



Contemporary Problems in Corrections

47:202:402:73

Fall 2018

Course Information

Class time: Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30 to 8:50

Location of class: Bradley Hall, 313

Instructor: Beth E. Adubato, Ph.D.

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: badubato@scj.rutgers.edu

Course Description:

- Course Catalog description: This course explores the impact of alternatives to incarceration, the growing prisoner rights movement, strikes by correctional employees, and public resentment toward persistently high rates of recidivism are major topics discussed in this course. In addition, the class provides for an in-depth study of issues concerning correctional education, job training, work release, and post-incarceration employment.
- General course description: This course goes beyond the basic foundational corrections course focus on origins, purposes, actors and actions, and consequences of the United States' corrections system and subsystems to a particular emphasis on an exploration and analysis of the problems of that system and subsystems. This includes the issues with correctional philosophies of rehabilitation and retribution, alternatives to incarceration and support for former inmates, and a survey approach to specific issues faced by the incarcerated and correctional employees.

Student Learning Objectives:

- Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
 1. Trace the roots of the penal system in the United States and its origins.
 2. Compare the various correctional institutions across the U.S. and facilities in six comparison countries.
 3. Explain how mass incarceration and punishment practices have contributed to the parole epidemic.
 4. Demonstrate an understanding of the various challenges parolees face when returning to the community.

5. Analyze current reentry practices and risk assessment tools.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of current policies surrounding reentry and identify areas of reentry that still need to be addressed.
7. Explain desistance and strategies used by parolees and practitioners to reduce recidivism.

Course Requirements

- Muraskin, R.(Ed.). *Key Correctional Issues*. Pearson Education, Inc: Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2010
- All other readings will be posted on Blackboard

Course Structure:

- The course content is divided into 3 sections:
 - I. Beginnings: Overview and History of Correctional Systems and Functions
 - II. Perspectives – Rehabilitation, Retribution, and Alternatives to Incarceration
 - III. Issues – The Incarcerated, the Warders, and the System
- The course will consist of lectures, a review of the weekly readings, and extensive discussion of the various topics related to correctional foundations, philosophical perspectives and practices of incarceration, and a survey approach to issues specific to prisoners, correctional employees, and the future of American corrections.

Attendance

You will not be successful in this course if you miss more than one *unexcused* class. If you cannot attend a given class, you must make arrangements to hand-in your assignment. You are responsible for the material you miss. Also, please be prompt—tardiness is disruptive to the rest of the class.

Watching and/or playing with electronic items such as an iPhone or with the Internet on your laptops is tantamount to not attending class. Students exhibiting this behavior during class time will be marked absent.

Announcements

All announcements and additional course information will be posted on Blackboard—please check our class page regularly.

Grading

Will be calculated based on a 100-point scale as follows:

The final grade will be based on the following:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Attendance & Participation | 5% |
| Quiz | 15% |
| Midterm | 25% |
| Amelioration Project | 30% |
| Final exam | 25% |

Grading Criteria

| | |
|----|---------|
| A | 90–100% |
| B+ | 85-89% |
| B | 80-84% |
| C+ | 75-79% |
| C | 70-74% |
| D | 60-69% |
| F | <60% |

The “Amelioration Project”

This project will be further explained in class, but it is essentially a creative project. Each student will develop a program that addresses one of the particular issues raised over the course of the semester. This program will propose “solutions” to this (or these) issue(s). Specific guidelines will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

| | | |
|---------------|--|--|
| Week 1 | Beginnings: Overview and History of Correctional Systems and Functions, Parts I and II | Muraskin—Chapters 1-3 |
| Week 2 | The Problem of Recidivism & Rehabilitation, Retribution, and Alternatives to Incarceration | Muraskin—Chapters 4-6 |
| Week 3 | Rehabilitation: Preparing for the Outside, Part I – Counseling and Treatment & Part II – Education, Job Training, Postcarceral/Reentry Support | Muraskin—Chapter 12 Additional readings on Blackboard |
| Week 4 | Documentary: <i>The Hard Road Home</i> , Parts I & II | Readings posted on Blackboard Quiz |
| Week 5 | Retribution: Corporal Punishment & the Death Penalty, Parts I & II Documentary: <i>Death Row Stories: Nathan Dunlap</i> | Muraskin—Chapters 20-22 |

| | | |
|----------------|--|---|
| Week 6 | <p>Alternatives to Incarceration, Part I – Restorative Justice</p> <p>Alternatives to Incarceration, Part II – Non-Custodial Sanctions</p> | <p>Readings on Blackboard</p> <p>Midterm Exam</p> |
| Week 7 | <p>Introduction to Part III. Issues – The Incarcerated, the Warders, and the System</p> | <p>Muraskin—Chapters 13 & 14</p> |
| Week 8 | <p>The Prisoner Rights Movement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">&</p> <p>Female and Juvenile Prisoners</p> | <p>Muraskin—Chapters 11 & 15</p> |
| Week 9 | <p>Mentally Ill and Elderly Prisoners</p> <p style="text-align: center;">&</p> <p>Gangs and Violence</p> | <p>Muraskin—Chapter 9</p> <p>Additional readings posted on Blackboard</p> |
| Week 10 | <p>Health and Disease</p> <p>Solitary Confinement, Part I</p> | <p>Muraskin—Chapters 7 & 17</p> |
| Week 11 | <p>Solitary Confinement, Part II</p> <p>Thursday, November 16th</p> <p>**Online meeting**</p> <p>Documentary: <i>Frontline: Solitary Nation</i></p> | <p>Readings posted on Blackboard</p> |

| | | |
|----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Week 12 | Overcrowding and Correctional Employees: Overview No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday | Muraskin—Chapter 16 |
| Week 13 | Correctional Employees: Safety; Correctional Employees: Strikes; & Correctional Employees: Professionalization of Officers | Readings posted on Blackboard |
| Week 14 | Amelioration Projects | Muraskin—Chapters 13 & 15 |
| Week 15 | Conclusion: The Future of American Corrections | |

General information

Academic Integrity

As a member of the Rutgers University community you are not to engage in any academic dishonesty. 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>

Your academic work should be the result of your own individual effort, you should not allow other students to use your work, and you are required to recognize and reference any material that is not your own. Violations of the university's policy will result in appropriate action.

Academic Resources

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.

Kate Torres
Coordinator 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: kate.torres@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/>.