

POLITICS OF POLICE AND PRISONS

Department of Political Science
Vanderbilt University

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PSCI 3242
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M/W/F 1:25-2:15 PM

Office Hours: M/F 10:45AM – 11:45AM

Sign up here: <https://calendly.com/allison-anoll/office-hours>

Course Description

Beginning in the mid-1970s, incarceration rates in the United States began to grow at an exponential rate. While just under 200,000 people were in prison in 1970, today the estimation is 2.1 million. This mass incarceration affects certain groups more heavily than others. Despite making up only 11% of the U.S. population, Black Americans comprise 36% of the prison population. The result is that 1 in every 10 Black men in their thirties is in prison or jail on any given day.

What caused this dramatic change in the prison population in the United States? What produces the large racial disparities in incarceration rates and other types of contact with the American carceral state? In this class, we'll consider how changing definitions of crime and policing – driven by political mechanisms – have produced this nation-wide, uniquely American phenomenon. We'll first examine history and theories of punishment. Then we'll look at the politics of crime at each level of the criminal justice system: policing and arrests, sentencing, incarceration, and release. We'll consider the effects of these systems on inequality, families, and democracy, before finally turning to an exploration of reform and resistance with an eye toward how you, as a part of the American demos, can engage on these issues.

Goals and Learning Objectives

The goal of this course is to expose you to the political dynamics of crime, policing, and incarceration in the United States, while helping you grow as a social scientist and active citizen through practice and application. At the completion of this course, you will have a strong foundational knowledge on this topic suitable for advanced work on this topic through an honors thesis or in graduate school, or in a career. But maybe more importantly, you will be equipped with skills and tools to interact effectively and knowledgeably in the modern political world. This will happen through our focus on growing as a discussion participant, scientific thinker, deep listener, and content specialist. To meet these goals, by the end of the course you will be able to:

- *Content Acquisition.* Describe, organize, and connect key questions and concepts on the politics of American crime and policing.
- *Analytical Application.* Extend social science research questions and findings to current political debates; analyze the merits of an argument and build a policy claim; apply content knowledge to effectively participate in politics.
- *Interpersonal Growth.* Demonstrate growth in discussion techniques including close listening, speaking with evidence, challenging with respect, and summarizing others' contributions.

Assignments and Course Requirements

Reflecting the goals of this course, the assignments are designed to assess your content acquisition and retention, your ability to analytically apply concepts to real-world problems, and your growth as a discussion participant. As such, there are three categories of assignments that count toward your grade:

Content Acquisition: Concept Maps. 40%

At the conclusion of each unit, you are required to develop and bring to class a concept map that organizes the unit content. These concept maps are meant both to demonstrate your mastery of the material and serve as a resource for you down the line. Each map will answer the unit's question by highlighting key ideas and connections in the unit's material. We'll spend time in class discussing these maps and working in groups to add to, change, and combine them. The maps will become increasingly valuable to your grade, reflecting the idea that I expect you to get better at making them as the course goes on: Unit 1 map = 5%; Unit 2 = 8%; Unit 3 map = 12%; Unit 4 = 15%. More details for this assignment including a rubric are available in the Assignments folder on Brightspace.

Analytical & Application: Reform Project. 45%

This course is designed not only to help you understand the politics of crime and policing as it currently stands, but also to train you to apply your newly acquired knowledge to assess and analyze possible alternatives. In line with this goal, you will choose a current reform policy from a list of options and analyze its merits in a three-part project spanning the semester. This assignment requires you to 1) research the policy and provide a recommendation regarding its adoption in a formal paper, 2) teach your fellow classmates about the reform effort, and 3) engage in a real-world participatory act on your topic's behalf in the form of writing and submitting an opinion editorial. More details on this assignment including rubrics are available in the Assignments folder on Brightspace.

- Part 1. Research Paper. 15%
- Part 2. Policy Presentation. 15%
- Part 3. Opinion Editorial. 15%

Interpersonal Growth: Developing Humble Confidence. 15%

Being an active citizen and effective scholar requires you both to see value in your ideas and contributions, while being open to change and correction. Through the discussion and participation component of our course, you'll work to grow on both dimensions. You'll learn about how to think like a social scientist, practice deep listening, and interact with other discussion participants in a way that is constructive and productive. This participatory component of your assignment requires consistent attendance in class, as well as occasionally bringing working drafts or other outside material for class discussions. More information on this assignment including a rubric is on Brightspace.

