

SOCY 3044

Race, Class, Gender, and Crime (Continuing Education Online Class)

Instructor: Bertha Alicia Bermúdez Tapia

Instructor

Contact Information

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Office Location: Virtual Office, Meetings available through Zoom by appointment

Office Hours: By appointment

Communication Policy

Due to the online nature of the course, email will be the best form of communication. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24-36 hours during the week, and by Monday for emails received over the weekend. Please do not hesitate to email with any questions.

Instructor Bio

I am a Doctoral Candidate in Sociology at the University of Colorado Boulder, and a fellow at the Institute of Behavioral Science for the Population Program. I have served as an Instructor for SOCY 1021, 3201, 2031, and 4131 on campus. I encourage engagement and participation in the online classroom through respectful debates and discussion, while maintaining an inclusive learning environment open to all perspectives. My research interests are on the qualitative aspects of the relationship between migration, deportation, and border lives, particularly exploring community responses to immigration policies and violence on the US Mexico Border. I received a BA in Political Science from Monterrey Tech (Mexico) and a Master's degree in Gender Studies and Culture from the University of Chile.

About the Course

Course description

This course focuses on issues of race, class, and gender regarding crime in the United States. We address how racism, classism, genderism/sexism, and other forms of bias and discrimination operate and intersect in the criminal legal system. The course is designed to give the student a solid understanding of some of the flaws in the current criminal legal system, and the raced, classed, and gendered aspects of processing acts that have been deemed as crimes, including the punishment of persons charged with offenses and the responses to victims.

Course Objectives

Completion of this course will allow you to:

1. Describe and critically engage with basic mechanisms of inequality within the criminal justice system.
2. Understand the ways in which race, gender, and class affect the application of (in)justice.
3. Understand the role of prisons as industry and as an agent of social control.
4. Be able to situate the historical roots of the contemporary carceral state and the persisting inequalities.
5. Understand the power of the media and ideology in the construction of criminals.
6. Develop critical creative tools to envision justice beyond the current hegemonic narrative.

Course Overview

Course content will be presented in six formats:

1. Short videos by the instructor introducing material or addressing specific topics.
2. Presentation files from the instructor on a per-topic basis.
4. Textbooks readings and additional research article that will be presented through Canvas and the corresponding discussion will center around them.
5. Education films will be introduced via canvas.
6. Weekly Online Discussion Posts and Responses.

Course Outline

Week	Topic	To do or to Read
Week 1. September 3 (Tuesday) – September 6	Introduction to the course Background to the Criminal Justice System and Setting the Stage to Study the Criminal Justice System Along Lines of Class, Race and Gender	<i>Class, Race, Gender, Crime: The Social Realities of Justice in America</i> (“CRGC”) - Introduction, Chapter 1 (pgs. 24-40), and Chapter 2 (pgs. 41-47)
Week 2. September 9 – September 13	Background to the Criminal Justice System and Setting the Stage to Study the Criminal Justice System Along Lines of Class, Race and Gender (cont)	CRGC Chapter 2 (pages 47-63), Chapter 3 to 5

