

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL POLICY & PRACTICE-MSW PROGRAM

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICIES

Spring, 2018- Wed. 4 pm

I. COURSE PURPOSE

It is recognized that almost every facet of social work intersects with the Criminal Justice system (CJS) because it directly or collaterally affects so many of the disadvantaged and vulnerable populations served by social workers. How does social work, through the auspices of the CJS, address the challenges of marginalized populations that pass through its gates? Minorities, women, the LGBTQ community, immigrants, individuals who have been identified as being in need of behavioral and medical health services and those who are undereducated and have a lower SES are in need of social work interventions to assist in addressing the difficult task of changing their life opportunities during and after their association with the CJS. There are more than 2 million people incarcerated today in the United States. There are over 7 million people under the auspice of parole, probation and other forms of community supervision. Women are the fastest growing prison population. Over 2 million children have a parent in prison. In addition, there has been a 37.6 percent increase in the number of individuals arrested by ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations who are either known or suspected to be in the country illegally in the first hundred days of President Trump's administration. Further, plans are being crafted to increase the number of individuals detained from 38,000 to 48,000 daily by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) (crimmigration). Children are being separated from families and plans to release families from custody by Border Patrol can be characterized as haphazard and inhumane. There is a dearth of culturally appropriate services to address the intersections between forms or systems of oppression facing minority orientations, identities, lifestyles, and faith-based beliefs in the CJS. The litany of challenges associated with these issue areas of concern, aptly titled "Mass Incarceration", has greatly exacerbated the difficulties facing social workers in their pursuit of social justice.

This course provides a critical analysis of the role of social work in the criminal justice system in the United States. It examines the implications of criminal justice policies and interrogates the feasibility of criminal justice reform in the major components of the CJS: police, courts and corrections. This course is intended to facilitate a more informed/holistic practice for MSW students working directly or indirectly within the varying intersections of criminal justice administration and social work practice. A major focus and discussion will be on policy, reform and advocacy. Thus, this course intends to uphold social work values such as the human dignity, social justice, human rights and empowerment for all, irrespective to their societal status.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester the student should be able to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the criminal justice system in the United States, inclusive of its varying intersections with social work practice. The student should also be able to recognize incongruities within criminal justice policy or practice to that of the professional values of the social work profession. By the end of the semester the student will have demonstrated:

1. An understanding of the historical development of the criminal justice system in the United States.
2. An understanding of the legal and procedural auspices associated with the criminal justice system.
3. The ability to critically evaluate policies and practices associated with the criminal justice system in relation to social work values.
4. An understanding of the impact of mass incarceration (and reentry) as it pertains to race, gender, ethnicity, class, orientations, socioeconomics, belief systems and behavioral and medical health needs.
5. An understanding of the varying intersections of social work and mass incarceration.
6. The ability to articulate and advocate for socially just criminal justice policies, criminal justice reform and practices in line with social work values and ethics.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS: Students are expected to come to class, participate actively and relevantly in class discussions, complete written assignments on time and complete the group “film” assignment. It is expected that students demonstrate an integration of theory, of criminal justice policy, practice knowledge, and skills, and an increased development of their professional self in class and in the field.

B. ATTENDANCE POLICY: Classroom learning is a fundamental component of professional education. Class attendance is required and will be monitored. Students are, therefore, expected to attend each class, arrive at class on time, and be in attendance for the full class. In the event that you are unable to attend class for any reason, you must notify your instructor in advance.

C. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING YOUR WORK

1. Quality of written assignments: all papers are to be of graduate level quality, well documented, using APA format, and submitted on time. Papers will be evaluated on the following bases:

- Follows requirements of the assignment
 - Conceptual clarity
 - Organization
 - Incorporation of course concepts
 - Demonstration of an understanding of course concepts
 - Evidence of critical thinking
 - Evidence of critical engagement with the literature
 - Demonstration of an appropriate use of scholarly literature
 - Quality of writing (includes correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation)
 - Reflection on one's use of self
2. Class participation: attendance, quality and quantity of oral participation, participation in experiential exercises, and peer discussion assignments.
 3. Completion of assigned readings and demonstration of an understanding of course concepts. This is evident in class participation and in the incorporation of concepts from the readings in written assignments.

IV. GRADING POLICIES

The final course grade is based on the following assignments.

Social Work Policy Position Papers (2)	30%
A Group "Film" Assignment	25%
Shootings Analysis Paper	30%
Class Participation and Posts	15%

Extensions are granted at the discretion of your instructor.

V. TEXTBOOKS

Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York: New Press

Walker, S., Spohn, C. & DeLone, M. (2012). *The color of justice: Race and crime in America*. Wadsworth Pub. Co.

