

SOC 2610 A01 – Sociology of Criminal Justice and Corrections – Winter 2008 (3 cr. hrs.)

100 Fletcher Argue Building
Tuesday/Thursday 10:00 – 11:15

Instructor: Prof. Frank Cormier
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Office hours: 1:00 to 2:30 M/W/F, or by appointment

Course Objectives:

This course provides an introduction to the the structure and workings of the Canadian criminal justice system. During the course we will examine the system's three main components: police, courts, and corrections. Much of the course will involve a discussion of the main actors, the policies, and the procedures employed in the system (the 'who', 'what', and 'how'). Just as important is a critical examination of the underlying beliefs, theories, and ideologies that shape and influence our criminal justice system (the 'why').

At all stages of the course, students will be encouraged to take an active role through class participation.

Required Text:

Griffiths, Curt (2007). Canadian Criminal Justice: A Primer. (3rd edition) Toronto: Thomson Nelson Canada Ltd.

Note: While the majority of the assigned readings will be from the text, additional articles may be assigned from time to time.

Evaluation:

Grades will be determined on the basis of three term tests and an assignment:

Test #1	27.5%	(January 31 st)
Test #2	27.5%	(March 11 th)
Test #3	20%	(April 10 th)
Assignment	25%	(no later than March 25 th)

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A+	90 - 100%	(Exceptional)	C+	65 - 69%	(Satisfactory)
A	80 - 89%	(Excellent)	C	60 - 64%	(Adequate)
B+	75 - 79%	(Very Good)	D	50 - 59%	(Marginal)
B	70 - 74%	(Good)	F	0 - 49%	(Failure)

Note: Assignments must be turned in directly to the instructor, or to the Sociology general office by 4:00 p.m. on the due date. Failure to complete any portion of the required course work will result in a grade of zero for that portion.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes. In the case of unavoidable absence, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible. In the case of a missed test, exam, or assignment due date, a medical certificate must be provided.

Class Conduct:

Disruptions such as talking, late arrivals or early departures are especially distracting to the instructor and to other students. Please be considerate of the needs and rights of others. Active cell phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. are not welcome.

Academic Integrity:

Students are advised to acquaint themselves with the University of Manitoba policies on academic dishonesty, including impersonation at exams (s. 4.2.8) and plagiarism and cheating (s 7.1) in the 2007-2008 Undergraduate Calendar.

Voluntary Withdrawal:

Students should be familiar with the rules and procedures for voluntary withdrawal. The final date for withdrawal without academic penalty is March 20th, 2008.

Course Schedule

The dates below are approximate and may be adjusted as the course progresses. Note that while the majority of the assigned reading will be from the textbook, additional articles may be assigned from time to time.

Introduction (Jan. 3 to Jan. 10)

An Overview of the Canadian Criminal Justice System (Griffiths, ch. 1)

Public and Media Perceptions of Crime (Griffiths, ch. 2)

Part I: Police (Jan. 15 to Jan. 29)

History, Structure, and Police Procedure (Griffiths, ch. 3)

Community Policing (Griffiths, ch. 4)

Part II: Courts (Feb. 5 to Mar. 6)

Structure and Operation of the Criminal Courts (Griffiths, ch. 5)

Sentencing: Principles and Procedures (Griffiths, ch. 6)

Part III: Corrections (Mar. 13 to Apr. 8)

Correctional Institutions (Griffiths, ch. 7)

Life After Incarceration: Release and Re-Entry Into the Community (Griffiths, ch. 8)

Assignment

The assignment requires you to complete an 8 – 10 page (double-spaced), critical examination of a dramatic television program that focuses on an element of the criminal justice system (Policing, Courts, or Corrections). Programs you may choose from include: *CSI* (any location), *Law and Order* (any version), *Cold Case*, *Prison Break*, *Criminal Minds*, *Sue Thomas: FB Eye*, *Medium*, *Boston Legal*, etc. Students examining American crime programs should be aware that they are required to compare the depiction of the American system to the Canadian system. Note that the programs listed above are only a sample. The programs may be current episodes or re-runs. If you are in doubt about whether a program is acceptable, check with your instructor.

The primary objective of this assignment is to assess the program's portrayal of the criminal justice system. You must watch a minimum of three episodes of the program. Provide a brief summary of each episode (do not assume that your professor has watched the program). Then, assess the nature and accuracy of the program's portrayal of the criminal justice system based upon the lectures and readings from this class. Be sure to draw on concepts and ideas from the textbook and the lecture. Also, consider the following questions:

- Does the programs accurately portray the workings of the criminal justice system?
- Were there any parts of the program that you found to be unrealistic?
- How does the program, in general, portray crime and criminal justice? Is it more sympathetic to some persons (e.g., lawyers, judges, police, criminals) than others?
- Do you think the program has an underlying political or ideological agenda?

Your paper is to be written in essay format (introduction, body and conclusion), and should be written in an "academic style." That is, it must be written formally and objectively.

Papers are due no later than March 25th, 2008. Late papers will have 5% per day (including weekends) deducted from the grade.