University and Course Policies

Academic Honesty.

This course will follow Vanderbilt's high standards of academic honesty, available in detail in the University's Student Handbook: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/the-honor-system/

Reading and Materials.

You are not required to buy any books for this course. All materials will be available on Brightspace. You are however expected to print, read, and annotate all the assigned material, or bring your annotated materials on a reading tablet. Your preparation and engagement are central to this course's construction and as a result, directly affect your success in this class: you will be unable to participate in class or complete assignments at an "A" level without a careful, thoughtful reading of the course's materials. Read the material for each week in the order listed on the syllabus.

Technology in the Classroom.

Pedagogical research on teaching and learning shows that students learn and retain more when they handwrite their notes and are free from technological distractions like laptops, phones, and tablets. As a result, laptops are not allowed during class and cellphones must be turned to silent. The only exception to our technology-free policy is you can bring a digital writing or reading tablet to use during class, but you MUST turn off wi-fi and notifications at the start of class. I retain the right to change this policy at any point or revoke individuals' technology usage if it is distracting to the broader classroom environment.

Late work.

Late submissions create a burden on graders and disrupt the planned pace of your learning---but life is also messy, and your mental health and sleep are important. I am open to providing an extension on assignments for extenuating circumstances that are discussed with me in advance of the deadline (write me directly), but work submitted after the deadline without such a discussion is subject to a penalty. An assignment submitted one day late is subject to a 5% penalty; two days late is a 10% penalty; three days late is a 15% penalty. Work will not be accepted after three days from its due date.

References + Letters of Recommendation.

It is my policy that I only write letters of recommendation for students who have completed a full course with me and have received a final letter grade of "A." If you need a letter of recommendation or reference, please visit this webpage for information about timeline and process:

<https://allisonanoll.com/references-and-recs/>

Students with Disabilities.

If you need course accommodations due to a disability, please make an appointment with Prof. Anoll. We will work together along with the University's EAD Department to meet your needs:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student-access/>

The Stuff of Life.

Inevitably, things come up during the semester that can make it challenging for some students to follow the policies outlined above. If at any point you are struggling to fulfill the expectations of this course, please come talk to Prof. Anoll. The earlier you do this, the easier it is to find a solution for the challenge. Further, here is a list of resources that can help:

- Title IX and Student Discrimination Office: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/>
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Life resources: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/resources>
- For students dealing with harassment, assault, and/or stalking, Vanderbilt Project Safe has resources (<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/projectsafe/>).
- For students dealing with anxiety, depression, distress, or other concerns, the University Counseling Center (615) 322-2571 offers resources: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/ucc/>
- To be scheduled with a counseling professional, complete this intake form: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VanderbiltUniv&layout_id=20www.vanderbilt.edu/studentcarenetwork

Course Schedule and Readings

Date	Topic, Reading, & Assignments
<p>Unit 1: What is the carceral state?</p> <p>In this unit, we will examine the state as the locus of punishment powers and see how competing theories of punishment help us understand the rise of the modern carceral state.</p>	
<u>Week 1</u>	The Ground Rules
1/9	<i>Introduction</i> - None
1/11	<i>Thinking About Thinking; Talking About Talking</i> - Pingree, “The Capture” (1pg) - Hoover & Donovan, “Thinking Scientifically” (9pg) - Complete online survey by 9 am on 1/11
1/13	<i>The State, and What’s at Stake</i> - Lerman and Weaver, “The Carceral State and American Political Development” (16pg)
<u>Week 2</u>	Theories of the Punishment
1/16	<i>No class – MLK Day</i>
1/18	<i>The Goals of Incarceration</i> - Bedau and Kelly, “Punishment, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy” (9pg) - Garland, <i>Punishment and Modern Society</i> (12pg)
1/20	- Torney, <i>Why Punish? How Much?</i> (8pg) - Rushe and Kirchheimer, <i>Punishment and Social Structure</i> (9pg)
<u>Week 3</u>	History of the Modern Carceral State
1/23	<i>A New Jim Crow</i> - Alexander, “The Rebirth of Caste” (Chapter 1) (39pg)
1/25	<i>A Response</i> - Forman, <i>Racial Critiques of Mass Incarceration</i> (33pg) - Hinton et al, NYT: “Did Blacks Really Endorse the 1994 Crime Bill?” (2pg)
1/27	<i>Review of Unit</i> - Bring draft of concept map to class - Concept map due by noon Sunday 1/29

