

Spectrum Program Session 2

Course Title: Crime & Punishment: Understanding the Justice System Honors

Course Description

“Justice is incidental to law and order.” — J. Edgar Hoover. This course investigates the cycle of justice, including the relationship between law enforcement, the judicial system, and the correctional system. Through readings, discussions and review of historical cases, students explore the ethical questions surrounding the execution of justice and the role of various officials involved in the process. This is an excellent course choice for students interested in law and politics.

Essential Questions

1. What is “justice”? What do we mean by a “just” system of laws and how do we achieve it?
2. What is the relationship between individuals, society, and the law? How are law and justice determined by social, historical, or cultural contexts?

Outcomes

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

- a. define the concept of justice and apply it to real-world scenarios.
- b. articulate, defend, and refute legal arguments based on acceptable rules of evidence.
- c. write social-science arguments with sophisticated thesis statements and appropriate use of evidence.
- d. explain the workings of the criminal justice system, including individual rights, arrest and trial procedures.
- e. discuss some of the major court cases and Constitutional issues in U.S. history.
- f. analyze the ways in which political, historical, cultural, and/or social issues affect the justice system and its relationship to society

Instructional Strategies

This class is designed to give you an introduction to the concepts of law and justice and their application in different contexts, time periods, and social situations. Students will engage in role-playing activities, class discussions, mock trials, and historical re-enactments to better understand these concepts and understand how they can mean different things to different people. Additionally, students will take part in expeditionary learning and primary source document analysis in order to learn and apply the rules of evidence to issues of law and justice. Finally, students will conduct their own independent social science research on an issue of importance to them, and present their argument to the group.

Resources and Materials

- **Books.** Outside reading in this course will be centered on three well-known narrative texts with the themes of law, justice, and punishment. We will read, on average, one (short) book per week.
 1. Kafka, F. (1999/1914). *The Trial*. Knopf Doubleday. Mitchell, B., trans.
 2. Lee, H. (1960/1988). *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Grand Central Publishing.
 3. Marquez, G.G. (2003). *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Knopf Doubleday.
- **Web sites.** Students will be required to conduct internet research on current criminal justice issues. Suggestions of reliable and accurate websites will be provided.

- **News articles.** Topical articles from newspapers, magazines, journals, and other periodicals will be supplied as needed. Students will also be required to keep up with current news online or in print.

Student Assessment

- **Pre-Assessment:** All students will be required to complete a short writing assessment at the beginning of the course. This assessment will give me an idea about your writing skills and your ability at constructing high-quality social science arguments.

- **CTD Grading Scale**

A+	100-97%	A	96-93%	A-	92-90%
B+	89-87%	B	86-83%	B-	82-80%
C+	79-77%	C	76-73%	C-	72-70%
D+	69-67%	D	66-63%	D-	62-60%
F	below 60%				

- **Breakdown of Final Grade**

20% Daily quizzes. These will be open-notebook assessments on the assigned readings and topics previously covered in class. These will be used primarily for review of the previous night’s reading and to check on progress throughout the course.

20% Participation. This includes individual study and research habits, work in cooperative activities, and the quality (not quantity!) of contributions to class discussions. This class relies heavily on debate and discussion of controversial issues – you will be expected to participate actively each day and work with others to solve problems.

20% In-class writing. The aim of these assessments will be to develop your analytical and persuasive writing skills. They will also give you a chance to share your own opinions on criminal justice issues.

20% Research Project. You will be choosing a contemporary criminal justice issue of your own to research, analyze, and present to the class at the end of the session.

10% Final Exam. This will cover the material from the entire course and questions will be modeled on introduction to criminal justice and law and literature courses.

10% Student goal-setting and self-assessment. During this course, you will have the opportunity to take some control over your own learning and skills development.

- **Post-Assessment:** All students will be required to complete a final writing assessment (similar to the pre-assessment) that will test your ability to construct sophisticated social science arguments and defend them with evidence

Schedule

Dates	Topic(s)	In-class Activities	Graded Assignments and/or Assessments (in italics)
Mon 7/18	Intro to argumentation Intro to criminal justice	Argumentation activity Intro - US law and court system	HW: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part I (pp. TBA) and reading guide <i>Writing pre-assessment</i>
Tue 7/19	Definitions of justice	Rawls, Sen, JS Mill on justice Justice scenarios	HW: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part II (pp. TBA) and reading guide <i>Writing: Define “justice”</i>
Wed 7/20	The Rules of Evidence: Facts, statistics, and circumstantial evidence	Crime statistics: what do they tell us? Marshalling evidence activity Debate	HW: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part III (pp. TBA) and reading guide
Thurs 7/21	Argumentation: Making (or refuting) a case with evidence	Mock trial Argumentation inquiry activity Work time on project	HW: Finish <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Choose project topic and partner(s) <i>Writing: To Kill a Mockingbird</i>
Fri 7/22	The <i>Constitution</i> and the concept of rights –	What’s in the <i>Constitution</i> ? Slavery, voting, prohibition: historical	HW: Begin working on project – start

	historical issues	debates	reading <i>Chronicle of Death</i> <i>Writing: Constitutional issues</i>
Mon 7/25	Historical cases: Socrates, Dreyfus, Scopes et al.	The case for/against Socrates Dreyfus evidence activity Scopes activity	HW: <i>Chronicle of Death</i> (pp. TBA) <i>Writing: Historical "justice"</i>
Tue 7/26	Case study: Children charged as adults	Scenarios and debate FILM: PBS on children in jail	HW: <i>Chronicle of Death</i> (pp. TBA) <i>Writing: Children tried as adults</i>
Wed 7/27	Case study: Insanity Defense	Psychology and crime: What makes people do bad things?	HW: <i>Chronicle of Death</i> (pp. TBA) <i>Writing: Is insanity a defense?</i>
Thurs 7/28	Case study: Assisted suicide	Role-playing – assisted suicide Research – social statistics	HW: <i>Chronicle of Death</i> (pp. TBA) <i>Writing: Is assisted suicide murder?</i>
Fri 7/29	Case study: <i>A Chronicle of Death Foretold</i>	Evidence activity: Putting together the pieces Debate: Who did it?	HW: Work on project Begin reading <i>The Trial</i> (pp. TBA) <i>Writing: Chronicle of Death</i>
Mon 8/1	Case study: The War on Drugs	Recap <i>The Trial</i> so far Drug case re-enactment GUEST SPEAKER? Asst. DA	HW: Read <i>The Trial</i> (pp. TBA)
Tue 8/2	When the system works and how it (sometimes) fails	Recap <i>The Trial</i> so far Game? GUEST SPEAKER? Judge	HW: Finish <i>The Trial</i>
Wed 8/3	Justice, the law, and society: <i>The Trial</i>	Wrap up/discuss <i>The Trial</i> Project work time Film: <i>The Trial</i>	HW: Work on project <i>Writing: The Trial</i>
Thurs 8/4	Current issues in criminal justice	Presentations and debates	HW: None
Fri 8/5	Last Day	Sum up/Course Evaluations	<i>Final Exam Writing Assessment</i>

CTD Statement on Third-Party Web Sites

Instructors are required to thoroughly review any third-party web sites they intend to use in their courses for inappropriate content. However, because web content continuously changes, CTD disclaims any responsibility for any of the content contained on third-party web sites used in course materials. If you become aware of anything that may be inappropriate, please notify CTD staff immediately.