Course Syllabus

Course Description

This course explores ethical issues related to the institution of the criminal justice system, the professions of criminal justice, and politics intended to address crime, law, and justice. This course will satisfy your criminal justice writing requirement and will require a substantial writing component.

Grading Policy

Most of your grade in this class will come from two significant papers (details to follow). In addition, I expect you to attend and participate in every class. You will also answer three discussion questions each week related to the reading. I will collect these discussion questions each week. Every student can miss one class per semester without any prior permission. If you have to miss any more than one class this semester, please send me an email explaining the circumstances.

The grading breakdown for this course is as follows:

(1) Midterm Paper: 40%
(2) Final Paper: 50%
(3) Attendance, Participation, Weekly Discussion Questions: 10%

There is no extra credit for this course. You are strongly encouraged to come to office hours to discuss your paper topics and received feedback on rough drafts. I am more than happy to offer feedback any week during my normal office hours.

Books and Readings

The book for this class is: *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Crime and Criminology* by Thomas J. Hickey. I will be using the 10th edition of the textbook (2011). There is a 9th edition available as...
well. You are welcome to buy either edition. The book should be available in the bookstore and online. Used copies of the 9th edition are very affordable on Amazon. You will be assigned to read approximately one or two sections this book per week.

**Papers**

You will be expected to write two papers this semester, both approximately 7-8 pages in length. You will be taking a position on an issue relevant to the course. An assigned grader will grade these papers based upon your organization, writing, grammar, argument and support. I will post detailed explanations of these two assignments on iLearn.

**Schedule of Topics (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

**Week #1:** Introduction to the course

*Required readings:* None

**Week #2:** Causes of Crimes

*Required Reading:* Is crime beneficial to society? Is criminal behavior determined biologically?

**Week #3:** Policing, Part I

*Required Reading:* Should the police enforce zero-tolerance laws?

**Week #4:** Policing, Part II

*Required Reading:* Is racial profiling an acceptable law enforcement strategy? Does the United States have a right to torture suspected terrorists?

**Week #5:** Juvenile Justice

*Required Reading:* Is the death penalty an unconstitutional punishment for juvenile offenders?

**Week #6:** Punishment, Part I

*Required Readings:* Is capital punishment a bad public policy?

**Week #7:** MID-TERM PAPER DUE (March 11, 12, & 13)

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Week #8:  Punishment, Part II

*Required Readings:* Do three strike sentencing laws and other “get tough” approaches really work?

Week #9:  SPRING BREAK (March 25, 26, & 27), NO CLASS

Week #10:  Punishment, Part III

*Required Readings:* Are supermax (control unit) prisons an appropriate way to punish hardened criminals?

Week #11:  Privatization of Law Enforcement

*Required Reading:* Should private “for-profit” corporations be allowed to run U.S. prisons? Should states regulate private police? [Only the first topic is covered in textbook]

Week #12:  Gun Policy

*Required Reading:* Will strict gun laws reduce the number of homicides in the United States?

Week #13:  Jury Nullification

*Required Reading:* Should juries be able to disregard the law and free “guilty” persons in racially charged cases?

Week #14:  Prosecutorial Discretion

*Required Readings:* None

Week #15:  Fringe Issues

*Required Readings:* Should sex offenders be castrated? Should marijuana be legalized?

Week #16:  FINAL PAPER DUE (May 13, 14 & 15)
SPRING 2013

From: Dean Don Taylor

B. CHSS Policy
Syllabi are to incorporate the Academic Senate Policy regarding finals week, the deadlines or withdrawals, late adds, CR/NC option and information related to course registration and Disability Programs and Resource Center. A sample listing of the required College policies are shown below.

Final Exam: According to Academic Senate policy F76-12 a time period is set aside at the end of each semester for a formal examination period. All classes are expected to meet during the final examination period whether an examination is given or not. The final examination schedule is published each semester in the Class Schedule.
http://www.sfsu.edu/~acadres/final_exams/finals13.htm

CHSS Withdrawal Policy: The last day to drop a class is February 8th, 2013 at midnight. From February 9th–April 26th, 2013 you must submit a withdrawal petition. Withdrawal from a class after February 8th, 2013 will be considered for serious and compelling reasons only and must have accompanying documentation. The following reasons are not considered serious and compelling: Changing your major, poor performance, class not required for graduation/major, or more time needed for other classes. If you wish to withdraw from class due to unexpected changes in your work schedule, illness or family emergencies, documentation will be required, along with a copy of unofficial transcripts. If you are requesting a withdrawal, bring your petition and appropriate documentation to the instructor. From April 27th–May 17th, 2013 you may not withdraw from a class or the University, except in the case of a serious documented illness or verified accident.

CR/NC Option: March 22nd, 2013 (by midnight) is the last day to request the CR/NC option. The Associate Dean will not approve requests for changes if you miss this deadline.

Late Add Policy: The period to add classes via permit numbers is January 28th–February 8th (midnight), 2013. The period to add classes by Exception (2nd set of permit numbers) is February 9th–February 22nd, 2013. It is your responsibility to procure a late permit number from your instructor and add the class. Faculty cannot add you into a class. After February 22nd, 2013 a Waiver of College Regulations form must be signed by your instructor, Chair and CHSS Associate Dean to add. This will be approved only if there was an administrative error.

Check your registration through MySFSU: Sign up for CR/NC, drop and add classes by the appropriate deadline online through MySFSU. ALWAYS check your registration after making any changes and BEFORE deadlines to be sure you are registered properly for your classes. This is a student responsibility. Deadlines for all registration procedures, including withdrawals and requests
for credit/no credit, are listed in the class schedule and will be strictly adhered to by the instructor, the Department Chair and the Associate Dean of College of Health & Social Sciences.

This can be viewed on the Registration Calendar at the following website:
http://www.sfsu.edu/~admisrec/reg/regsched132.html

**Disability Programs and Resource Center:** Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC, located in SSB 110, can be reached by telephone at 415-338-2472 (voice/TTY) or by e-mail at dprc@sfsu.edu.