needs of the agency where you work.

The term paper should be at least 10 pages long, and should include the following sections: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Discussion and Conclusion. Your paper must be typewritten, using 1.5 line spacing, and must be properly referenced using the APA referencing style. Ensure that your work conforms to proper use of grammar, spelling and sentence structure. Your paper should read like a very well written journal article.

I encourage you to discuss the research project with each other. You must however, submit a work that is truly yours. In other words, while two or more people can write on the same topic, the paper you submit must reflect individual enterprise, that is, you are not allowed to collaborate on the actual writing of the assignment.

The following are suggested outlines for your term paper:

- a. Introduction (Problem statement)
- b. Literature Review (Review of extant literature on the subject).
- c. Research Design (Methods applied to obtain materials for the study)
- d. Research Findings
- e. Discussion of Research Findings
- f. Implications of Study/Research Findings for policy/solving of real life problem.

The following are good sources for data for your term paper: (The University Library will be your best place to start your inquiry. Do not also forget that I remain your other source for guidance, and I am available to assist you when you call on me. To complete a good research paper, you must give yourself time. Start now to put your materials and thoughts together. It is not possible to write a good research paper within 24 hours).

- a. Refereed Academic/ Professional Journals
- b. Books published by Academic Presses
- c. Magazines or Newspapers that are highly regarded

- d. The Mainstream Popular Press
- e. Internet sources (etc).

TERM PAPER – SUGGESTED TOPICS

1. Discuss the reasons for the problem of mass incarceration in America
2. Make a case for ending mass incarceration in America
3. Discuss ideas that are relevant to the Reentry Policy and what works to improve reentry outcomes
4. Does Gender affect criminal sentencing
5. Is Plea Bargaining Fair?
6. Do Minorities receive tougher sentencing?
7. Are mandatory minimum sentences fair and effective?
8. Do three strikes sentencing laws and other “get tough” approaches really work?
9. Should private “for profit” corporations be allowed to run U.S. Prisons?

EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR COURSE TERM PAPER

The following are the criteria I will base my evaluation of your Term Paper. The relevance of the content to the subject matter, and how you organize, present ideas, apply the relevant theoretical framework, creatively interject your opinions and your English usage. In addition to evaluating the different elements of the paper, a holistic view on how these features are brought together to form a total work is important.

A. For a paper to score an A it must meet the following criteria. The paper comprehensively addresses the subject matter. The thesis, arguments and all supporting evidence show a clear understanding of the issues. The paper clearly, effectively and insightfully develops and conveys a point of view. Its organization and focus is also very clear, coherent, and ideas smoothly progress from one to the other, and also demonstrating excellent critical thinking and supported with appropriate examples. There are no major errors in vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling, citation, punctuation and paragraphing. It must meet the APA format and present a complete Bibliography in a separate page.

B. A paper in the B grade range must meet the following criteria:

Show significant mastery of the subject matter; however, showing occasional errors in thought and quality; the paper is clearly and effectively developed and presented, demonstrating reasonable critical thinking, coherence in thought, and progression of ideas; occasional mistakes which do not impede the meaning and clarity of the statement in grammar, word selection, sentence structure, spelling, paragraphing. Appropriate evidences are provided to support paper thesis, arguments and opinions. The References must be complete and the APA writing format followed.

C. A paper in the C or lower range has the following weaknesses:

The paper shows some understanding of the subject matter however with significant errors that compromises the quality of the paper. The theories selected for analysis do not fit or are misapplied.

One or more of the important elements of the paper is missing. The paper in significant respects is unfocused and or disjointed and incoherent. There are several grammatical, sentence structure and spelling mistakes. The citations and references are either lacking and or not properly done.

Grading Matrix

Instrument	Value (points or percentages)	Time
Mid-term Exam.	100 points	- 300 Minutes
Final Exam.	100 points	- 300 Minutes
Term Paper	200 points	- 1200 Minutes
Weekly Paper Review	100 points	(13 X 180) – 2340 Minutes
Weekly Discussions	100 Points (11 X 60)	- 660 Minutes (Total Minutes for this Online Course – 4800)
Total:		100% 600

Grading Scale:

- A = 500 – 450 points (100 – 90%)
- B = 449 - 400 points (89 – 80%)
- C = 399 – 350 points (79 – 70%)
- D = 349 – 300 points (69 – 60%)
- F = 299 points or below (59 – 0%)

Grade Appeals:

Any student who believes that s/he has been graded unfairly, even after talking with me about the grade, may appeal that grade by following University procedures as explained in the Student Handbook. Please keep records of all graded assignments and make all appeals in writing with the proper documentation. It is the student’s responsibility to prove that s/he has been graded unfairly.

Attendance and Participation Policy:

You earn grades for class attendance and participation in all class activities and discussions.

To earn grades for participation, you must do your readings and show you understand what was presented in the class readings.

Academic Integrity:

All acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating on exams, plagiarism, internet papers, paraphrasing internet papers, presenting someone else’s work as your own, failing to meet academic and professional requirements, will result in an automatic “F”. The University’s academic honesty and plagiarism policies are enforced in this course.

Course Schedule: *subject to some changes (See Blackboard for specific deadlines)*

WEEKS	ASSIGNMENTS	TIME
Week 1	Blackboard Orientation. Review of Syllabus and Introduction	30 Minutes
Week 2	Review of chapter 1 of text	180 Minutes
Week 3	Review of Chapter 2 of text	180 Minutes
Week 4	Review of Chapter 3 of text	180 Minutes
Week 5	Review of Chapter 4 of text	180 Minutes
Week 6	Review of Chapter 5 of text	180 Minutes
Week 7	Review of Chapter 6 of text	180 Minutes
Week 8	Review of Chapter 7 of text	180 Minutes
Week 9	Review of Chapter 8 of text	180 Minutes
Week 10	Review of Chapter 9 of text	180 Minutes
Week 11	Review of Chapter 10 of text	180 Minutes
Week 12	Review of Chapter 11 of text	180 Minutes
Week 13	Review of Chapter 12 of text	180 Minutes
Week 14	Review of Chapter 13 of text	180 Minutes
Week 15	Review of Chapters 14 and 15 of text	180 Minutes
Week 16	Review of Chapter 16 of text	180 Minutes

Week 17	Term Paper and Final Examination due	1500 Minutes
	Discussion Forum Assignment	TIME
Discussion 1	Discuss the range of purposes served by the corrections system	60 Minutes
Discussion 2	Discuss the Enlightenment and how it contributed to the development of the corrections system (b). Discuss the linkages between slavery and prison labor	60 Minutes
Discussion 3	Compare and contrast specific and general deterrence (b). What in your opinion are the merits of indeterminate sentencing?	60 Minutes
Discussion 4	What are the main functions of jails? (b). Discuss some of the alternatives to jails that you are familiar with.	60 Minutes
Discussion 6	What are the goals of the prisoner classification systems. Discuss the problems administrators face in implementing them.	
Discussion 7	What are the main differences between probation and parole? (b). What is the role of parole board?	
Discussion 8	List the ways that juvenile offenders are sanctioned. (b). What are the similarities and differences between the early Houses of Refuge and current juvenile corrections practice?	
Discussion 9	How much training and education should a probation officer have? (b). What do you think are the reasons for the difficulty of recruiting minority staff in rural areas?	
Discussion 10	What do you think are the implications of the fact that more African Americans are under criminal justice supervision	
		60 Minutes

	than were slaves prior to the Civil War? (b). What are the advantages and disadvantages of native Americans having a separate system of justice on Native lands?	
Discussion 11	Define community justice and show how it differs from criminal justice (b). Identify the arguments in favor of community justice.	60 Minutes
	TOTAL	4890

Academic Integrity Policy for Inclusion in Syllabi

Academic integrity is a commitment to the values of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, respect and responsibility in academia. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act that is committed in an academic context. Honesty and integrity are essential values of the Mississippi Valley State University's mission to pursue truth and knowledge. Academic excellence can be reached only with the cooperation and support of students. Students are expected therefore to accept responsibility for maintaining honesty and integrity in all acts inside and outside the classroom, studio or laboratory.

For a detailed description of sanctions and appeal procedures, consult Student Handbook pg.59. https://www.mvsu.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook

ADA SYLLABUS STATEMENT

ADA Syllabus Statement (Fall 2019)

Mississippi Valley State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Services for Students with Disability Office to obtain this service. Disabilities covered by the ADA may include learning, physical, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or chronic health disorders. Students who are uncertain if their condition/disability is qualified should contact the SSD Office.

Mrs. Kathy Brownlow/ ADA Coordinator

Social Science Building Office 105

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