

Corrections
SOC/CRM 464 (PS)
State University of New York, Cortland

Syllabus

Craig Little

Office: Cornish D310

Office Hours: M, 10:00-11:30; T, 2:00-3:00

W, 10:00-11:30; 2:00-3:00, or by appointment

Section 001 8:30-9:45 T/R Corn D205

Section 002 10:05-11:20 T/R Corn D205

Fall 2008

Sociology/Anthropology

E-mail: littlec@cortland.edu

Phone: X-2470

Course Description

This course takes a long-range historical approach to correctional ideas and institutions in the United States and Europe. It focuses on the development of theories and practices for “correcting” dependent poverty, criminality, delinquency and mental illness. In particular, the course examines the changing relationship between punishment and inequality. It also analyzes the reciprocal effects of mass imprisonment on the American economy, politics, families and other social institutions.

We begin with the sociology of punishment. The core questions are: Why do we punish? And what social imperatives influence how punishment has been practiced in various times and places? Next, we turn to American penology beginning with the European historical and philosophical foundations of punishment practices in the American Colonial era. The course then traces American penal history from the Colonial period to the present, elucidating the criminological, political, economic and popular rationales for key transitions and reforms. America’s “imprisonment binge” of the last quarter of the 20th century, into the 21st, concludes our historical survey. Analyses of prisons and prisoners will include the perspectives of corrections officers, prisoners, prisoners’ families and crime victims. Numerous alternatives to incarceration will be explored. The course concludes by proposing a political economy of punishment as a model for understanding the inequalities inherent in American mass imprisonment and the prison/industrial complex.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students will be able to address the following questions intelligently:

- What is punishment? Why do we punish?
- What are the major sociological theories of punishment?
- What are the ancient and modern foundations of Western punishment philosophies and practices?
- What are the outlines of American penal history, from the Colonial Era to the present?
- How do the major theories of crime relate to various penal practices and reforms?
- How can we best explain America’s imprisonment binge of the late-20th and early-21st centuries?
- What are the major contemporary issues for students and practitioners of American corrections?
- What are the causes and consequences of America’s policy of mass imprisonment?
- What is the American prison/industrial complex and how can it be explained?

Books

Blomberg, Thomas G. and Karol Lucken. 2000. *American Penology: A History of Control*. New York: Aldine. (B&L)

Conover, Ted. 2001. *New Jack: Guarding Sing Sing*. New York: Vintage. (Conover)

Irwin, John. 2005. *The Warehouse Prison: Disposal of the New Dangerous Class*. Los Angeles: Roxbury. (I)

Course Requirements

Mid Term Exam	30%
Final	30%
Research Project:	
Presentation/paper	30%
Class Discussion	10%

Mid Term and Final Exams:

These exams will be comprised of objective (multiple-choice, true-false) questions and essays written in the class. Approximately one week prior to each exam I will give you a list of about six essay questions from which I will ask you to write on two or three during the exam in class. While I encourage you to study for the exam by taking notes, constructing outlines and writing practice essays, you will **not** be permitted to bring notes into class to use during the exam.

Research Project: Presentation Skills

With two partners, you will research a “corrections issue” for presentation in class. For examples of possible “corrections issues,” see the list under weeks 12-13 on the Course Outline. You may propose any other issue, in addition to the ones on the list, for my approval. Your presentation will be approximately 15 minutes long with an additional five minutes for questions from your student colleagues and me. I encourage you to use PowerPoint or other audio-visual aids and class handouts to enhance your presentation. You will also submit to me a brief, 4-5 page paper on your corrections issue. The paper will include your PowerPoint presentation (and handouts if you use them) as appendices. The paper should be carefully documented with appropriate footnotes and references. The paper and its appendices must be submitted to me *both* in hard-copy *and* as an e-mail attachment to me. This is a cooperative project. Therefore, the grade you receive will be assigned to the partners as a group. I will distribute and discuss additional guidelines for preparation of the class presentation, its proper delivery, and preparation of the associated paper. Consistent with the requirements for Presentation Skills (PS) course designation, both you (as the presenters) and the students in the class (your audience) will evaluate your presentation according to criteria provided on the assignment instructions. Criteria for evaluation of your presentation and your paper will be distributed and discussed in class. **Read the criteria and pay careful attention to them. Your grade will depend on it.**

Class Discussion:

During the semester, there will be opportunities for you to participate in discussions with the entire class and in smaller groups. I will be using your participation as an indicator of how well you are keeping up with the reading and thinking about it. At the end of the semester, I will rate your overall class discussion according to this scale: Above Average; Average; and Below Average. You can ask me anytime how I am rating your performance.

