Sociology of Punishment
SOC413H1F
Room 41 (basement), Sociology Department; 725 Spadina Avenue
Fall 2017 Wednesday 2:00-4:00

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Office Hours: Wednesday 4:00-6:00pm or by appointment
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Course Description and Objectives
This course is designed to give students an intensive overview of sociological penology. It covers some of the major theoretical approaches to punishment and contemporary theoretical innovations; it explores research that was launched in the heyday of prison sociology and developments that have occurred since the mass incarceration movement in the U.S. We also consider how punishment is patterned in different social contexts, how it is gendered and racialized, its broader social effects, and alternatives to imprisonment.

Required Prerequisites
1.0 SOC FCE at the 300+ level. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time they are discovered.

Recommended Preparation: SOC200H1; SOC212H1; SOC313H1

Course Web Site
The course website prepared on the Blackboard system will contain the syllabus, all required readings for each week except those that are assigned from the text and course announcements. Students are responsible for the content of all course materials and for checking their official utoronto.ca email address regularly.

Format and Requirements
This course is a rigorous reading course. You are expected to read and think through the assigned readings for each class and write a one-paragraph summary of each reading and one or two questions based on that reading BEFORE EACH CLASS. Post this on Blackboard. All students will be expected to participate in the class discussions each week and to come prepared to discuss them.

Final Grades will be based on the following point distribution:

- Attendance & Participation: 5%
- Posted summary of readings & Questions: 15%
- Class Presentations: 20%
- Research Question & Paper Outline: 10%
- Annotated Bibliographies: 10%
- Popular Depictions of Punishment: 10%
- Final Paper: 30%

Class presentations (20% of the Final Grade)
Every student will sign up to lead one of the classes. You should select an area that you are particularly interested. You will work with one or more of your classmates to construct a summary of the important themes that emerge from the assigned readings for the week and you should include one or more of the recommended readings or a reading that is cited in one of your assigned readings. You can also include any news worthy or policy developments that you think are relevant to your topic. You and your peer(s) should divide up your presentation of the reading material for the week (including any recommended reading you select) and you should come with a set of questions for the class that arise from your presentation of the material.

Research Question and Paper Outline: (10% of the Final Grade): DUE OCTOBER 11
The research question and paper outline should be 2 pages. The question is what you are seeking to understand. Remember that sociologists rarely ask questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no.” Rather they are interested in the “how” and in patterns and variations across social groups. Suppose you are interested in prisoners’ health. Here are three interesting questions:
1. Does better sanitation improve the health of prisoners?
2. Does having poor health in prison increase the likelihood that a prisoner will be depressed?
3. What structural and social factors contribute to poor mental health among prisoners?
The first question is a medical question. The second is a medical and psychological question. Only the third question looks at patterns among prisoners and the factors that are related to these patterns. A sociologist might also look at meanings, focusing on what the carceral experience means to inmates and how this might vary based on their social backgrounds.

Your outline should include an introduction with a few sentences that will “hook” the reader and demonstrate how you intend to frame your paper. The body of the outline should guide the reader through what you think will be the main arguments of your paper (including citations here is a good idea). Finally the conclusion of your outline should reiterate your research question, summarize your findings, and consider what might be important questions (based on your findings) for future scholars to consider.

Annotated Bibliographies (10% of the Final Grade): DUE NOVEMBER 1
The annotated bibliography is designed to help you get started on the existing research will be important for your paper. Your annotated bibliography should be 3 single-spaced pages and it should (1) identify the source and authors (i.e., a full citation); (2) summarize the authors arguments and the evidence they bring to bear to support their argument (i.e., think critically about the work and do not just reiterate what is in the articles; and (3) show how the works you have selected are related to other works in the area.

Popular Depictions of Punishment: (10% of the Final Grade): to be completed in lieu of the seminar on NOVEMBER 15 (and turned in before class on November 22). We will not meet in class this week and you have no assigned readings for this week. However, you are required to invest some time in examining how the media portrays prison OR how prisoners’ themselves characterize their experience.

