McGill University
Department of Sociology

COURSE OUTLINE

Sociology 488—Punishment and Prison
(in Leacock 721 from 9:35-11:25 on Mondays)

Fall 2019

Professor Jason T. Carmichael
Office: Leacock 814
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-12:00
Email: jason.carmichael@mcgill.ca

Course Overview:

This class exposes each student to the historical, philosophical, theoretical and empirical work related to punishment, prisons, and more broadly, social control. Because an understanding of punishment is fundamental to the understanding of society, each student will gain a greater appreciation of the mechanisms through which a peaceful society is maintained through the fear or use of punishment. To accomplish this, we will examine in detail the development of the prison system over the last several hundred years and explore the rationales and effectiveness of for its massive expansion.

Course Requirements:

Final grades will be based on a relatively subjective assessment of your overall work in the course (presentations, participation, and final paper using the weights mentioned above). The grade weights outlined below only serve as a guide.

Attendance and Class participation (roughly 25% of final grade): Participation in class discussions and small group work is a vital component of the course. Students will be graded on participation, and you can’t participate unless you attend class and do the readings. In order to promote useful class discussion, each student should have read all the required readings prior to class. Students should be prepared to share their thoughts and comments during class.

- Attendance: (roughly 5% of the grade) I will take attendance at the beginning of each class (after the first class). You will be allowed one absence during the term without penalty. Those arriving late to class will receive reduced credit for attendance that day.

- Class Participation and Presentations: (total of 20% of the overall course grade) – contains two components as follows:

  1) Presentations (50% of participation grade): One-two student(s) will be required to present a brief summary (10-12 minutes) and lead the discussion for each of the articles outlined below. The person assigned to the article will also be responsible for writing a 1-2 page single-spaced summary of the article or chapter and make this
available to the rest of the class prior to your presentation. This summary should include criticisms, limitations, and weaknesses of the theoretical argument. Please bring on hard copy of the summary for me to look at during your presentation.

2) Class Participation (50% of participation grade): There is a subjective element to participation but it must be considered in a seminar course. When determining your overall grade for the course, I will consider your level of overall ‘engagement’ in the class discussions to determine your score for this component of the grading.

Important Note: I would prefer you not have laptops out during the class. You may choose to ignore this preference but distracting laptop use will result in a reduction of your class participation grade up to a maximum of your entire class participation grade.

Weekly Essays (20% of final grade): You will be required to write 4 essays during the term. Students have discretion as to which weeks they do not turn in an essay. Each essay will be worth 25% of your total weekly essay grade. No accommodations will be made for students who do not turn in the required number of essays. Each essay should be roughly 750 words in length but no more than 1,000 words (please state the word count on each essay). In the essay, describe the broader argument of the set of readings for that week’s readings. Discuss whether you found the arguments of the work compelling (here would be a good place to discuss strengths and weaknesses of a theory and/or empirical work). You must incorporate at least two readings into your discussion. Essays are due at the beginning of class (hard copies, please).

Some IMPORTANT rules about weekly essays:

1. Papers turned in after the beginning of the class will not be accepted.
2. I need a hard copy of the essay at the beginning of class.
3. Only one essay per week may be submitted.
4. Weekly essay may only be submitted on weeks you are not presenting a reading to the class.
5. Weekly essays may only be submitted on weeks where we are discussing readings (not during classes where we have the presentations of final papers).
6. Weekly essays must be on material we are discussing the week the essay is submitted.
7. You MUST be present on the day you submit a weekly essay.

Final Research Paper (50% of final grade): Students are required to complete a seminar length paper (roughly 7,000-8,000 words – 12-point font, 1-inch margins, double spaced.). The paper will be due during the last class – December 3rd. Students will need to pick a topic relevant to prisons and punishment. The first 3-4 pages of the paper are due on the 7th week of class. This introduction to the paper must include at least 2-3 relevant academic sources.

Presentation of Final Research Paper (5% of final grade): Students will present a summary of their research paper to the class for roughly 10 minutes during the last two classes of the term.

FINAL GRADES: So, putting it all together the grading allocation will look like this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and class participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Weekly Essays</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>75-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>65-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (Conditional Pass)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>50-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (Fail)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Note: All textbooks are available at Paragraph Books located at the corner of McGill College and Sherbrooke St.


Articles listed below are available free online but will be placed on MyCourses.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note: all dates are tentative and readings are subject to change during the term. Any changes will be announced in class.

**Week 1: Sept 9th.**

Introduction to the course.

**Week 2: Sept. 16th – Punishment.**


**Week 3: Sept 23rd - Theories of Punishment**


**Week 4: Sept. 30th – Theories of Punishment**


**Week 5: Oct. 7th – Punishment**


**Week 6: Oct. 14th – Religious and Political Ideology**


**Week 7: Oct. 21st – History of Prisons - PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Morris and Rothman – Chapters 1-4

**Week 8: Oct. 28th - History of Prisons**

Morris and Rothman – Chapters 5-8
**Week 9: Nov. 4th – Sentencing**


**Week 10: Nov. 11th – Imprisonment and Release**


**Week 11: Nov. 18th - Wrongful Convictions, Mass Incarceration.**


**Week 12: Nov. 25th – Death Penalty**


**Week 13:**

**Dec 2nd – Day 1 of Final Paper Presentations**

**Dec 3rd – Day 2 of Final Paper Presentations**  **TERM PAPER DUE**

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS (Dec. 3rd). THEY MUST BE TURNED IN DURING THE CLASS. ANY PAPERS TURNED IN AFTER THE END OF THE LAST CLASS WILL BE MARKED DOWN.**

**Important Notes:**

No incompletes will be given in the course except in the most extreme cases and must be approved by Prof. Carmichael prior the last day of classes.

**Additional Points:**

**1) McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).**

L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).

**2) In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.**

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue).
3) In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

4) If you have a disability that requires special accommodations, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.

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