

California State University, Sacramento
Division of Criminal Justice
Spring 2009

CRJ 120 Fundamentals of Corrections

Instructor Contact Information:

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(you may leave a message but email is the best way to contact me quickly)

Section 1 MW 12-1:15 Douglass Hall 107
Section 2 MW 3-4:15 Alpine Hall 144

Course Description

Overview and critical analysis of contemporary correctional theory and practice. Comparison of mainline American corrections with historical, cross-cultural, philosophical and non-traditional views of corrections. Controversial issues in contemporary corrections, including prisoner rights, victimization, the death penalty, unions, institutional corrections, community corrections, future of corrections, correctional careers, and administration and staffing of correctional programs.

Prerequisite: CRJ 001. Restricted to declared majors and minors or instructor permission. 3 units.

Course Objectives:

This course will use a combination of (1) examinations, (2) reflective essays and (3) research papers to assess students' ability to:

1. Become familiar with the operations and interdependency of the agencies that comprise the contemporary criminal justice system and the functions of each (jail, prison, probation, parole, and community sanctions).
2. Develop an appreciation for the various points of view that fuel discussion regarding controversial issues related to correctional practice.
3. Possess knowledge of the development of various correctional philosophies and approaches.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of research related to measuring the efficacy of the programs available to inmates while in prison.

5. Demonstrate awareness of the difficulties offenders experience during the reentry process.
6. Understand the various philosophies of punishment and how they have influenced correctional practice in America and in the state of California.
7. Discuss the pros and cons of current legislative efforts in the area of correctional reform.
8. Identify the ethical and legal challenges faced by correctional administrators and staff.

Required Books

You can purchase the following textbooks at the Hornet Bookstore.

Corrections in the 21st Century , Fourth Edition, by Schmallegger, Frank and Smykla, John Ortiz. McGraw Hill, Publishers, 2007.

Newjack, Guarding Sing Sing (Paperback) by Conover, Ted, 2001.

SacCT 6.0 Information

You are required to have a Saclink account for this course. If you do not have one, please get one by the next class meeting. ALL of the assignments, including lecture notes and course information will be posted on SacCT version 6.0 at <http://online.csus.edu>.

Course Requirements:

(1) Midterm	50 points
(1) Take Home Final Exam/ Proposal for change	50 points
(2) Quizzes	20 points (10 points each)
(1) Reflection Paper on Guarding Sing Sing	30 points
In-class work	20 points
(2) Web Assignments	10 points
(1) Questions for "Guarding Sing Sing" (Take Home Quiz)	20 points
(1) Take Home Quiz on Text	20 points
Total	220 points

From the total number of points, a percentage will be derived for your final letter grade as follows:

Grading Range:

A = 93-100	B = 83-85	C = 75-73	D = 63-65
A- = 90-92	B- = 82-80	C- = 72-70 ***	D- = 60-62
B+ = 86-89	C+ = 76-79	D+ = 66-69	F = 59 and below

*****IMPORTANT NOTE:** CRJ 120 is a core course so CRJ majors must earn a grade of C- or better to avoid having to re-take it.

Grading Rubric: Written work will be graded on both substance and quality of writing. The following grading rubric is generally followed:

A grades are awarded by work that goes above and beyond the required assignment. This includes work that has been carefully edited and contains no grammatical errors, work that uses multiple sources outside of assigned course material, and that provides a solid analysis and synthesis of material in a well organized manner.

B grades are awarded to work of excellent quality. This includes work that is well organized, has few grammatical errors, and that provides a strong analysis of the material studied.

C grades are awarded to average work. This includes work that meets the requirements of the assignment, is organized in a cohesive and acceptable manner and that illustrates a command of the material studied.

D grades are awarded to below average work but work that indicates an attempt was made at a C grade. This includes work in which minimal assignment requirements were almost, but not quite met. This work is completed on time but it appears there was no attempt to edit, leaving it difficult to read.

F grades are awarded for assignments that are not completed; that are not close to meeting the assignment requirements or are not coherent.

Incomplete grades will not be given unless there is a legitimate reason why the student cannot complete the required work during the semester. A failing grade is not considered a legitimate excuse.

Examinations/ Quizzes

Refer to the class schedule for dates of exams. There will be **no make-up quizzes or exams** unless you advise me **ahead of the exam day** of a valid need to reschedule. **Students are expected to take the quizzes and exams when they are scheduled and turn in take-home quizzes and exams in on time.**

Do not expect to take the quiz if you miss that day of class unless I am advised of a valid reason (i.e., you are in sports and have a note from the coach that you have a game that day) before the day of the quiz. If you are ill on the day of the exam or the quiz, I will expect a call or email before the exam or quiz alerting me

to your illness and I will expect a doctor's note validating your illness if you expect to reschedule.

