

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology
Winter Term (3 Credit Hour Course) 2012

**SOC 2610 SOCIOLOGY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONS A02
(CRN 22958)**

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Class: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-2:15 (137 Isbister)
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:15

Required Texts:

Griffiths, Curt T. (2011) *Canadian Criminal Justice: A Primer*. Toronto: Nelson.
ISBN: 0-17-650171-1

Course Description and Objectives:

Welcome to SOC 2610! The course provides an overview of the Canadian criminal justice system (the police, courts, corrections, and re-entry). In addition, the course is designed to help students develop a critical understanding of the major issues and concerns that are currently being addressed by criminal justice researchers, government, policymakers, and people employed in the criminal justice system.

Students enrolled in SOC 2610 are required to have completed SOC 2510 (Criminology) at the University of Manitoba or its equivalent at another university. In SOC 2510, students learned how criminologists study and explain crime. In SOC 2610, the focus shifts from examining theories of crime and criminal justice policy to learning about the history, structure, and current operation of the Canadian criminal justice system.

This course is a useful introduction for anyone who is considering a career in the criminal justice system. Various careers in the criminal justice system include: police officers, lawyers, court clerks, paralegals, judges, correction officers, probation officers, parole officers, and custom officers. Whether or not you are considering one of these careers, everyone should have a vested interest in learning more about the workings of the criminal justice system, because we all live in communities; and, therefore, we are all affected by crime and criminal behaviour (either directly or indirectly).

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Define and list the basic components of the criminal justice system
- Describe the duties and responsibilities of various individuals with the criminal justice system
- Evaluate societal responses to the criminal justice system and examine the manner in which it has changed over time

- Analyze the development and operation of the criminal justice system through a critical sociological lens
- Interpret the criminal justice system as an interdependent social system that is closely tied to, and influenced by, other social and political institutions that exist in Canadian society
- Identify some of the major issues and problems that criminal justice researchers and policymakers have addressed in recent years in attempting to bring about changes in the manner in which the Canadian criminal justice system operates

Course Evaluation

Grades:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Descriptive Scale	GPA
93 to 100	A+	Exceptional	4.5
85 to 92	A	Excellent	4.0
80 to 84	B+	Very Good	3.5
70 to 79	B	Good	3.0
66 to 69	C+	Satisfactory	2.5
60 to 65	C	Adequate	2.0
50 to 59	D	Marginal	1.0
0 to 49	F	Failure	0.0

Note: Senate Policy #1307 requires "A post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will encourage equitable correspondence between grades and level of performance in all sections." Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve such equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

Test 1:	January 31 st , 2012	30%
Test 2:	March 8 th , 2012	30%
Court observation assignment:	March 22 nd , 2012	20%
Test 3:	April 5 th , 2012	20%

Tests: There are three unit tests covering class lectures and assigned readings. Each test will include a mixture of true/false, multiple choice and written responses. The specifics of each test will be discussed in class. Each test will contain a mixture of assigned readings and class lectures.

Required Reading:

Test 1: Chapters: 1, 2, 3
 Test 2: Chapters: 4, 5, 6, 7
 Test 3: Chapters: 8, 9, 10, 11

Missed Tests: Any student who misses a test or exam must provide a doctor's note (or appropriate equivalent). **This will be strictly enforced.** No student will be allowed to write a make-up test without a doctor's note (or some form of written documentation). Any student who does not inform me (by phone/voice mail/office hours) **prior** to test time (that they will be absent for the test) **will not** be allowed to write a make-up test. This also will be strictly enforced. Missed tests must be written within one week of original test date. The instructor will inform the student of when and where the make-up test will be written.

Court Observation Assignment*: The goal of the court assignment is for students to spend some time observing the criminal courts in Winnipeg.

Students are to attend a Court of Queen's Bench criminal trial (judge or judge/jury) at a Manitoba the Law Courts building (in Winnipeg, the law courts building is located at 408 York Avenue). Students must attend for a half day (morning or afternoon session).

Students are urged to take down as much information as possible about the courtroom proceedings. It is understandable that, given the limited time you will be observing, you will not be able to observe every aspect of the criminal proceeding. Nevertheless, below are some suggestions of what to look for:

- A) Court atmosphere. Were the proceedings formal or informal? Did the court actors appear concerned about protecting the rights of the accused?
- B) Judge. Age (best guess), race/ethnicity (Caucasian, First Nations, visible minority – do not need to be specific), sex. How would you characterize the demeanor of the judge you observed?
- C) Other court personnel (including, Crown, defence, & jury – general overview). Ages (best guess), race/ethnicity (Caucasian, First Nations, visible minority – do not need to be specific). How would you describe the demeanor of the court personnel? Was there evidence of a smoothly functioning courtroom workgroup?
- D) Accused. Age (best guess), race/ethnicity (Caucasian, First Nations, visible minority – do not need to be specific), sex, social class (if known), dress, behaviour in court, charge(s), number of previous convictions (if known), prior relationship with victim.
- E) Evidence. Identification of accused, police testimony, testimony of accused, expert testimony, recovered property, recovered weapon, number and credibility of Crown witnesses, number and credibility of defence witnesses.
- F) Legal issues. Definition of the offense (citation from the Criminal Code), judge's rulings, Crown's/defence's objections, other legal points raised during the proceedings.
- G) Other factors. Victim provocation, prior victim-defendant conflict, character of victim, racial composition of event, victim injury, accused pre-trial release status.
- H) Outcomes of court proceedings . What was the verdict (if any)? Was there a sentence imposed? Did the proceedings seem fair and just?

A note on courtroom etiquette. Please dress appropriately for your day in court. Be as unobtrusive as possible when you are observing court proceedings. Please remember to turn off your mobile phone. You will have to proceed through a metal detector upon entry to the law courts building so bring as little as possible.

After spending a day observing a criminal trial, students are required to write an essay about their court experience. In particular, there should be three sections to your paper.

The first, which you should label **Courtroom Observation**, should include a description of what you observed in the courtroom. Give the date, name, and type of court proceedings you observed, and describe the proceeding on the dimensions listed above.

In the second section, labelled **Reactions and Analysis**, give your personal reactions to and analysis of the proceedings. Were you surprised by anything you saw? Shocked, or even bored? Did the court experience meet your expectations? What appeared to govern the outcome in the case you observed? If there was no verdict (i.e. the trial is ongoing), write about the process that you observed (e.g. the Crown's witnesses and presentation of the evidence).

In the third section, labelled **Integration**, compare your courtroom experience with the lectures and readings from this class. Be sure to draw on concepts and ideas from the textbook (citing it properly using APA) as well as the lecture in order to provide a context for and discussion of your observations. For example, were there any points made in class or in the readings that were illustrated in the courtroom proceedings you observed?

The paper should be approximately 5-7 pages (not including title page and bibliography), typed, double spaced, 12 pt font (Time New Roman only), with 1-inch margins. Marks will be deducted for failure to comply. In addition, marks will be deducted (up to ¼ of your final paper grade) for essays that are not thoroughly edited (i.e. several spelling errors, poor grammar/sentence structure, poor organization, proper citations, poor paragraph formation, etc.). Even though you are permitted to write the paper in the first person (e.g. "I went to the law courts building..."), your essay should be written in an "academic style". Please avoid colloquial language and journalistic sensationalism.

Papers are due no later than March 22nd, 2012. Late papers will have 5% per day (weekends count as 2 days) deducted from the grade. Please do not email me your paper. All papers (whether submitted on time or late) must be submitted by hard copy.

* Excerpted, with permission, from Court Observation assignment by Dr. Valerie P. Hans, University of Delaware, 2004 (now at Cornell University Law School).

Student Conduct and Academic Regulations of the University

Voluntary Withdrawal: The final date for voluntary withdrawal from this course is March 16th, 2012. There are no refunds on this date – see the Fall/Winter Calendar for details.

Academic Integrity: Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Personations at Examinations' (section 5.2.9) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (8.1) found online under UManitoba Catalogue 2011-2012 (General Academic Regulations, Section 8. Academic Integrity). The Faculty of Arts also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Electronic Devices: Students are required to silence all electronic devices (cellular phones, Blackberries, I-phones, pagers, ipods, etc.) when in the classroom. If there is a reason that you require your device to remain on 'ring' mode (i.e., sick child at daycare), please inform me at the start of the class. Students are not permitted to send or receive text messages during class. A student found texting during class will be asked to leave. Students are welcome to bring laptop computers to class for note-taking purposes only. Students found using social networking sites or surfing the Internet during class will be asked to leave.

Classroom Disruptions: Students should recognize that excessive talking, late arrival, or early departures from the classroom are disrupting for both the instructor and classmates. Please be considerate of others in the class. Continual disruption by a student may result in disbarment from the course. Please notify the instructor at the onset of class if you need to leave early or if you have to come late to the next class.

Accommodations

Special Needs: Students with special learning needs (who for legitimate reasons require extra time to write a test, or who require aids or other supports) should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the term in order to arrange suitable accommodation.

Religious Holidays: The university recognizes the right of all students to observe recognized holidays of their faith, which fall within the academic year. With instructor discretion, necessary arrangements can be made to ensure studies are not jeopardized. The instructor should be notified of a student's intended absence in advance and at least three weeks notice of absence should normally be given where special arrangements are sought.