<p>Unit 2: Do politics affect punishment?</p> <p>In this unit, we'll discuss how politics shapes outcomes at each point in the criminal justice system.</p>	
<p><u>Week 4</u></p>	<p>Dynamics of Politics</p> <p>1/30 <i>Public Opinion Dynamics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enns, "The Public's Increasing Punitiveness and Its Influence on Mass Incarceration in the United States" (13pg) - Beckett, "Setting the Public Agenda: 'Street Crime' and Drug Use in American Politics" (12pg) <p>2/1 <i>Guest: Former Nashville Mayor, Bill Purcell on local politics</i></p> <p>2/3 <i>People and Institutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lipsky, <i>Street-Level Bureaucracy</i> (6pg) - Oberfield, <i>Becoming Bureaucrats</i> (14pg)
<p><u>Week 5</u></p>	<p>Policing & Arrests</p> <p>2/6 <i>Influences on Police Behavior</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makowsky and Stratmann, "Political Economy at Any Speed: What Determines Traffic Citations?" (7pgs) - Mummolo, "Modern Police Tactics, Police-Citizen Interactions, and the Prospects for Reform" (10pg) - Gatto et al, "Prejudice in the Police" (9pg) <p>2/8 <i>Racial Disparities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sentencing Project (3pg) - Pryor, Shao Buchanan, Goff, "Risky Situations: Sources of Racial Disparity in Police Behavior" (9pg) - Beckett, Nyrops, and Pfigst, "Race, Drugs, and Policing" (22pg) - Eberhardt Et Al, "Seeing Black: Race, Crime, and Visual Processing" (12pg) <p>2/10 <i>Guest: Captain. Leshuan Oliver on policing in Nashville</i></p>
<p><u>Week 6</u></p>	<p>Courts & Sentencing</p> <p>2/13 <i>Mandatory Minimums</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zimring, "Populism, Democratic Government, and the Decline of Expert Authority: Some Reflections on Three Strikes in California" (12pg) - Bernick and Larkin, Heritage Foundation: "Reconsidering Mandatory Minimum Sentences" (5pg) - Eckholm, NYT: "Out of Prison, and Staying Out, After 3rd Strike in California" (3pg) - Apuzzo, NYT: "After Obama Push for Clemency, Hints of Reversal Likely..." (2pg) - Listen: <i>Serial</i> Season 3, Episode 5: "Pleas Baby Pleas" <p>2/15 <i>Racial Disparities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bowers et al, "Death Sentencing in Black and White" (14pg) - Rice et al. "The Impact of Racial Resentment on White Juror Decision-Making" (5pg) - Clair & Winter, "How Judges Think About Racial Disparities" (18pg)

2/17	<p><i>The Prison Boom</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Western, <i>Punishment and Inequality in America</i> (Chapter 1) (21pg)
<u>Week 7</u>	Prisons & Incarceration
2/20	<i>NO CLASS – Anoll away to give research talk</i>
2/22	<p><i>The Economies of Incarceration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Austin and Coventry, “Emerging Issues on Privatized Prisons” (20pg) - King et al, “Big Prisons, Small Towns: Prison Economics in Rural America” (19pg) - Press Pack (8pg)
2/24	<p><i>Parole Boards & Clemency</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walker, WSJ: “State Parole Boards Use Software to Decide White Inmates to Release” (5pg) - Breslin & Howley, “Defending the Politics of Clemency” (22pg) - Press Pack (11pg)
<u>Week 8</u>	Reintegration and Reentry
2/27	<p><i>The Experience of Return</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mooallem, NYT: “Carlos and Roby are two ex-convicts with a simple mission: picking up inmates on the day they’re released...” (9pg) - Richie, “Challenges Incarcerated Women Face...” (20pg)
3/1	<p><i>Social Welfare Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alexander, Ch 4 Selections (18pg) - Maur, “Invisible Punishment” (2pg) - Sentencing Project, “A Lifetime of Punishment” (9pg)
3/3	<p><i>Review of Unit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring draft of concept map to class - Concept map due by noon Sunday 3/5
<p>Unit 3: Does punishment affect politics?</p> <p>In this unit, we’ll consider how the carceral state and corresponding policies affect political outcomes at the individual and collective level.</p>	
<u>Week 9</u>	Political Attitudes and Political Behavior
3/6	<p><i>Public Opinion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Horowitz, “Making Every Encounter Count” (4pg) - Desmond & Parpachristos, NYT: “Why Don’t You Just Call the Cops?” (2pg) - Peyton, Sierra-Arévalo, and Rand, “A Field Experiment on Community Policing and Police Legitimacy” (5pg) - Cook, “Will the Current Crisis in Police Legitimacy Increase Crime?” (3pg) - Gallup data (20pg)