There will be no make-up final exams. There will be a midterm exam which will cover the first chapters in the textbook and the book "Guarding Sing Sing" along with issues discussed in class, including videos and class exercises. The exam format will include multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and short essays. There will also be two short quizzes given during the course of the semester which will be announced the week prior to the quiz. The quizzes will be in fill-in-the blank or short answer format. The final exam will be in the format of a paper, with specific guidelines given to you regarding what should be included in your proposal. You will have time to prepare your research during the semester and will complete the paper/exam at home. It will be due the last day of class, alleviating your need to complete the final exam during exam week in class.

Papers and Assignments

Reflection Paper on Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing

We will be having a class discussion based on the reading of this required book. A three-page paper is required, which will be graded on original thought, analysis, content, and grammar. Pick a topic for your paper (which should NOT exceed four pages in length) and support based on the text. Sample topics include main themes observed and discussed in the text. A grading rubric will be posted on SacCT.

Proposal for Take Home Final Exam

A full grading rubric will be posted on SacCT, but I am looking for a **creative** and well-researched and supported proposal that will work towards solving a current problem in the criminal justice system. Current problems we face include overcrowded prisons, recidivism for returning parolees, high cost of corrections, violence in prisons and jails, high suicide rates in jails and prisons, health care problems in prisons and jails, and others that will be discussed in class. The paper will be reviewed for original content, communication/ writing ability and organization, and evidence of problem solving based on knowledge of the issue.

SacCT Assignments and Quizzes

Will be posted and will take the place of three classes during the semester as indicated in the weekly schedule. The Web assignments are due as indicated for pass/fail credit. In addition, one week during the semester, instead of attending class you will have time to read the book "Guarding Sing Sing" and will answer written questions which will be posted on SacCT regarding your reading. The questions will be due the following week.

Other 'Expected' Requirements

Participation:

In addition, all students are encouraged to become active participants in the class discussion. If you want this experience to be challenging, dynamic, and fun, I *strongly* encourage you to come to class ready to actively participate.

Attendance:

Excessive absences will affect your performance on exams and on course assignments. Some days include course participation for points and other days I do not lecture straight from the book and show video clips, so doing the readings alone will not provide you with enough information to be successful in this course. In addition, I provide information on how to do well on each of the assigned papers/ exam.

Readings:

Failure to read the assigned materials will greatly hinder your ability to participate in class discussions and may prevent you from learning the material as well you are able. It is also impossible to participate in class discussions in "Guarding Sing Sing" if you have not read the book. Please read the material and contribute to a much more fun, informative classroom experience!

Grading Policy:

There will be *no incomplete grades* given for this course except in the most severe circumstances. A grade of Incomplete is usually assigned only when a student has completed more than 50% of the required coursework, is receiving a "C" or better, and has had an unexpected crisis (family, medical, mental health, etc.) arise during the semester or session and cannot complete the rest of the term. Written documentation will be *required* for any request for an incomplete grade, and if something occurs, please speak with me immediately so that I can ensure that your grade will not be jeopardized.

LATE WORK: Papers must be turned in on or before their due date. If you are going to miss class on an assignment due date it is your responsibility to turn in your paper early. Late papers will be docked five points for every day they are late. On time constitutes the beginning of the class the paper is due.

I will be glad to *update you on your progress* throughout the course. However, please do not call me to find out how you did on a test or a paper, as I do not give grades over the phone. I will make results available to the class as soon as I reasonably can or you may see me personally or e-mail me with grade information requests. It is highly advised that you keep a running tally of grades you have earned in the course for your own informational purposes.

If you ever feel that you have been graded unfairly, you may appeal your grade to me **in writing**. By providing me with a written appeal, you have the opportunity to present your case for a better grade fully, clearly, and concisely,

and I have the opportunity to reflect carefully on your arguments. However, I need to let you know in advance that it is best to keep up with your grade during the semester. If you have a hard time with the midterm, **please come and see me immediately.** I can work with you during the semester to raise your grade. If you contact me late in the semester or **after your final grade has been posted for the semester** there is a great likelihood that I will have no way of helping you raise your grade at that time unless it was a data input mistake on my part.

Help and Special Needs:

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester. All assignments except for in-class assignments must be typed, so please make sure you have accommodation if needed.

Academic Integrity and Honesty Issues:

Each student is required to adhere to the University's Academic Dishonesty Policy that includes both cheating and plagiarism. This policy is available on the CSUS web site and you may talk with me if you have any questions about these policies. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, the following will occur: zero credit for the assignment, a probably failing grade in this course, and a potential referral to the University administrator responsible for handling student discipline. Familiarize yourself with the Student Tutorial on how not to plagiarize: <http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>. By citing any author's work diligently, you will help to avoid plagiarizing without realizing that you are doing so. Cutting and pasting from articles or books without quotation marks and clear citation will count as plagiarism. Learn the APA style that is posted on SacCT on the course website and use it on every assignment. If you have questions as to how to cite or how to find an article, please ask. I will not give second chances after the fact, but am very helpful with your assignments before they are due.

