

**San José State University**  
**Department of Justice Studies**  
**JS189-01, Senior Seminar: Contemporary Problems, Fall 2020**

**Course and Contact Information**

**Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy**

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

**Course Description**

Identification, discussion and analysis of selected problems in justice studies. A major term paper on a selected topic is required. Prerequisite: 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. 3 Units.

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**





## **Late Assignments**

Late assignments will not be accepted for credit without prior agreement.

## **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

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## **Course Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
1	August 19	Introductions/Course overview; Syllabus, Class, Project, Assignment &

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
4	September 9 (No Class Monday the 7th, <b>Happy Labor Day!</b> )	<b>Assign Project (DUE NO LATER THAN 12/7)</b> ; Retribution: Discretionary Application; The Death Penalty, Due Process, Tookie Williams & The Mercy Seat; Justification & Excuse; <b>Read Chapters 4 &amp; 5: The Myths That Violent Juveniles Will Become Adult Criminals &amp; That of Black Crime (pgs 37-56)</b> ; <b>Prepare, Submit and be ready to discuss Assignment #2: Review Questions: 1-3 (pg 12), 1-3 (pg 23), 1-3 (pg 35), 1-3 (pg 46), 1-3 (pg 56) &amp; Profile: Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850)</b> ; Exercise: <i>Is Buck v. Bell, 274 U.S. 200 (1927), relevant in regard to current policy specific to criminalization of the chronically homeless, mentally ill or immigrant communities?</i>
5	September 14 & 16	Review Assignment #2; Criminal Profiling: Stop & Frisk; Reasonable Suspicion & Probable Cause; Pretexting & Metadata collection analysis; <b>Read Chapters 6 &amp; 7: The Myths That Mental Illness Causes Crime &amp; Drug Decriminalization (pgs 57-79) &amp; Profile: John Augustus (1785-1859)</b> ; Exercise: <i>What challenges are inherent to the bail system in the United States? What solutions do you propose to improve the bail system?</i>
6	September 21 & 23	Recidivism: Restoration & Crisis Intervention Training; <b>Read Chapters 8 &amp; 9: The Myths about Drug Use and Violent Offending &amp; That White-Collar Crime Is Only about Financial Loss (pgs 81-101)</b> ; <b>Prepare, Submit and be ready to discuss Assignment #3: Review Questions 1-3 (pg 66), 1-3 (pg 79), 1-3 (pg 92), 1-3 (101) &amp; Profile: Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909)</b> ; Exercise: <i>What is the worse problem, recidivism or the lack of rehabilitation? Why? What are the primary differences between Retributive and Restorative models of justice?</i>
7	September 28 & 30	Review Assignment #3; Legislative Intent: Mandatory Minimum Sentencing & the “Three Strikes” sentence enhancement law of California; Proposition 47 and California’s Realignment Policy; <b>Chapters 10 &amp; 11: The Myths that Gun Control Policies Reduce Crime &amp; Sex Offenders are Beyond Redemption (pgs 103-125) &amp; Profile: Megan Kanka (1986-1994)</b> ; Exercise: <i>Is gender inequality still a problem in the third decade of the twenty-first century? If so, in what three ways should this problem be solved?</i>
8	October 5 & 7	Security: Surveillance, Pit Bulls & Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; Broken-Windows and Labeling Theories; <b>Read Chapters 14 &amp; 15: The Myths The Role of Police Is to Fight Crime &amp; That Science Solves Crimes (pgs 147-165)</b> ; <b>Prepare, Submit and be ready to discuss Assignment #4: Review Questions 1-3 (pg 113), 1-3 (pg 125), 1-3 (pg 156), 1-3 (pg 164) &amp; Profile: Chief August Vollmer (1876-1955)</b> ; Exercise: <i>In what ways are homelessness and poverty linked to the United States justice system? How do you propose these two particular problems be solved?</i>

9      October      Review Assignment #4; Fear: Budget Priorities & the Fear-Victimization  
12 & 14      Paradox; Sanctuary Policy Jurisdictions & Scapegoating the Undocumented;  
Pelican Bay & Solitary Confinement; **Read Chapters 16 & 17: The Myths**

- 14 November 16 & 18  
**(Happy Thanks-giving!)** Fair Trial: Right to Counsel, Peers as Jurors & Impartial Judges; Richmond, CA: Homicide Rates, Officer Involved Shootings & Black Lives Matter; Mens Rea, Expert Witnesses, Diminished Capacity & The Twinkie Defense; **Read Chapters 26 & 27: The Myths Prisons Can be Self-Supporting, Correctional Privatization & Inherent Efficiency (pgs 278-295); Prepare, Submit and be ready to discuss Assignment #7: Review Questions 1-3 (pg 263), 1-3 (pg 277), 1-3 (pg 284) & Profile: Bass Reeves (1838-1910);** Exercise: *What specific problems could be eliminated through community policing?*
- 15 November 23 & 25 Review Assignment #7; Challenging Presumptions, Critical Analysis & Meritorious Debate; Compulsory Registration: Public Disclosure & California Penal Code Section 290; **Read Chapters 28 & 29: The Myths That**