Reducing Local Crime: Exploring the Nexus Between Public Policy, Urban Planning, Public Health and Criminal Theory
Fall 2018

Course Days:	Tuesday and Thursday
Course Dates:	September – December 2018
Room:	Bradley Hall 311
Time:	7:30pm to 8:50pm
Instructor:	Michael Simmons, Ph.D.
Phone:	973-353-1754
Email:	Michael.simmons@rutgers.edu
Office:	47 Bleeker Street
Office Hours:	Thursday 5:30-7:10 and by appointment

Course Syllabus

Overview

This course will introduce students to prominent theories in criminology and explore the intersection between the fields of public policy, public health, and urban planning in understanding crime in the United States. Additionally, over the semester we will examine the complexity that theory and practice can play in reinforcing misleading notions about crime; as well as promoting helpful principles to reduce crime and increase public safety in communities around the country. The exploration of topics will be done from a practitioner's, policy analyst, and researcher's point of view. The class will be interactive and encourage collaborative classroom activities.

Learning Outcomes

After completing the course, students will:

1. Be able to identify the key factors that drive criminal justice policy formation; including the roles that (a) Theory (b) Media and public perception; (c) Governmental officials; (d) Public engagement (e) Costs and benefits; (f) Race/ethics/morality; and (g) Timing/flexibility all play.
2. Be able to understand the bidirectional influence that community engagement, public policy, public health, and theory each play in the creation of laws and criminal justice policies.
3. Identify and discuss major criminal justice efforts that currently shape the American Justice system.

Students will also learn how to express arguments related to the formation of public policy in a logical and concise matter that uses statistical analysis to represent arguments. Over the course of the semester you will:

- Perform policy analysis of various topics related to public policy, planning, and health.
- Use statistical analysis to perform basic analysis.
- Prepare talking points related to policy analysis.
- Learn to critically analyze public policy issues related to planning and public health.
- Work in small groups to produce policy positions in a manner that acknowledges and respects differing viewpoints.

B.S., Criminal Justice Program Learning Goals

Upon completion of the B.S. in Criminal Justice at Rutgers University-Newark, students should be able to:

1) Describe the development and functions of major criminal justice institutions (e.g., police, courts, corrections, and juvenile justice), the activities of actors within these institutions, and how they relate to one another as well as the broader social, political, and economic world.

2) Describe the mechanisms, correlates, theoretical underpinnings, and situational contexts of crime, criminal behavior and opportunity, and techniques for prevention and treatment.

3) Apply and analyze theories related to the policies and practices of the criminal justice system and its major institutions.

4) Demonstrate the ability to gather, explain, and apply empirical research in the field of criminal justice.

5) Obtain a comprehensive knowledge about the process of conducting criminal justice research, and develop the skills to conduct criminal justice research with appropriate methodologies.

Course Structure

The course will consist of lectures, a review of the weekly readings, and discussion of various topics related to criminal justice policy, planning, and public health. Various theories and policy/planning/public health framework that policy makers, researchers and practitioners utilize in the creation, implementation and evaluation of public policies will be introduced throughout the semester. Occasionally, the class will consist of a breakout recitation session. During the recitation sessions, students will be divided into small groups and we will have a weekly group activity where they will analyze a problem and later report their findings to the rest of the class.

Grading, Communication and Academic Integrity Policies

Grading:

Introductory Exercise (10%)

For your introductory exercise you will be tasked with writing a mock opinion editorial (op-ed). The purpose of this exercise is for you to gain practical experience in presenting your beliefs in a concise and clear manner. You must choose a topic related to criminal justice, but you must have your topic approved by me. **This assignment is due on October 16th.**

Two Inventory Problem Sets 20% (10% each):

There will be two problem sets. The exercises will consist of 5 to 10 short questions, which you can complete with your classmates (still must submit your own copy). The purpose of the exercises is to make sure that students are retaining information from lectures, readings, class discussions and small-group recitation sessions. **This assignment is due on October 30th and November 15th.**

Attendance and Class Participation (10%):

All students are expected to attend class and participate in group discussions and exercises. Students are responsible for all assigned readings for each week.

Mid-term (15%):

The mid-term will consist of definitions, short answers and an essay.

Final Exam (25%)

The final will consist of definitions, short answers and an essay.

Paper and Presentation (20%)

All students will be required to write a 12 to 15-page paper the uses one of more theories from public health, public policy, urban planning, or criminal justice to recommend a set of actions to improve public safety for a targeted population in society. Students will be required conduct a class presentation on the major research findings.