1. Current Popular Depictions of the prison experience can be found in several TV series: “Orange is the new Black,” “Rectify,” “Alcatraz,” “Prison Break,” or “Oz.” If you select this option, you should watch at least two episodes and then write a 2 page summary and critique. How is the prison experience portrayed? To what extent does it accurately reflect what you know about punishment based on the scholarly works you have read for this course. What is the producer of the show trying to convey in the images of prison that are being conveyed?

2. Popular Depictions of the prison experience can also be found in prisoner autobiographies (some examples are listed below but you are free to pick another one that is not listed). If you choose this option you can select anyone of the following and write a brief report (2 pages). What was the aim of the prisoner in writing this autobiography? How well do his/her depictions of prison life comport with the depictions scholars put forward (i.e., explain in what ways they are similar or different)? What do you learn about prison life by reading this account and how has it affected your views about why and how society punishes its citizens:
- *In the Place of Justice* (2011) by Wilber Rideau. Vintage Books

**Final Paper: (30% of the Final Grade): DUE DECEMBER 6**
Your final research paper should be based on both the work you produced for your paper outline and your annotated bibliography. It should be 15 pages double spaced (12p. Times New Roman font with one inch margins on all sides), excluding your bibliography. It should also include a complete bibliography. Your bibliography should have a complete reference to any sources you cite in your paper. Please follow the format listed here for your citations in the paper and your bibliography: [http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/document.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/document.html)

**Help and Information:** For help, tips and advice on writing essays, contact the University of Toronto Writing Centre: [www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning)

**A Note on Plagiarism**
*From the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters:*
*It shall be an offence for a student knowingly:*
(d) to represent as one’s own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism.
Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on “knowing”, the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.
For helpful instructions on “HOW NOT TO PLAGIARIZE” go to: [www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning)

**Late Assignments and Medical Excuses**
Students who fail to hand in an assignment due to medical illness must provide a written medical excuse within one or two days of the missed test/assignment. The only form accepted will be the **Verification of Student Illness** or Injury form obtained from the U of T website: [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)
Doctor’s notes are not acceptable substitutes. Dates for make-up tests will be announced in class.

**For the final paper, grades will be lowered by 5% per day for every day they are late. If the essay is turned in later than 7 days after it is due, no credit will be given for this assignment.**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit: http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility.
If you have documentation that you are a special needs student, please see me as soon as possible to discuss how best to assist you in the course.

**COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE**

**Sept. 13: Introduction: Thinking about Why We Punish**


-Chapter 11 “Punishment as a cultural agent: Penalty’s role in the creation of culture.

-Chapter 7: Prison Otherwise

**Sept. 20: Classic Sociological Theories of Punishment**

-Chapter 2: The work of Emile Durkheim
-Chapter 4: Rushe & Kirchheimer and the Marxist Tradition
-Chapter 6: The work of Michael Foucault

**Sept. 27: The Heyday of Prison Sociology: The Structure of, and Social Relations in, The Big House**

**Recommended**

- Chapter 2: Social Order: pages 31-62

**Recommended**


**Oct. 4: Cultural Variations, and Temporal Changes, in The Big House**

- Chapter 2: The Correctional Institution
- Chapter 3: Division


**Recommended**


**Oct. 11: Theorizing about the Move to Mass Incarceration**

*RESEARCH QUESTION AND PAPER OUTLINE DUE*

- Chapter 3: The Crisis of Penal Moderism
- Chapter 7: The New Culture of Crime Control
-Chapter 2: Why So Many Americans are in Prison

Recommended


**Oct. 18: The Prison Experience During Mass Incarceration**

-Chapter 3: The Warehouse Prison
-Chapter 4: Doing Time in Solano

-Chapter 1: Controlling Troubles

Recommended


**Oct. 25: Comparative Penology – A Global Perspective**


Recommended


**NOV. 1: Comparative Penology – Local Variations**

*ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE*


Recommended


**Nov. 8: Reading Week**

**Nov. 15: Popular Depictions of Punishment**

**Nov. 22: Race and Gender**


Recommended


Nov. 29: The Long Reach of Imprisonment


Recommended


Dec. 6: Reintegration

*PAPERS DUE*


**Recommended**