3/8	<p><i>Participation – Direct Contact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uggen and Manza, “Democratic Contradiction?” (20pg) - Weaver & Lerman, “Political Consequences of the Carceral State” (14pg) - Christiani & Shoub, “Can Light Contact with the Police Motivate Political Participation?” (17pg)
3/10	<p><i>Participation – Indirect Contact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walker, “Extending the Effects of the Carceral State” (11pg) - Anoll, Epp, Israel-Trummel, “Contact and Context” (5pg)
	<p><i>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS 3/13, 3/15, 3/17</i></p>
<u>Week 10</u>	<p>Downstream</p>
3/20	<p><i>Representation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lawrence & Travis, <i>Urban Institute</i>: “The New Landscape of Imprisonment” (31pg) - Hamsher, “Counted Out Twice” (12pg)
3/22	<p><i>Wealth and Labor</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Western, <i>Punishment and Inequality</i>, Ch. 5 Selection (2pg) - Pager, “The Mark of a Criminal Record” (14pg) - Harris, Evans, & Beckett, “Drawing Blood from Stones” (16pg)
3/24	<p><i>NO CLASS – Anoll away at conference</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use time to work on research paper – annotated outline due in class 4/5 - Watch, listen, read selections of primary sources listed on assignment details
<u>Week 11</u>	<p>Inequality</p>
3/27	<p><i>Families</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wakefield & Wildeman, <i>Children of the Prison Boom</i> (28pg)
3/29	<p><i>Guest: Hon. H. Jan Roltsch-Anoll, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Judge, Prince William County, VA</i></p>
3/31	<p><i>Unit Review</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring draft of concept map 3 to class - Final concept map due noon Sunday 4/2
<p>Unit 4: What are pathways for resistance and reform?</p> <p>Considering the ways politics affects punishment and vice versa, we turn in this unit to examining the approaches – theoretical and policy specific – that might change the status quo.</p>	
<u>Week 12</u>	<p>Approaches</p>
4/3	<p><i>Unit Intro: Resistance or Reform?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sered, “Transforming Our Responses to Violence” (15pg)

4/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alexander, Ch. 6 Selections (7pg) - Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> Ch 6 selections (10pg) - Sentencing Project, “Social Interventions That Work” (3pg) <p><i>Research Paper Outline Workshop</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No reading - Bring annotated outline of research paper to class
4/7	<p><i>Resistance Through Music: Field Trip to National Museum of African American Music</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No reading - Research paper due 10 PM Saturday, 4/8
<u>Week 13</u>	Beyond the Academy
4/10	<i>Guest: David Plazas, Opinion and Engagement Editor, The Tennessean</i>
4/12	<p><i>Frames/ Op-Ed Workshop</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beckett, Reosti, and Knaphus, “The End of an Era?” (16pg) - Obama, NYT: “Why we must rethink solitary confinement” (2pg) - Bring draft of op-ed to class
4/14	<i>Student presentations + guest panel of former students</i>
<u>Week 14</u>	Policy Reforms
4/17	<i>Student presentations</i>
4/19	<i>Student presentations</i>
4/21	<i>Student presentations</i>
<u>Week 15</u>	Wrapping Up
4/24	<p>So What?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring draft of concept map 4 to class - Final concept map due noon Wednesday 4/26
5/2	<p><i>Exam period</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit op-ed through Brightspace by 7PM - Submit proof of op-end submission through Brightspace by 7PM