SOCIOLOGY OF CRIME CONTROL AND PUNISHMENT
Sociology 7723
Professor Ryan D. King
Autumn Semester, 2014
Mondays, 2:15 – 5:00pm
Townshend Hall #245

CONTACT INFORMATION
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Office hours: Monday and Thursday, 10:30 – 12:00, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This seminar introduces students to theories and empirical research on the topics of crime control and criminal punishment. Our objective during each week is to discuss a ‘big idea’ that informs the study of crime and punishment, and then examine how scholars apply these ideas in empirical research. The class is designed for graduate students with an interest in conducting original research or teaching about crime and punishment.

The seminar is divided into three sections. In Part I we briefly discuss the concept of informal social control as it relates to crime and punishment. Part II delves into the realm of formal (state) social control with an emphasis on explaining variation in criminal punishment over time and across places. Finally, Part III reviews strategies for controlling crime and disorder. Among the specific topics covered in this class are the following: social capital, incarceration, sentencing, punishment and social change, ‘broken windows’, deterrence, and reintegrative shaming.

REQUIREMENTS
1. **Compare and contrast essays.** Each week (except 9/8 and 10/27) students must submit a two-page compare and contrast essay. The goal of these assignments is to help us understand how the main ideas discussed during each week fit together. The first page of this essay should recap the main idea of the previous week’s reading and discussion. The second page should then compare and contrast this with the current week’s readings. For instance, the paper due on 10/6 should summarize the main points of the readings and discussion of political economy on 9/29 and then summarize the key similarities and differences between those ideas and the material on group threat assigned for 10/6.

2. **Session leader.** Each student must lead one session during the semester. This entails three components: (1) write a short (∼3 pages) essay that summarizes the key concepts, findings, and connections to other course material (this also counts as your ‘compare/contrast essay’); (2) write three discussion questions related to the readings; and (3) give a short oral introduction to the topic and answer a few questions at the beginning of class. The paper is due by 9am Monday morning and must be read by all members of the class prior to our meeting. The goal of this assignment is to help with teaching preparation, which sometimes necessitates reading a body of work, distilling the key take-home points, presenting the information to a group, and fielding questions.
3. **Book Review.** Each student is required to write one book review. Sociologists are sometimes asked to review a book for a journal and assess its contribution to the field, typically in about 800 to 1,000 words. This review can focus on any of the six books assigned for this class with the exception of Garland’s *Punishment and Modern Society*. Please note that this is a book review, not a book report. Hence, your review should entail a brief outline of the book, but it’s also necessary to critically reflect on the contributions and merit of the work. You may want to peruse book reviews published in the *American Journal of Sociology* or the *Law and Society Review* for examples of this type of writing.

4. **Wikipedia page.** Write a Wikipedia page about a concept discussed in the class. The page could describe a topic (e.g., deportation), a crime control strategy (restorative justice), or perhaps a theory (Black’s theory of law). The goal of this assignment is to explain a difficult concept in everyday language for a lay audience. Topics must be approved by the instructor before beginning this assignment.

5. **Seminar Project.** Students must write a final paper due at the end of the semester. Three options are available. First, this may take the form of an empirical paper, akin to what you would submit as a master’s thesis or a journal manuscript. A second option is to synthesize a body of research, akin to a book chapter or a watered down version of an annual review paper. The third option is a research proposal. Keep in mind that for the latter option you must be specific with respect to your data; do not assume unlimited resources. I will provide more detail about this paper and the grading criteria early in the semester. A paper proposal related to this project is due by November 3rd.

6. **Participation in class** is essential and will constitute 6% of the overall grade. One objective of this, or any, graduate-level seminar is to prepare ourselves for professional sociology, either within our outside of academia. This requires the capacity to communicate ideas, articulate sociological themes in a public forum, and provide constructive feedback to colleagues. Both students and instructors should take advantage of the seminar environment to sharpen these skills. To assess your participation, I take notes after each meeting about each member’s degree of participation and award points accordingly.

**Assignments are weighted as follows:**

- 1. Paper proposal (due by 11/3) – 5%
- 2. Compare and contrast essays (weekly)
  - 12 essays * 2% each 24%
- 3. Session leader 10%
- 4. Book review 10%
- 5. Wikipedia page (due by 12/8) 10%
- 6. Seminar project (due by 12/15) 35%
- 7. Participation 6%

Total 100%

**Policies concerning grading, student conduct, and late work**

Assignments submitted after due dates will receive a 10% deduction for each business day late unless an extension is granted. It is important to notify me as soon as possible when requesting an extension. Also, incompletes can haunt a graduate student during and beyond graduate school, and hence I will grant incompletes only under extraordinary circumstances. In short, don’t count on receiving an incomplete in this class. Finally, any student caught cheating, plagiarizing, or engaging in any other form of scholastic misconduct will be given an automatic
zero for the assignment in question and will be referred to the Department Chair and the OSU Committee on Academic Misconduct for potential disciplinary action. To be clear, your work should be your own and no part of any paper should be copied without attribution and proper citation. All students are expected to read and understand the OSU’s code of student conduct at [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc/](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc/).

**Note on Email:** Please write your emails in a professional manner. I.e., include a proper greeting and closing and give attention to grammar and spelling (occasional typos are inevitable and perfectly understandable).

**Statement regarding disability.** Students requiring accommodations based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please also contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**REQUIRED READINGS**


*Additional readings (articles and chapters) are placed on the course Blackboard page.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Part I – Informal Social Control**

**9/1 – Labor Day – Classes not in session**

**9/8 – Course Introduction; Crime and informal social control**


**9/15 – Crime and violence as social control**

- Donald Black. *The Behavior of Law*.

**Part II – Explanations of State Social Control**
9/22 – Durkheimian Themes; Elias and ‘The Civilizing Process”

- David Garland. P&MS, Chapters 1, 2-3, 10

9/29 – The Political Economy and Punishment

- David Garland. P&MS, chapters 4-5

10/6 – The conflict theory revised – Group threat and political explanations


10/13 – Race and politics at the case level – Public opinion and sentencing research

Sentencing


Public support for punitive policies


10/20 – Foucault and Weberian ideas for the study of punishment

- Michele Foucault. Discipline and Punish.
- David Garland. P&MS, chapters 6-8

10/27 – Punishment and ‘Late Modernity’

- David Garland. The Culture of Control.

Part III: Crime Control
11/3 – Order maintenance and ‘broken windows’

11/10 – Deterrence

11/17 – Labeling and reintegrative shaming

11/24 – Collateral consequences of ‘doing time’ and ‘getting marked’

12/1 – Procedural justice and legal cynicism
- Tom Tyler, Why People Obey the Law.
12/8 - Social networks – Theory and relevance for crime control
✓ David Kennedy. Don’t shoot.