Other readings are from textbooks and professional journals.

VI. SPEAKERS

Guest lecturers, individuals who are practitioners that work in the CJS, will present to the class the most recent updates, and the boundaries to implementation of service delivery in the criminal justice system. Individuals who were/are under the supervision of the CJS will present their experiences and their current adjustment after their reentry in society.

VII. ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Weekly Class Room Reading Assignments:

In addition to the weekly questions, group leaders may also present for discussion a newspaper/magazine article, or any other type of media (YouTube video etc.) that pertains to the criminal justice system with implications for social work practice.

B. Social Work Position Papers (Due weeks 5 and 15) [3 pages each]

Students will research an area of (CJS) policy and write a social work position paper (an analysis of a policy initiative through the lens of social work practice and values). The policy areas students can choose specific policies from are: police, courts and corrections. For example students may review and analyze the war on drugs; immigration laws; sentencing guidelines; three strikes laws; capital punishment; zero tolerance in schools; policies for behavior/physical health; etc. A discussion of criminal justice reform should be included in this writing.

C. Shootings of Unarmed People of Color [Due week 10]

Students will research a jurisdiction where police have killed an unarmed person of color. Information on demographics, policy (policy changes), and the circumstances of the shooting should be included. The paper will describe how it is possible for police to shoot unarmed people of color with impunity and the role of the criminal Justice System (Police, Courts and Corrections) in this process. Recommendations for policy changes and more humane best practice protocols through the lens of social work practice and the implications of those recommendations should be included.

Please cover the following in your policy and police shootings papers:

- 1) What are the social work implications of these policies?
- 2) Identify policy reforms that are inclusive of social work values.
- 3) What is the media impact on policy making?
- 4) How does public fear and legislative response affect the crafting of policies?

D. Group Film Project (Presented weeks 14 and 15)

The focus of the video/power-point project will be marginalized populations in the CJS, for example LGBTQ, minorities or women. Students will craft a Video incorporating qualitative (cases, interviews, surveys, etc.) and quantitative (statistical

analysis, power points, aggregate data) methodology examining the experience of a specific population in the system. What are the social work implications of marginalized people in the CJS? Do their experiences differ from those of the norm? How do they differ? How can social workers address these and other issues?

VIII. FIELD TRIP

Students will take a Field Trip to The Juvenile Justice Center of Philadelphia. Students will craft 1 page reflective summaries:

- What did you learn or gain from this assignment?
- How does it impact your practice, or social work practice as a whole?

IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to adhere to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Care should be taken to avoid academic integrity violations, including: plagiarism, fabrication of information, and multiple submissions. Students who engage in any of these actions will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity, which investigates and decides on sanctions in cases of academic dishonesty.

1. Plagiarism: using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying, in part or in its entirety, another person's paper, article, or web-based material and submitting it for an assignment; using someone else's ideas without attribution; failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, etc.
2. Fabrication: submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data or statistics, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.
3. Multiple submissions: submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

1/23

WEEK #1 – Introduction

- Expectations, requirements and overview of course content.
- Social work and social justice.
- Students will discuss the assigned reading Hill Collins, Pat. (2005 or later),

Intersecting oppressions, web byte pdf. 11 pages; Reamer, F. G. (2004). Social work and criminal justice: The uneasy alliance. And view the youtube video, Lipsky, M. (2010). "Street Level Bureaucrats".

- Students will answer the pre-assigned questions:
 - *How does the (CJS) align with the domains of power?
 - *How does the structure of our society affect the (CJS)?
- What are the social work implications of this analysis?

Readings

Epperson, M.W., Roberts, L. (2013). To what extent is criminal justice content specifically addressed in MSW programs? College of Social Work Faculty Publications, Florida State University.

Hill Collins, P. (2005 or later). Intersecting oppressions, web byte pdf. 11 pages

Reamer, F. G. (2004). Social work and criminal justice: The uneasy alliance. Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work, 23(1/2), 213-231

Lipsky, M. (2010). "Street Level Bureaucrats," Youtube video

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 1, Race, ethnicity and crime: American's continuing crisis.

1/30

WEEK #2 – The Police System

Speaker-
Former Deputy Philadelphia Police Commissioner

Video: Law and Disorder in Philadelphia

Readings

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 4, Justice on the street? The police and racial and ethnic minorities.

Wolf, K.B. & Cokely, C. L. (2007). "To protect and serve?": An exploration of police conduct in relation to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community. *Sexuality and Culture*. 11(2), 1-23.

Jarecki, E. (2012) "The House I Live In." IMDb video

Discussion

Students will discuss the aftermath of the Ferguson police shooting.

Police will discuss the intricacies of their service delivery.