Week 3. September 16 – September 20	Intersectionality and Crime; Theoretical Insights Regarding the Criminal Justice System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRGC Chapter 6 • Darrell Steffensmeier, et al. (2017). “Intersectionality of Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Age on Criminal Punishment,” <i>Sociological Perspectives</i> 60(4):810-833 (PDF on Canvas) • Michelle Alexander (2011). “The New Jim Crow,” <i>Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law</i> 9:7-26 (PDF on Canvas) • James Forman, Jr. (2012). “Racial Critiques of Mass Incarceration: Beyond the New Jim Crow,” <i>New York University Law Review</i> 87:21-69 (PDF on Canvas)
Week 4 September 23 – September 27	Theoretical Insights Regarding the Criminal Justice System (cont.);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicole Gonzalez van Cleve & Lauren Mayes (2015). “Criminal Justice Through ‘Colorblind’ Lenses: A Call to Examine the Mutual Constitution of Race and Criminal Justice,” <i>Law & Social Inquiry</i> 40(2):406-432 (PDF on Canvas) • Naomi Murakowa & Katherine Beckett (2010). “The Penology of Racial Innocence: The Erasure of Racism in the Study and Practice of Punishment,” <i>Law & Society Review</i> 44:695-730 (PDF on Canvas) • Alexes Harris (2007). “Diverting and Abdicating Judicial Discretion: Cultural, Political and Procedural Dynamics in California Juvenile Justice,” <i>Law & Society Review</i> 41:387-428
Week 5 September 30 – October 4	Social Science and the Law; The Criminal Justice System and Social Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John B. Mitchell (2012). “Crimes of Misery and Theories of Punishment,” <i>New Criminal Law Review</i> 15(4):465-510 (PDF on Canvas) • Alice Goffman (2009). “On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto,” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 74:339-357 (PDF on Canvas)
Week 6 October 7 - October 11	The Criminal Justice System and Social Class (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lynne Haney (2018). “Incarcerated Fatherhood: The Entanglements of Child Support Debt and Mass Imprisonment,” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 124(1):1-48 (PDF on Canvas)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loic Wacquant (2010). “Class, Race & Hyperincarceration in Revanchist America,” <i>Daedalus</i> 139(3):74-90 • Bruce Western & Becky Petit (2010). “Incarceration & Social Inequality,” <i>Daedalus</i> 139(3):8-18 (PDF on Canvas) • Alexes Harris, Heather Evans & Katherine Beckett (2010). “Drawing Blood from Stones: Legal Debt and Social Inequality in the Contemporary United States,” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 115(6):1753-1799 (PDF on Canvas)
Week 7 October 14 – October 18	The Criminal Justice System and Social Class (cont.); Race and the Criminal Justice System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael R. Menefee (2018). “The Role of Bail and Pretrial Detention in the Reproduction of Racial Inequalities,” <i>Sociology Compass</i> 12:1-9 (PDF on Canvas) • Olivia C. Jerjian (2017). “The Debtors’ Prison Scheme: Yet Another Bar in the Birdcage of Mass Incarceration of Communities of Color,” 41 <i>New York University Review of Law & Social Change</i> 235:276 (PDF on Canvas) • Steven E. Barkan, <i>Race, Crime and Justice: The Continuing American Dilemma</i> (“RCJ”) Chapters 1 and 2 • Christopher Uggen & Robert Stewart (2015). “Piling On: Collateral Consequences and Community Supervision,” <i>Minnesota Law Review</i> 99:1871-1912 (PDF on Canvas)
Week 8 October 21 – October 25	Midterm	
Week 9 October 28 – November 1	Race and the Criminal Justice System (cont.)	Barkan, RCJ, Chapters 3 to 7
Week 10 November 4 – November 8	Mass Incarceration Revisited	John F. Pfaff, <i>Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration – and How to Achieve Real Reform</i> (“ <i>Locked In</i> ”), Introduction, and Chapter 1 to 3
Week 11 November 11 – November 15	Mass Incarceration Revisited (cont.)	<i>Locked In</i> , Chapters 4 to 8
Week 12 November 18 – November 22	Women Offenders and Imprisonment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April Bernard (2013). “The Intersectional Alternative: Explaining

		Female Criminality,” <i>Feminist Criminology</i> 8(1):3-19 (PDF on Canvas) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In Search of Safety: Confronting Inequality in Women's Imprisonment</i> (“ISOS”), Chapters 1 to 3
Fall Break November 25 – November 29		
Week 13 December 2 – December 6	Women Offenders and Imprisonment (cont)	ISOS, Chapters 4 to 7 Book analysis due. December 6 midnight
Week 14 December 9 – December 13	Final examination	

Required Texts

There are four required books, as follows:

1. **Class, Race, Gender, Crime: The Social Realities of Justice in America** (5th edition) (Authors: Barak, Leighton & Cotton) (Rowman & Littlefield) (ISBN # 978-1-4422-6885-2)
3. **In Search of Safety: Confronting Inequality in Women's Imprisonment** (Authors: Owen, Wells & Pollock) (University of California Press) (ISBN # 978-0-520-28872-0)
4. **Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration and How to Achieve Real Reform** (Author: Pfaff) (ISBN # 978-0-465-09691-6)
5. **Race, Crime, and Justice: The Continuing American Dilemma** (Keynotes in Criminology and Criminal Justice Series) (Author: Barkan) (Oxford University Press) (ISBN # 978-0-19-027254-8)

Please notice that some on these books are available as e-books through the CU library.

Book analysis:

A very important assignment of the semester, worth 20% of your final grade is to write a book analysis. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas. You will choose between **one** of the following nine books and write a 4-6page (double-spaced) analysis of it.

1. Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.
2. Golash-Boza, T.M., 2015. *Deported: Immigrant policing, disposable labor and global capitalism*. NYU Press.

