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**CCJ4497 Criminal Justice Policy**  
**College of Criminology and Criminal Justice**  
**Florida State University**  
**Spring 2024**

**Professor:** Dr. Julie Brancale  
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**Office:** 201B Criminology & Criminal Justice Bldg  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 8:30-9:30am & 11:30am-1:30pm  
Thursday R 8:30-9:30am

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**Office:** 307A Crim and CJ Bldg  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 11:30am-1:30pm  
Thursday 1:00pm-3:00pm

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### **Course Meeting Information**

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:45am-11:00am, BEL116

### **Course Overview and Objectives**

The development of criminal justice policies is heavily influenced by numerous factors, such as high-profile events, public opinion, politics, budgets, public safety, victim protection, offender punishment and rehabilitation, and—sometimes—science. In this course, we will begin by describing the role of the United States Constitution in criminal justice policy and assessing the ways in which policies are enacted. We will then survey a series of the most impactful United States criminal justice policies. In doing so, we will focus on the policies' historical context, intended and unintended consequences, and measurable outcomes. At the end of the semester, we will describe strategies for designing and enacting effective criminal justice policies that meet their intended goals in a fair, just, and equitable manner.

The specific objects of this course are to:

1. Describe how and why criminal justice policies are enacted in the United States.
2. Assess the influence of public opinion, politics, public safety, victim protection, offender punishment and rehabilitation, budgets, and science on the policymaking process.
3. Identify and describe the major criminal justice policies that have been proposed and enacted across the United States, including their historical context, impact on measurable outcomes, and unintended consequences.
4. Evaluate and critique the effectiveness of criminal justice policies.
5. Develop strategies for enacting effective, fair, and just criminal justice policies.

One of my main priorities is to help you obtain knowledge that will allow you to express your own informed opinions on the important issues surrounding criminal justice policy. Many of the topics we will cover may be controversial with no clear or single “right” answer. I encourage you to express your own point of view (in a respectful way) and ask that you remain open to the perspectives of others.

### **Required Course Materials**

#### *Reading Materials*

We will not use a textbook for this course. Rather, the required weekly readings will consist of articles, chapters, and websites that will be available in the *Modules* section of Canvas.

It is critical for you to read the assigned material before each class so that you are prepared to discuss and ask questions. It is your responsibility to read all material, as some exam questions will come solely from the assigned readings. If the readings change, an announcement will be made in class and posted on Canvas.

### *Computer and Internet Connection*

You must have regular access to a working, reliable, secure, and stable computer and internet connection for this course. Some Canvas features and course materials may not work well on phones or tablets, therefore accessing and completing assignments on a computer is critical.

### **Course Structure, Grading, and Policies**

This course will meet face-to-face on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The structure of each class meeting will vary based upon the topic we are covering that day. For example, some classes will be lecture-based, and others will be more discussion-based. Exams will be taken in-person during our regularly scheduled class time and during the university-scheduled final exam week.

### *Attendance*

Attendance and grades are strongly positively correlated, therefore, to do well in this course, it is imperative that you attend each class, remain attentive, ask questions, and take detailed notes. If you miss a class session, be sure to get notes from one of your classmates; under no circumstances will your professor or teaching assistant's notes be given out. In addition, while we welcome questions and discussions during office hours or scheduled appointments, we will not re-lecture material if you miss class.

### *Classroom Environment and Etiquette*

Some of the policies that we will discuss are going to be controversial, with students having very different opinions on what they believe is the "right" policy and what they believe is the "wrong" policy. These differing opinions are welcome and encouraged (not to mention, completely reflective of the realities of the policymaking process). However, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, and you may not be disrespectful or dismissive of others' opinions. Please place cell phones on silent or turn them off, do not engage in telephone conversations, send text messages, browse the internet, or use social media during class time.

### *Course Communication and Email*

Course materials will be available in the *Modules* section of Canvas and links to submit assignments will be available in the *Assignments* section of Canvas. Important updates will be posted in the *Announcements* section of Canvas.

You should check our course Canvas site and your FSU email daily. Updates and important information will only be sent to your FSU account and shared via Canvas announcement. Emails sent to your professor and teaching assistant must be respectful, include a subject with the course number or title, and contain proper greetings and grammar. Any questions about grades must be asked during a scheduled appointment. Your professor and teaching assistant cannot discuss any specifics about grades through email or phone.