Discussion of the film.

Q & A and processing from speakers and students.

2/6

WEEK #3 – Charging and Prosecution

Speakers

Former Deputy District Attorney and Defenders Assoc.

Readings

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 5, The courts: A quest for justice during the pretrial process.

Alexander, M. (2012). "Go to trial- Crash the Justice System". *N. Y. Times*. 3/11, (sr5)

Discussion

Speakers will discuss their perspectives of the CJS.

Q & A and processing from speakers and students

2/13

WEEK #4– Trial and Sentencing

Speaker**Philadelphia County Judge****Readings**

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 7, Race and sentencing: In search of fairness and justice.

Bernick, E., & Larkin, P. (2014). Reconsidering mandatory minimum sentences: The argument for and against potential reforms, Heritage Foundation. 2/10

Q & A and processing from the speaker and students.

2/20

WEEK #5 – Probation and Parole

Speakers**Philadelphia County and Pennsylvania State Parole and Probation****Readings**

Alexander, M. (2010). Chapter 2, The lockdown.

Ackerman, Sacks, & Furman. (2014). Criminalization of immigration as a pacification strategy. Justice Policy Journal, 2014 (11), 1-14.

Stumpf, J. (2006). Crimmigration crisis: Immigrants, crime, and sovereign power, The. Am UL Rev., 56, 367.

Thompson, H. A. (2013) How prisons change the balance of power in America, Atlantic, 10/13.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/10/1>

Discussion

Q & A and processing from the speaker and students

Student presentations on probation/parole.

1st Policy Paper Due

2/27

WEEK #6 –

Speakers:

Formerly incarcerated individuals with over 50 years in Corrections institutions and recently released individuals who were sentenced to life as juveniles.

Readings

Alexander, M. (2010). Chapter 3, The color of justice.

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 6, Justice on the bench? Trial and adjudication in criminal court.

Drucker, E. (2002). Population Impact of Mass Incarceration under New York’s Rockefeller Drug Laws: An Analysis of Years of Life Lost. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*. 434-437

Discussion

Q & A and processing from speaker and students.

What is corrections?

Are you corrected?

3/6

WEEK #7-

SPRING BREAK

3/13

WEEK #8 – *Criminal Justice Reform*

Speakers

GRI Administrators

Readings

Walker, S. (2012) Chapter 2 and 11, *The Color of Justice*.

Alexander, M. (2010) Chapter 6 *The New Jim Crow*.

Readings

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 9, *Corrections in America: A portrait in color*.

The Sentencing Project, (2007). Women in the criminal justice system,

www.sentencingproject.org/doc/.../womenincj_totalp...

The Sentencing Project, (2014). Women in the justice system,

www.sentencingproject.org/template/page.cfm?id=138

The Sentencing Project, (2012). Incarcerated women,

www.sentencingproject.org/.../cc_incarcerated_women

Discussion

Q & A and processing from speaker and students.

Student presentation of women in the CJS

3/20

WEEK #9

Speakers

Philadelphia Prison Commissioner

Readings

Alexander, M. (2010). Chapter 4, *The cruel hand*.

Uggen, C., Manza, J. & Behrens, A. (2004). "Less than average citizen": Stigma, role transition and the civic reintegration of convicted felons. *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 605, 281-310.

Schnittker, J. & John, A. (2007). Enduring stigma: The long-term effects of incarceration on health. *Journal of Healthy and Social Behavior*, 48, 115-130

Film: "The pull of gravity". U.S. Attorney's Office.

Discussion

Q & A and processing from speakers and students.

3/27

WEEK #10 – The Juvenile Justice System

Field trip to the Juvenile Justice Center

Speakers

Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice Services (JJS), City of Philadelphia

Reading

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 10, Minority youth and crime: Minority youth in court.

Discussion

Students and speakers will discuss the structure of the JJS. Is the system working? What are the social work implications?

Paper on Police Shootings Due

4/3

WEEK #12 – The Death Penalty

Panel Discussion: The Death Penalty

Speakers

Students and advocates

Readings

Walker, S. (2012). Chapter 8, The color of death: Race and the death penalty.

Discussion

The panel and students will discuss the death penalty. What are the social work implications?

Is the death penalty a deterrent to crime? Is it in society's best interest?

4/10

WEEK #13- Field Trip to Inside/Out Graterford SCI and Phila County Prisons

4/17

WEEK #14

Presentation of student videos

Readings

Students will identify and present cases with clients in the CJS.

Discussion

Students will break out into small groups and discuss today's topics

4/24

WEEK# 15 – Presentation of student videos

Readings

Students will choose the readings.

Discussion

Students will show and critically analyze their films.

Final Policy Paper Due