Other Important Information

Classroom Etiquette Issues:

Cell Phones, Pagers, and Computers: Out of courtesy and respect for all of us in the classroom, I am requiring that **all cell phones and pagers be turned off** while class is in session. If a cell phone "goes off" during class, I will ask that you turn it off immediately. If the problem persists, you will be asked to leave. In addition, you are asked **not to surf the web or to be on your computer unless you are taking notes. Offenders will be asked to turn off their computer.**

Be on Time! I have noticed that students have been coming late to class and/or leaving early. I certainly understand if you must do this out of necessity (i.e., a doctor's appointment; traffic issues; etc.). If you know ahead of time that you will be arriving no more than 15 minutes late and/or leaving early, please inform me in a timely manner. If you arrive late or must leave early, please sit by the door.

It is simply rude and disruptive to me and the entire class to have you walk in front of class to find a seat.

Eating in Class: I do allow students to have food and drink during the class session. However, use your common sense and be quiet about it. Opening a bag of chips during lecture, for example, would not be a wise choice.

Sleeping in Class: If you feel you need to nap during class, go home and take a nap. **Please do not do it in my classroom.**

Final Comments & Teaching Philosophy

Open your mind and be respectful of points of view that differ from your own! I encourage lively debate, but ask that you be courteous and professional in your demeanor towards others.

In this course, I expect students to actively participate and contribute to classroom discussions. In fact, I firmly believe that the success of this class depends upon your contributions. By “success,” I mean dynamic, exciting, and fun, yet challenging. Although I do encourage open discussion and contribution of all varieties of opinions and comments, I also require that students respect one another. Please remember and respect the fact that everyone is entitled to have his or her opinion be heard in an environment of open discourse.

Although this course will involve a strong commitment on your part to the completion of the readings and assignments as well as attendance and participation in class discussions, I feel that this course can be an enjoyable learning experience for you. Therefore, my overall teaching philosophy encompasses both of these goals: learn as much as you can but have fun while doing it. I am also very responsive to suggestions during the course of the semester. If there is something that I can do to help you to learn or to appreciate the material in a more comprehensive manner, please do not hesitate to let me know what I can do to make your learning experience more effective.

Tentative Topics and Reading Schedule:

This schedule is only tentative, as films will be shown and discussion will dominate the format the information is presented in. Reading the books and learning the terms posted on SacCT will be the main way to guarantee that you are prepared for the test. The classroom experience is meant to enhance your understanding and interest in corrections on a level deeper than individual terms.

Week 1: January 26 and 28
Chapter 1: Corrections: An Overview
Chapter 2: Punishments: A Brief History

Week 2: February 2 and 4
Chapter 3: Sentencing: To Punish or to Reform?

February 4th : Web Assignment #1 (no class)

- Week 3: February 9 and 11
Web Assignment #1 Due February 9th
Chapter 4: Diversion and Probation: How Most Offenders are Punished
Chapter 5: Intermediate Sanctions: Between Probation and Incarceration
- Week 4: February 16 and 18
Chapter 6: Jails: Way Stations Along the Justice Highway
Chapter 7: Prisons Today: Change Stations or Warehouses
February 18th : Guest speaker from probation (get participation points for attendance)
- Week 5: February 23 and 25
Have read "Guarding Sing Sing": Discussed this week.
- Week 6: March 2 and 4
Finish Chapter 7: Prisons Today
Quiz #1 March 4th Chapters 1-7
- Week 7: March 9 and 11
Chapter 8: Parole: Early Release and Reentry
Chapter 9: The Staff World: Managing the Prison Population
- Week 8: March 16 and 18
Midterm March 16: Chapters 1-9
No class March 18th – Do take home quiz on "Guarding Sing Sing"
- Week 9: March 23 and 25
March 23 – No Class: Web Assignment #2 on Chapter 11, The Legal World: Inmate's Rights.
March 25th: Take home quiz on "Guarding Sing Sing" and Reflection Paper on "Guarding Sing Sing" Due
(Turn in to CJ Office if notice states no class due to Jury Duty)
Chapter 10: The Inmate World: Living Behind Bars
Read if class canceled, covered in class if not.
- Week 10: March 30 and April 1
Spring Break
- Week 11: April 6 and 8
Web Assignment #2 Due
Chapter 12: Special Prison Populations
Chapter 13: Prison Issues and Concerns: Security, Privatization, Technology, and Accreditation

- Week 12: April 13 and 15
Chapter 14: The Victim: Helping those in need
Quiz April 15th
- Week 13: April 20 and 22
Chapter 15: Death: The Ultimate Sanction
- Week 14: April 27 and 29
Chapter 16: Juvenile Corrections: End of an Era?
Take Home Quiz Posted April 28th
- Week 15: May 4 and 6
Take Home Exam posted and reviewed on May 4
In-Class Participation/ Finish up Chapters
- Week 16: May 11 and 13
This week: In-Class Participation/ Movie
Take Home Exam Due: May 13th end of class