### *Grades*

Grades in this course will be determined by your class attendance and performance on three exams and a policy project. Each assessment is briefly described below; more information will be provided in class and on Canvas. Late assessments will not be accepted. To avoid any technology-related issues that may result in the late submission of your work, please allow enough time before each deadline to submit your assignments. Your final project will be scanned through Turnitin (a plagiarism detection tool) and those with high similarity scores will be investigated and addressed in accordance with the FSU Honor Code.

### In-Class Attendance Checks/Assignments

Sporadic and unannounced in-class attendance checks/assignments will count for 10% of your final grade. Two attendance checks/assignments will be dropped (in other words you can miss two in-class attendance checks/assignments and still get the full 10% for attendance).

### Exams

Exams are designed to assess your mastery of the course material and will be completed in-person during the regularly scheduled class time. Exams will count for 60% of your final course grade. Each exam can only be taken one time; re-takes are not permitted. Exams can only be taken on a different date if you have a valid, documented, and university-approved reason for missing the scheduled date. If you miss an exam, you must let your professor or teaching assistant know (and provide documentation) within 24 hours of the missed exam. The exam must be made-up within one week of the regularly scheduled exam. Make-ups (which include any exam not taken during the regularly scheduled class time) will consist of essay questions and will be administered at a date/time of the professor's choosing. No exceptions will be made.

### Policy Project

For the policy project, you will select either a proposed (not passed or currently in committee discussions) or enacted criminal justice policy to describe and critique. The project will count for 30% of your final course grade. The project will consist of two parts, first, you will write a 2-3 page paper describing the history, intentions/purpose, and outcomes of your selected policy; second, you will develop a fact sheet for your selected policy. A fact sheet is a one-page document that contains the most relevant information about a topic. The goal is to provide facts and key points in a clear, concise, and easy-to-understand way. The project must be submitted on Canvas by the specified due date and time. Late projects or those submitted via a means other than Canvas will not be accepted, no exceptions. Rewriting a project after submission is not permitted.

### *Course Grades and Grading Scale*

Final course grades will not be curved or rounded. Individual extra credit opportunities or assignments will not be given to improve course grades or to replace required assignments or exams. Your grades are not negotiable; the total number of points earned on the exams, position papers, and fact sheet will determine your final course grade, no exceptions.

### Grade Breakdown

- 60% Exams
  - 20% Exam 1
  - 20% Exam 2
  - 20% Exam 3
  
- 30% Policy Project
  - 15% Paper
  - 15% Fact Sheet
  
- 10% In-Class Attendance Checks/Assignments

### Grading Scale

A 94-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%	F 59% and below
A- 90-93%	B 84-86%	C 74-76%	D 64-66%	
	B- 80-83%	C- 70-73%	D- 60-63%	

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

### **University Attendance Policy**

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family, and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

### **Academic Honor Policy**

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of student's academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." Florida State University Academic Honor Policy:  
<http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>

### **Academic Success**

Your academic success is a top priority for Florida State University. University resources to help you succeed include tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. The following information is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Department of Student Support and Transitions to learn more.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with the academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet the integral requirements of the course.

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services; and
- (2) request a letter from the Office of Accessibility Services to be sent to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and,
- (3) meet (in person, via phone, email, skype, zoom, etc...) with each instructor to whom a letter of accommodation was sent to review approved accommodations.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in an alternative format upon request.

For the latest version of this statement and more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Office of Accessibility Services

874 Traditions Way

108 Student Services Building

Florida State University

Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)

(850) 644-8504 (TDD)

[\*\*oas@fsu.edu\*\*](mailto:oas@fsu.edu)

[\*\*https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas\*\*](https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas)

## **Confidential Campus Resources**

Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

Victim Advocate Program

University Center A, Rm.

4100

(850) 644-7161

Available 24/7/365

Office Hours: M-F 8-5

[\*\*https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap\*\*](https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap)

University Health Services

Health and Wellness Center

(850) 644-6230

[\*\*https://uhs.fsu.edu/\*\*](https://uhs.fsu.edu/)

Counseling and Psychological

Services

Askew Student Life Center,

2nd floor

942 Learning Way

(850) 644-8255

[\*\*https://counseling.fsu.edu/\*\*](https://counseling.fsu.edu/)