SOC6206H
Sociology of Crime and Law III: Punishment
Winter 2019

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The course is centered around four key concepts within the field of Criminology and the Sociology of Punishment. We will explore how the concepts of race, risk, spatial regulation and surveillance have shaped theories of punishment. Particular attention is paid to how neoliberal penal politics, actuarial risk and surveillance have resulted in mass incarceration and the targeting of racial minorities. We will analyze how marginalized populations and particular physical spaces are constructed as security risks in need of regulation. We also explore the limits of contemporary punishment theories.

Each of the weekly topics include required readings along with recommended list for students who wish to further explore a topic of interest. Several of the readings correspond to the comprehensive exam in the area of the Sociology of Crime and Law. Students are welcome to add readings to the recommended list.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Participation and Discussion Board: 10%
Each week, students are expected to review the required readings and submit questions for discussion by Tuesday 5:00 pm. The questions are to be posted on the blackboard discussion board.

Presentations: 10%
Students will be required to lead seminars. The presentation will a) address some of the questions posted to the discussion board as well as, b) relate the topic to an area of interest to the student or draw on an additional related article.

Reading responses: 40%
At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for 4 reading responses (10% each). Each response should be approximately 3-4 pages, double-spaced. The responses ought to be more than a summary of the reading. They should focus on a critical question raised within the readings, relate the readings to an area of interest, or address some of the questions identified on the discussion board. The responses are due on the day of the lecture.

**Essay:**

Students have the option of writing 1) a critical literature review, 2) a research proposal or 3) a research paper. The critical literature review will incorporate readings from the required and supplemental reading list and any additional sources relevant to the topic. The research proposal will include a literature review, a statement of research questions and a detailed methods section outlining how data will be collected and analyzed. The research paper will involve an investigation of a topic related to the course and will normally incorporate original research. I will meet with each of you no later than week 8 of the semester to discuss your topic for the final paper.

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**COURSE READINGS:**

**January 9: Racial Foundations of Criminology**

The following readings explore how racial classification was central to the founding of the discipline of criminology.

Beccaria, C. (1764). *On Crimes and Punishments*


**Recommended:**


**January 16: Race, Class and Mass Incarceration**

The articles blend political economic theories to understand the rise of mass incarceration. Wacquant asserts an approach that moves beyond traditional “crime and punishment” approaches. His work situates the mass incarceration of blacks in the US within neoliberal economic shifts that coincide with the decline of the welfare state.


**Recommended:**

**January 23: Policing of Indigenous People**
The overincarceration and punishment of Indigenous People is being described as a Canadian human rights crisis. We will explore how the Canadian state has constructed Indigenous Peoples histories, rights and protest as security problems to be managed.


**Recommended:**

**January 30: The Neoliberal Punitive Turn**
Beginning in the late 1980s and 1990s, sociologists and criminologists have described a new epoch in crime control. They variously described this new epoch as “the risk society” (Beck), “the culture of control” (Garland), “actuarial justice” (Feeley & Simon), and “advanced neo-liberalism” (Rose). Many of these approaches were influenced by Foucault’s theories of regulation.


[Select chapters]

**Recommended:**
- B. Hutter and M. Power, eds. (2005), Organizational Encounters with Risk. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 67-91

**February 6: Crime Control in the Risk Society**
This class will examine how the concept of risk has been used to describe contemporary forms of social control and governance.


**Recommended:**


**February 13: Actuarial Justice and Risk Management**

The articles introduce opposing debates regarding the use of risk assessments. They focus on the production of risk knowledges through actuarial techniques and their implications on social control and regulation. We will examine the extent to which local political cultures and social conditions shape the nature of risk-based forms of regulation.

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

February 27: The Boundaries of Punishment
The articles question whether the field of criminology and sociology ought to broaden its understanding of punishment. They explore the blurring of the boundaries between criminal, civil and administrative processes.


Recommended:

March 6: Broken Windows and Policing Disorder
The readings explore the popularity of broken windows and zero tolerance policing and how it fostered policing of disorder.


Recommended:
March 13: Spatial Regulation

The regulation of space and its association with crime has emerged as a critical theme in criminology and socio-legal studies. The articles draw attention to the intersection between crime and the regulation of private and public spaces.


Recommended:

March 20: Theorizing Surveillance

The readings for this seminar examine the dominant models of surveillance including, George Orwell’s 1984 depiction of “big brother,” Michel Foucault’s use of Bentham’s “panopticon,” and Ericson and Haggerty’s “surveillance assemblage.”


Recommended:


March 27: Crimmigration, Detention and the Regulation of Borders
The readings examine how new security measures and the regulations of national borders. We will consider the impact of the regulation on configurations of citizenship and due process rights.


**Recommended:**

**April 3: Big Data Surveillance**


Recommended: