

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS189-04, Senior Seminar: Contemporary Problems, Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy

Required Textbook

Bohm, Robert M. and Walker, Jeffery T. (2013). Demystifying Crime & Criminal Justice (2nd Edition). OXFORD ISBN: 978-0-19-984383-1

Students may purchase texts in the bookstore and online.

Library Liaison

Nyle Monday, Nyle.Monday@sjsu.edu, (408) 808-2041

<http://libguides.sjsu.edu/justicestudies>

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/ studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Weekly Assignments

Students will be assigned weekly reading and writing assignments in class and as reflected below. Weekly Assignments are due during every other Wednesday class session, or as instructed, and will consist of a two-to-three paged double spaced typed analysis in 12-point font. (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)

Group Project

Students will be assigned to work in groups and are expected to participate in a professional and respectful manner. Each group will be tasked with a project, to be assigned and explained extensively in class, to develop and present in class during the semester as reflected below. Each group is required to participate during in-class exercises and make one presentation to the class once per semester. (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)

Final Paper

Final Papers will require students to conduct independent research to craft a thesis paper, to be assigned and explained extensively in class and will be due during the last scheduled class session of the semester as reflected below. Reliable sources for all assertions should be cited in the American Psychological Association (APA) format. (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)

Final Examination

Students will complete a cumulative final examination using key terms and concepts from readings and class discussion consisting of short answer and essay based questions. (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)

Late Assignments/Missed Quizzes

Late assignments will not be accepted, no assignment may be submitted via email, and missed quizzes cannot be retaken for credit.

Cell Phones/Texting

All cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off and put away during class sessions. Routine phone calls, texting or other online activity during class is discouraged, will be noted and may result with up to 10% (one letter grade) deducted from the final grade.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at

- 3 February 10 & 12 **Assign Final Paper (DUE NO LATER THAN 5/11);** Sovereignty: Constitutions, Statutes & Case Law; Jurisdictional Structures; Sources of Authority; Oscar Grant and the Duty to Protect and Serve; Criminalizing Behavior; **Read Chapters 6 & 7: The Myths That Mental Illness Causes Crime & Drug Decriminalization; Prepare and be ready to discuss Review Questions #3 (p 66), #2 (p 79) & Profile: Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832);** In-class exercise:
- 4 February 17 & 19 **Assign Group Project (DUE 4/20 - 5/6);** Retribution: Discretionary Application; The Death Penalty, Due Process, Tookie Williams & The Mercy Seat; Justification & Excuse; The Civic Duty to Respond to Crime; The Absence of Crime is the Greatest Indicator; **Read Chapters 24 & 25: The Myths of Closure and Capital Punishment & Prisons as Country Clubs; Prepare, submit and be ready to discuss Weekly Assignment #2: Review Questions #1 (p 263), #2 (p 277) & Profile: Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) + Week 3 #'s;** In-class exercise:
- 5 February 24 & 26 Criminal Profiling: Stop & Frisk; Reasonable Suspicion & Probable Cause; Pretexting & Metadata collection analysis; **Read Chapters 28 & 29: The**

- 8 March
16 & 18 Security: Surveillance, Pit Bulls & Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; Broken-Windows and Labeling Theories; **Read Chapters 4 & 5: The Myths That Violent Juveniles Will Become Adult Criminals & That of Black Crime; Prepare, submit and be ready to discuss Weekly Assignment #4: Review Questions #2 (p 46), #2 (p 56) & Profile: Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909) + Week 7 #'s; In-class exercise:**
- 9 March
23 & 25 Fear: Budget Priorities & the Fear-Victimization Paradox; Sanctuary Policy Jurisdictions & Scapegoating the Undocumented; Pelican Bay & Solitary Confinement; **Read Chapters 22 & 23: The Myths That Imprisonment Is the Most Severe Form of Punishment & The Death Penalty Is Administered Fairly; Prepare and be ready to discuss Review Questions #3 (p 241), #2 (p 253) & Profile: Emile Durkheim (1858-1917); In-class exercise:**
- 10 March 30-
April 3 **SPRING RECESS.**
NO CLASSES IN SESSION!
- 11 April
6 & 8 Engagement: Amber Alerts, Neighborhood Watch, Flash Mobs, Social Media & Foot Patrol; Community Policing & Cultivating Credibility; **Read Chapters 14 & 15: The Myths The Role of Police Is to Fight Crime & That Science Solves Crimes; Prepare, submit and be ready to discuss Weekly Assignment #5: Review Questions #1 (p 156), #2 (p 164) & Profile: Chief August Vollmer (1876-1955) + Week 9 #'s; In-class exercise:**
- 12 April
13 & 15 Expungement: Incarceration rates, Recidivism, Release & Community Integration; Confidential Informants, Witness Intimidation & Snitches Get Stitches; Exceptions to Warrants; **Read Chapters 20 & 21: The Myths That the Exclusionary Rule Allows Many Criminals to Escape Justice & That Punishment Reduces Crime; Prepare and be ready to discuss Review Questions #3 (p 176), #2 (p 183) & Profile: Dollree Mapp (1924-2014);**