Alignment with Conceptual Framework and Organizational Standards

This course covers many of the themes and objectives specified in the Conceptual Framework of SUNY Cortland's Teacher Education program. It covers the Liberal Learning themes of social justice and global understanding and it focuses on Learning Outcomes #1, 2, and 12.

College Policies

Academic Dishonesty: The College policy concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced in this course. See the College Handbook for procedures and possible sanctions.

ADA:

SUNY Cortland is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990(ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services located in B-1 Van Hoesen Hall or call (607) 753-2066 for an appointment. Any information regarding your disability will remain confidential. Because many accommodations require early planning, requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible. Any requests for accommodations will be reviewed in a timely manner to determine their appropriateness to this setting.

Attendance

If a class is so poorly taught or the material presented is so trivial as to be not worth your time, I believe you should not be forced to attend under threat of a penalty. I hope neither of these two conditions applies to this course. Regardless, attendance is at your option, without penalty for absence. However, be forewarned! Long experience has shown that students who miss classes tend to do very poorly. The reading in this course is plentiful and challenging. The period spent in class will be repaid many times over in orienting you to the reading and helping you to make analytical connections.

It goes without saying that with class discussion a portion of your grade, failure to attend class will hurt this aspect of your final evaluation.

Important note: There will be an exception to this attendance policy for the classes when there are student presentations. Attendance will be taken during these classes and it will be a factor in your own student presentation grade.

Communication

E-Mail

When you e-mail me you **must** put “SOC 464” in the subject line of the message. If I do not see this, I am likely to assume that your e-mail message is “Spam” and delete it. You can assume that e-mail messages to me will not be read unless they have “SOC 464” in the subject line.

Blackboard

Many of the course materials will be available on Blackboard, including some assigned readings. The course modules on the course outline below correspond to the “Learning Modules” on Blackboard. If you have any difficulty accessing or using Blackboard inform me immediately via e-mail or phone.

Readings and the Exams

The topics for your exam essays will provide ample opportunity to make use of the assigned readings. You should do so. Indeed, my evaluation of your essays will include attention to how well you understand and make use of this material. If you keep up with the reading, attend class and review the materials posted on Blackboard conscientiously, you should do well on the exams.

Suggested Additional Reading: Resource Bibliography

The following books and reports are among the most influential on my thinking as I have prepared this course. Collectively they represent the contemporary intellectual core of American penology.

American Bar Association. 2004. “Report of the ABA Kennedy Commission,” <http://www.manningmedia.net/Clients/ABA/ABA288/index.htm>

Austin, James and John Irwin. 2001. *It's About Time: America's Imprisonment Binge*. (Third Edition) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson.

Barnes, H. E. 1972. *The Story of Punishment: A Record of Man's Inhumanity to Man*. Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith.

Christie, N. 2000. *Crime Control as Industry: Toward GULAGS, Western Style*. (Third edition) New York: Routledge.

Cohen, S. 1985. *Visions of Control*. Cambridge, MA: Polity.

De Grigori, Alessandro. 2006. *Re-Thinking the Political Economy of Punishment: Perspectives on Post-Fordism and Penal Politics*. Ashgate.

Foucault, M. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (A. Sheridan, trans.) New York: Pantheon.

Garland, D. 2002. *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Garland, D. (ed.) 2001. *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.
- Garland, D. 1990. *Punishment and Modern Society: A Study in Social Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hallinan, J. T. 2001. *Going Up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation*. New York: Random House.
- Herivel, Tara and Paul Wright. 2007. *Prison Profiteers: Who Makes Money from Mass Incarceration*. New York: New Press.
- James, J. 2000. *States of Confinement: Policing, Detention, and Prisons*. New York: St. Martins.
- Manza, Jeff. 2006. *Locked Out: Felon Disenfranchisement and American Democracy*. New York: Oxford.
- Mauer, Marc and Meda Chesney-Lind (eds). 2002. *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. New York: New Press.
- Morris, N. and D. Rothman (eds.). 1995. *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Parenti, Christian. 2000. *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*. New York: Verso.
- Rothman, D. J. 1971. *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Rusche, G and O. Kirchheimer. 1939. *Punishments and Social Structure*. New York: Columbia University.
- Simon, Johathan. 2007. *Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear*. New York: Oxford.
- Staples, W. 2000. *Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Western, Bruce. 2006. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Whitman, J. Q. 2003. *Harsh Criminal Punishment: America's Solitary Place in the Liberal West*. New York: Oxford
- Wright, P. and T. Herivel. 2003. *Prison Nation: The Warehousing of America's Poor*. New York: Routledge.

Internet Web Sites

There are countless useful sources available on the Web. These are among the most helpful for a start.

Bureau of Justice Statistics: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <http://www.ncjrs.org/>

Federal Bureau of Prisons: <http://www.bop.gov/>

Vera Institute of Justice: <http://www.vera.org/>

Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/prisons/>

The Sentencing Project: <http://www.sentencingproject.org/>

Links to the “Corrections Industry”: <http://www.corections.com/>

SOC/CRM 464
Course Outline

Module	Week	Topic	Read/Assignment
1 The Sociology of Punishment	1	Introduction: Course Overview The Sociology of Punishment Punishment: What is it? Why do it? The goals of punishment	B&L: Chap. 1
2 The History of Punishment and Penology	2	Sociological Theories Durkheim: Social Solidarity Marx: Class-Based Regulation Foucault: Strategies of Domination Elias: Civilizing Sensibilities Western Traditions of Punishment Ancient and Medieval (through the 1700s): Private Vengeance	Blackboard Readings B&L: Chap. 2
	3	American Penal History Colonial America (1600-1790): Public Justice Federalist America (1790-1830): Early Reforms Democratization and Reform (1830-1880s): Rise of the Penitentiary	B&L: Chap. 3 B&L: Chap. 4 B&L: Chap. 5
	4	Progressive America (1880s-1930s): Positivist Criminology: Biology; Psychology; Sociology Progressive Penology: Reformatories, Parole and Probation American 20 th Century Penology: The Rehabilitative Ideal (1900-1960s): Prison Subcultures	B&L: Chap. 6 B&L: Chaps. 7&8 B&L: Chap. 9

Module	Week	Topic	Read/Assignment
	5	Breakdown of the Reform Model (1960s-1970s): Prisoners' Rights Decentralization: Less is better	B&L: Chaps. 10-11
	5	Law and Order Punishment (1980s-present) Special Prison Populations: Women, the sick and the elderly	B&L: Chap. 12 B&L: Chap. 13
	6	Penal Reform and the Culture of Control (1990s--?) Recapitulation and Review <i>Mid-Term Exam (October 2)</i>	B&L: Chap. 14 Review of B&L
		October Break, Fri. 10/3-Mon. 10/6	
3 Mass Imprisonment in America	7	Mass Imprisonment in America: International Comparisons State Comparisons The Demographics of Imprisonment: Who? Where?	I: Chap. 1
	8-9	America's Imprisonment Binge: Why? Why not? The Criminal Justice Funnel Sentencing Issues	I: Chap. 2
4 The Prisoner's Perspective	10	The Warehouse Prison: Prisoner's Perspective Doing Time Super Max	I: Chaps 3-6
5 The Correction Officer's Perspective	11	Inside the Big House: Correction Officer's Perspective Guarding at Sing Sing	Conover: All

Module	Week	Topic	Read/Assignment
6 Correctional Issues: Student Presentations	12-13	Corrections Issues: Student Presentations <i>Aging Prisoners</i> <i>Prisoners' rights</i> <i>Victims' rights</i> <i>Corrections Officers: Working Conditions and Workers' Rights</i> <i>Women as corrections officers</i> <i>Prisoner, ex-convicts and voting rights</i> <i>Suicide in prisons and jails</i> <i>Mental illness among inmates</i> <i>Drugs in prisons</i> <i>Prison gangs</i> <i>Alternatives to incarceration</i> <i>Prisoners' families: prison consequences</i> <i>Prison cultural effects: music, fashion and the like</i> <i>Private prisons and jails</i> <i>Women in prison</i> <i>Juvenile corrections (boys or girls)</i> <i>HIV/AIDS in prisons & jails</i> <i>Prison architecture</i> <i>Electronic monitoring/supervision</i> <i>Prison communities: Where prisons are built and why?</i> <i>Prisoner Release and reentry</i>	I: Chaps. 7-Afterward
7 Punishment and Inequality in America	13	Punishment and Inequality in America (Bruce Western, 2006) Consequences of mass imprisonment Labor market Politics Families and communities The crime drop	Blackboard
	14	The Correctional/Industrial Complex: The Political Economy of Punishment	Blackboard
	14	Punishment: A Reconsideration Recapitulation and Review	Blackboard

October Break: 8am, Friday, 10/3; classes resume, 8am, Monday, 10/6

Thanksgiving Break: Begins 8am, Wednesday, 11/26; classes resume, 8am, Monday, 12/1

12/5, All classes end

12/6-12/7, Study Days

12/8-12/12, Finals