

San José State University  
Department of Justice Studies  
JS 18904 Senior Seminar: Contemporary Problems Fall 2019

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dina M. Kameda, M.S., M.A.

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 8:00 AM–10:30 AM, 10:30 AM–11:00 AM, or by appointment

Class Days/Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM

Classroom: MacQuarrie Hall 526

Prerequisites: Senior standing in final semester; Justice Studies or Forensic Science major; JS 100W and JS 114 with a "C or better"; Department Consent

Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice Studies majors.

Course Format

The mode of instruction for this course is in person with online supplements. Reliable access to a computer and the internet will be required. All written assignments will be submitted via Canvas, and must be in Microsoft Word (\*.doc or \*.docx) If you do not currently own Microsoft Word, the software (both PC and Mac) is available for free to students: <http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/microsoft/index.html>

Canvas Course Page and Email

Copies of course materials will be posted on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking your email and Canvas regarding announcements, reminders, and any additional course materials. The majority of course materials will be posted in Adobe PDF format; if you choose to download them, you will need Adobe Reader to view the documents. There is no cost to download Adobe Reader (<http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherservers/>) Some course materials may need to be accessed via the internet (i.e., web sites).

E-mail Policy

Feel free to email the instructor at any time (I check several times per day) however, please adhere to the email guidelines below:

- 1.

2. E-mailed inquiries should be relatively short in nature. Students should make an appointment to meet with me to discuss more extensive inquiries. Students will be referred to the course syllabus with respect to questions that are addressed by simply reading the syllabus.

### Course Description

Identification, discussion and analysis of selected problems in justice studies. A major term paper on a select topic is required.

Prerequisite: Senior standing in final semester; Justice Studies or Forensic Science major; JS 100W and JS with a "C or better"; Department Consent

Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for Justice Studies majors.

### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to [1-5]:

1. Demonstrate their ability to complete a formal research paper that (a) synthesizes relevant scholarly sources; (b) reflects professional formatting and writing standards (APA format); (c) addresses relevant policy needs (such as necessary reforms) to intangible social problems; (d) somehow contributes to our collective understanding of concepts and approaches to "justice," however defined (social justice, criminal justice, community justice, and so forth).
2. Demonstrate their ability to present scholarly work to an audience of their peers.
3. Demonstrate a working understanding of "evidence-based" approaches to social problems and public

Students are 100% responsible for uploading the correct file when submitting an assignment. Failure to upload the correct file will result in a zero for the assignment

### Current Event Submissions

Students will be required to submit current event analyses relevant to our justice system. Each Current Event assignment will consist of a 2 page writeup that includes a short summary of a current event article, policy analysis of the issue or issues addressed, and the URL for the article reviewed. [CLO 4-5]

### Reading Presentation and Discussion Lead

Each student will be responsible for offering at least one in-class presentation of a response to a short answer essay question/prompt for a specific textbook chapter. Additional presentations will be scheduled if time permits. [CLO 2-5]

A schedule of presentations along with question/prompts will be provided; presentations will tentatively begin on 09/11/19. The presentation of a response will be roughly 15 minutes in length, with an additional 10-15 minutes for questions and discussion.

1. Students should begin with a reading of the relevant essay question/prompt providing their response.
2. Each response should incorporate substantive examples from the associated reading and/or outside research.

Following each presentation, students should be prepared to pose questions to the class to facilitate class discussion. While the instructor will moderate discussions, students are largely responsible for engaging in inquiry and discussion.

### Reading Presentation and Discussion Grading

Each presentation/discussion will receive a "grade" ranging from 0 – 20 points based on the fulfillment of requirements. Weekly presentations will account for 20% of the final course grade. Please note that late presentations will not be allowed, except under extreme circumstances which can be substantiated.

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Students are prohibited from writing on a topic that has been used for previous course, or currently being used for another course. Any attempt to violate this requirement will result in an automatic “F” for the paper, which ultimately will result in failing the course. Such an attempt would constitute a violation of the Academic Integrity policy.

This paper will include a review of scholarly literature on an approved topic. Students will be required to not only analyze and critique existing policies, but propose new or amended policies. The research reviewed must come from high quality justice-related journals, which establish and examine relationships between and among variables, concepts, theories, and policies. Based on the evidence reviewed, policy implications will be drawn.

A handout detailing the expectations, content, formatting, and submission requirements will be provided in a timely manner [CLO 1, 3-5]

**Policy Paper Presentation**

Students will be required give a 20 minute formal presentation of their policy papers followed by 10 minutes of discussion. [CLO 2]

The presentation must include the following:

1. Introduction: Description of the specific topic importance of the topic, and thesis
2. Literature Review: Relatively concise coverage of your literature review
3. Policy Critique and Implications: A critique of current policies, based upon the literature, in terms of the implications of their effectiveness/ineffectiveness, suggestions about alternative policies. This critique should pull upon findings in the literature to support the presenter’s point of view.

**Paper Presentation Grading**

The presentation will be graded based on the level of competency and flow, knowledge of the subject, conclusions, and ability to respond to presentation inquiries. It is highly recommended that students practice their presentations several times (preferably in front of someone who will provide constructive feedback). The presentations will be held to strict time limits. Failure to complete a presentation within the allotted time frame (i.e. 20 minutes), or too brief of a presentation, will result in a loss of points.

**Grading Policy**

Assignment/Exam	Exam/Due Date	Weight
Current Events	See schedule	15%
Reading Presentations/Discussion	See schedule	20%
Topic Materials	October 7 <sup>th</sup>	15%
Policy Paper	November 9 <sup>th</sup>	30%
Paper Presentation	See schedule	20%
		100%

**Grading Policy and Late Submissions**

Written assignments will primarily be graded on content; however, poor writing mechanics and APA formatting





Week	Date	Agenda/Topics, Readings/Homework, Exams and Deadlines
7	10/02/19	Ch. 6 Presentations and Discussion Reading for today: Ch. 6 Due today: Current Event 3 (Upload to Canvas by 11:59 PM)
8	10/07/19	Ch. 7 Presentations and Discussion Reading for today: Ch. 7 Due today: Topic Meeting Materials (Upload to Canvas by 11:59 PM)
8	10/09/19	Ch. 8 Presentations and Discussion

Week	Date	Agenda/Topics, Readings/Homework, Exams and Deadlines
13	11/11/19	Veteran's Day – No Class
13	11/13/19	Policy Paper Presentations
14	11/18/19	Policy Paper Presentations
14	11/20/19	Policy Paper Presentations
15	11/25/19	Instructor Personal Holiday – No Class
15	11/27/19	University Non-instructional Day – No Class
16	12/02/19	Policy Paper Presentations
16	12/04/19	Policy Paper Presentations
17	12/09/19	Policy Paper Presentations

Final 12/1