Final Grade:
A is 90 or higher
B+ is 85-89
B is 80-84
C+ is 75-79
C is 70-74
D is 60-69
F is below 60

Communication:

Students are encouraged to come by to see me if they are having any difficulties with the course materials or have any additional questions.

Late or Missing Assignment Policy:

Late Papers: All papers are expected to be submitted, in class or electronically on Blackboard, on the day they are due. You will be penalized ten points (out of 100) for every day a paper is late. I will not accept papers submitted over one week after the deadline without sufficient excuse. If you become ill or the victim of an emergency, please let me know within 48 hours.

Integrity Policies:

Academic and intellectual integrity is not only at the center of the policymaking process, but are also values of the Rutgers communities. Because of this, we will hold all students to the following standards:
- Prompt arrival at all course sessions and meetings
- Attendance, participation, and respectful behavior in all sessions
- Completion of all breakout group activities
- During the policy simulation preparation and actual debate, students equally contribute to the group assignment.

You are responsible for adhering to basic academic standards of honesty and integrity as outlined in the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity

Statement on Academic Honesty:

All members of our community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. We view a violation of academic honesty as a breach of trust and will result in a "Fail" in this class. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult with instructor.

Students with Disabilities:

Rutgers University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Nondiscrimination Policy of the University and in compliance with § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For additional information please visit the website https://ods.rutgers.edu/ or contact the representative for the Newark Campus.

Allen Sheffield
Director of ADA Services and Academic Support

Robeson Campus Center, Suite 352
350 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Newark, NJ 07102
Phone: 973.353.5300
Fax: 973.353.5666
E-mail: allen.sheffield@rutgers.edu
Website: https://ods.rutgers.edu/

Psychological and Counseling Services

If you experience psychological or other difficulties as a result of this course, or because of other issues that may interfere with your performance in the course, please contact the university's psychological and counseling service center (http://www.counseling.newark.rutgers.edu; 973-353-5805), which is located in Blumenthal Hall, room 101. The center offers a variety of free, confidential services to part-time and full-time students who are enrolled at Rutgers.

If you are interested in finding out more about

• Accelerated Master's Program (B.S. /M.A.)

• Criminal Justice National Honor Society (Alpha Phi Sigma)

Please refer to the School of Criminal Justice website http://rscj.newark.rutgers.edu/

Follow us, to stay up to date! @SCJ_APSS

Organization of the Course and Tentative Class Schedule

Week 1   **Week of Sept. 3rd – Sept. 7th**
Outline of course: objectives, expectations, grading, and reading.
        Overview: Key factor that drive policy formation:
- Science
- Economics
- Public Response
- Political Science
- Ethics
- The Public Sector
- Media
- Business
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Timing and flexibility

What is theory and why is it important?

Week 2   **Week of Sept. 10th – Sept. 14th**
Overview of Theory continued
Discussion on Super Predator Theory

Week 3   **Week of Sept. 17th – Sept. 21st**
 Crime Justice Policy:
The Nexus between Race, Poverty, and Crime

Week 4   **Week of Sept. 24th – Sept. 28th**
Review of Criminal Justice Theory
Rural Crime: Exploring its Causes and Possible Solutions

Week 5   **Week of Oct. 1st – Oct. 5th**
 Public Health and Crime: Criminal Justice Epidemiology

Week 6   **Week of Oct. 8th – Oct. 12th**
Public Health and Crime: Criminal Justice Epidemiology
Handout Inventory Problem Sets 1 & 2

Week 7   **Week of Oct. 15th – Oct. 19th**
Criminal Justice and Policy
Recitation Sessions: Case Study of High Crime Communities
Op-Ed. assignment is due

Week 8   **Week of Oct. 22th – Oct. 26th**
Urban Planning and Crime: Community Collective Efficacy

Week 9   **Week of Oct. 29th – Nov. 2nd**
Crime Prevention and Community Development
Paper Topics Due
Inventory Problem Set 1 Due

Week 10   **Week of Nov. 5th – Nov. 9th**
Guiding Theories in Criminal Justice

Week 11   **Week of Nov. 12th – Nov. 16th**
                               Office Hours: Student Paper
                               Recitation Sessions: TBD
                               Inventory Problem Set 2 Due

Week 12   **Week of Nov. 19th – Nov. 23rd**
                               Thanksgiving - No Class

Week 13   **Week of Nov. 26th – Nov. 30th**
                               Student Presentations
                               Paper Due

Week 14   **Week of Dec. 3rd – Dec. 7th**
                               Student Presentations

Week 15   **Week of Dec. 3rd – Dec. 7th**
                               Final Exam TBA