3. Lopez, Vera. 2017. *Complicated Lives: Girls, Parents, Drugs, and Juvenile Justice*. Rutgers University Press.
4. Richie, Beth. 2012. *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*. NYU Press.
5. Rios, Victor M. 2011. *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. NYU Press.
6. Sered, Susan Starr and Maureen Norton-Hawk. 2014. *Can't Catch a Break: Gender, Jail, Drugs, and the Limits of Personal Responsibility*. Univ of California Press.
7. Stevenson, Bryan. 2015. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. Spiegel & Grau.
8. Van Cleve, Nicole Gonzalez. 2016. *Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Criminal Court*. Stanford University Press.
9. Wacquant, Loïc JD. 2009. *Prisons of Poverty*. Vol. 23. U of Minnesota Press.

In addition to these books, various articles will be placed on the Canvas course website.

Student Responsibilities

Students will be responsible for all readings and videos contained within modules, two exams, all discussions, and one book analysis. Please allow the approximate the time commitment required for successful completion of the course.

Class Expectations

My overriding goal for this course is to have you engage with the class material and to think critically about race, class, gender and their intersections with the criminal justice system in the United States. The instructor expects all students to participate in discussions with thoughtful and insightful content and questions, and to incorporate readings, current events, and prior class knowledge into increasingly complex analysis of ideas and topics. To that end, here are my expectations for the course:

1. This is an upper-level division course. Consequently, I will not be teaching this course at a rudimentary level. That is, I expect you to be prepared to discuss the material and to engage with me and your fellow classmates in a critical way. I want to challenge your thinking and broaden your intellectual horizons regarding the sociological study of crime and its intersection with issues of race, class, and gender. Further, while I cannot be certain, I suspect that the reading load for this course will be greater than what you may expect from other 3000-level courses. While I am positive that the readings selected will be intriguing and thought-provoking, if you are not committed to a heavy reading load, then I would strongly think about taking this course from another instructor.
2. Some of the topics covered in this course may elicit strong and diverse opinions, such as racism, sexism, sexual assault, child abuse, and drug addiction. I expect that these topics will be discussed openly, professionally, and without aggression or malice. It is perfectly fine to have differing opinions on such weighty topics, but we must respect everyone's views in the classroom.

Assignments

Readings/Films/Lectures: Completion of the reading is absolutely critical to your success in the class and your final grade will depend greatly upon you having read, written about, discussed, and taken tests on the readings. All readings, films, and lectures need to be completed during the week they are listed on the syllabus.

Online Discussion Posts and Responses: This is an essential part of the online class experience. These discussion posts and responses are your opportunity to reflect on the course readings and material, think critically, and respond to other students' posts. The objective is twofold: 1.) to respond to one of the weekly prompts by discussing main points from the various readings, films, and lecture material for that week; 2.) to spark debate and discussion amongst students regarding particular topics, current events, etc.

- **Discussion Posts**: Each student must write a total of ten weekly discussion posts. Each post should be roughly 400-500 words. Each of the ten posts is worth 9 points, so the posts are worth 90 points total. The discussion board for posts will be open Wednesday-Thursday on the assigned week, so pay attention each week to post on time. *Late posts will not be accepted.*

The discussion posts will be evaluated on the following:

1. How well does the discussion post answer the discussion prompt for that week?
 2. Does it include main points from the readings/films/lecture materials?
 3. Is it well argued? If there are statistics or facts cited, does it include sources?
 4. Is it written in an objective and respectful way? (It is fine to take one side or another on a particular issue, but make sure you are not presenting your opinion as fact. What does the other side have to say? Are you challenging your own thinking and preconceived biases?)
 5. Does it demonstrate critical sociological thinking? This may not come naturally at first, but as we get further into the readings and the course, you will learn how to think critically and how to apply your sociological imagination and social theories when discussing current events and social issues.
- **Responses**: Each student will ALSO have to respond to at least one other student's discussion post each week. Responses should be roughly 100 words each. The weekly responses are worth 1 points per week, for a total of 10 points total throughout the semester. Posting responses to the posts will be open until Friday on the assigned week.

These responses will be evaluated on the following:

1. How well do you demonstrate your understanding of the readings/films/lecture material?
 2. Are you making a thoughtful comment or question?
 3. Is your response well argued? Does it provide sources for statistics or facts? Does it pose thoughtful and engaging questions or explain why you agree or disagree with a particular point?
 4. Is it respectful? Again, the purpose is to spark respectful and critical discussion.
- **Additional Discussion**: Additional discussion about the prompt or posts each week is highly encouraged. Please feel free to respond to posts beyond the required responses. Just remember that these discussions must remain respectful and inclusive of all voices.

Exams: There will be a mid-term and final exam with multiple choice and short answer questions. The dates they are available are listed in the course schedule. The midterm and final will both be open for 24 hours, so please put these dates in your calendar because there will not be make-up exams except for emergency situations, which require written documentation.

Book analysis: You will choose (on the syllabus) a book you are particularly interested in and write a 4-6-page double-spaced essay about it. This can be done at any time throughout the last third of the semester (week 10-14) and will be submitted on Canvas. See the guideline posted online for more information about how to organize your essay.

Grading Criteria

Final Grade: Your final grade is based on course requirements above, with point distributions:

Assignment	Percentage	Notes
Discussions and responses	35%	Ten weekly discussion posts. Each of the ten posts is worth 9 points, so the posts are worth 90 points total. The weekly responses are worth 1 points per week, for a total of 10 points total throughout the semester.
Midterm Exam	20%	October 21 – October 25
Final Exam	20%	December 9 – December 13
Book analysis	25%	December 6 midnight
Total	100%	

Grading Scale

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
94-100	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

Comments on Grading: There will be no extra-credit at the end of the semester. If you find that you are not doing well in the course, please email me as soon as possible. Staying up-to-date with the coursework and readings is the best way to succeed in this course.

Work that is missed cannot be made up. The only times I will accept late papers, posts, or give make-up exams is when you provide written documentation of a death in your family or a medical emergency. All documentation must be provided within one week of the situation.

Submission Policies

Instructions on how to submit assignments is included in the assignment description, and assignments are submitted through Canvas. Feedback can be expected on exams and projects within two weeks of the due date. Feedback on discussions will be ongoing. Please see discussion grading information for more detail.

Course Policies

Course Plagiarism Policy and policy issues

Online Discussion Posts and Responses: These provide a wonderful way for all members of a class to participate in discussion and debate. While I encourage participants to feel free to engage in debates and to intellectually challenge other people's ideas when they feel it is appropriate this MUST be done with civility and respect, just as we would expect in a traditional classroom. This is an inclusive online classroom environment and disrespect for others' opinions will not be tolerated. Please think first before submitting your discussion posts and responses to ensure that you are expressing yourself in a clear and respectful manner.

Academic Dishonesty: All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threats, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

Plagiarism and Turnitin: All assignments submitted online go through Turnitin software that detects cases of plagiarism. Please ensure that your submissions only include your own original work and there will be no issue. If you have any questions about paraphrasing, using sources, or plagiarism please refer to the following resources: [Understanding and Preventing Plagiarism](#) or [Plagiarism and Citation Guide](#).

Special Needs: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Conflict: If such occurs with any part of this course, bring it to the professor's attention by the end of the second week of classes. See http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Netiquette

All students should be aware that their behavior impacts other people, even online. I hope that we will all strive to develop a positive and supportive environment and will be courteous to fellow students and your instructor. Due to the nature of the online environment, there are some things to remember.

1. Always think before you write. In other words, without the use of nonverbals with your message, your message can be misinterpreted. So please think twice before you hit submit.
2. Keep it relevant. There are places to chat and post for fun everyday stuff. Do not stray from the discussion in the assigned questions.
3. Never use all caps. This is the equivalent of yelling in the online world. It is not fun to read. Only use capital letters when appropriate.
4. Make sure that you are using appropriate grammar and structure. In other words, I don't want to see anyone writing "R U" instead of "are you". There are people in the class that may not understand this type of abbreviation, not to mention it does nothing to help expand your writing and vocabulary skills. Emoticons are fine as long as they are appropriate. A smile ☺ is welcome, anything offensive is not.
5. Treat people the same as you would face-to-face. In other words, it is easy to hide behind the computer. In some cases, it empowers people to treat others in ways they would not in person. Remember there is a person behind the name on your screen. Treat all with dignity and respect and you can expect that in return.
6. Respect the time of others. This class is going to require you to work together for discussions and responses. Learn to respect the time of others in your group and your experience will be much better. Always remember that you are not the only person with a busy schedule, be flexible. Do not procrastinate! You may be one that works best with the pressures of the deadline looming on you, but others may not be that way. The same is true for the reverse.

Website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

*Compiled by Melissa Landin, Instructor, Dept. of Communication, Inver Hills Community College,
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Technology Requirements and Support

A separate page with the current technology requirements and support language will be provided by your instructional designer.

University Policies

A separate page with the current university policies will be provided by your instructional designer.