

**MILLSAPS COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

SOAN 2750-02
Crime and Prisons: SHH 347
Spring 2014; MW 2:45-4
Office Hours: 10-12MW and by appointment

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SYLLABUS

Course Description

What is crime? What is the role of the prison system in reducing crime? Currently, over 2.2 million Americans are behind bars and another 5.5 million are on probation or parole. One of every 31 American Adults are under the control of the criminal justice system, making America the world's largest jailer?¹

This course will center around two general topics: (1) Crime, Criminality, and Criminological Theory (2) Prison, Detention, and Mass Incarceration. Under each topic, we will utilize a sociological perspective to examine the nature of crime, the creation of crime and criminals, and our past and contemporary penal system.

Required Texts:

- 1. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander*
- 2. Crime and the American Dream by Steven R. Messner and Richard Rosenfeld (4th edition)*
- 3. The Female Offender: Girls, Women, and Crime by Meda Chesney-Lind and Lisa Pasko*
- 4. Making Good: How Ex-convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives by Shadd Maruna*

Additional Articles can be found on Course Connect (enrollment key is Evans)

Course Requirements

This course will be structured as a seminar. Many of the readings are theoretical, which means that you often need to read a second, even a third time, to understand. Class lectures and discussions will be based on the readings. It is your responsibility to read the assigned material before class; your class participation grade depends on your ability to discuss these readings

¹ See <http://www.toledoblade.com/Featured-Editorial-Home/2014/01/08/Prison-nation.html>;
http://www.sentencingproject.org/detail/news.cfm?news_id=1740&id=167

(summarize each reading, define and explain the key concepts and theories, and ask and answer questions about them). In general, you are expected to make frequent presentations of the readings, share in the exchange of ideas, and lead and participate in class discussions. Students will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- (1) Midterm/Final Exam: There will be a midterm and final exam in this course that will center on the readings, films, and class discussions. The exams will consist of three questions in which students are responsible for responding to two. Each exam is worth 50 points.
- (2) Participation: Evaluation of participation will consist of preparation, presentations in class, homework, and in-class assignments. Students may also be responsible for submitting weekly discussion questions and responses. Total: 100 points.
- (3) Final CEL project: As this is a community engaged learning project, you will be evaluated on your journal entries, and final project. Paper guidelines will be distributed in class. Total 125 points (25 journal/100 paper).
- (4) Film Critiques: During the semester, students will be responsible for submitting two film critiques. Total: 25 points each².

Community Engaged Learning Component

This course has a community engagement component that all students are required to participate in to gain “real world” experience. Hours of participation are open and students will have the opportunity to engage in community outreach through a variety of programs. In total, this component of the course will take only about fifteen hours to complete, including in-class discussion time. During the semester, several speakers from local organizations will be meeting with our class to discuss different organizations that are open to student volunteers.

Course Policies

As students at Millsaps, you have all pledged to abide by the Millsaps Honor Code. We expect you to meet the high standards of academic honesty embodied in the Honor Code. Academic honesty is vital for our intellectual endeavors. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are acts of dishonesty. If I find that a student has been academically dishonest, college policies require that I report the case to the academic dean for consideration by the Honor Council. Please take your responsibilities under the Honor Code very seriously. You should always submit your own original work for this class and cite *all* sources upon which you have drawn in developing papers and other projects. I will be unable to grade your work if you fail to provide proper citations. If you have questions about these issues, please see me. If you are challenged with a learning disability, it is your responsibility to register with Student Services and to inform me of any allowances granted by the college. I will be happy to work with you to make sure that we arrange for the appropriate allowances.

² Please note that many of the films may contain disturbing images. While I believe these films are useful for educational purposes, keep in mind that you will not be penalized if you choose to refrain from watching any of the films.

Course Schedule³

WEEK ONE

January 13: Course Introduction and Discussion of Interests

January 15

- A: What is Crime? (Pp 16-37)

Types of Crime & Criminological Theory

WEEK TWO

January 20: No Class

January 22

- A: What is Crime (Pp. 37-60)

WEEK THREE

January 27

- Chapters 1&2: Crime and the American Dream

January 29

- Chapter 4: Crime and the American Dream
- A: The Devil Made Me Do It

WEEK FOUR

February 3

- A: Born to be Bad: Biological Theories of Crime
- A: Serial Murder: Popular Myths and Empirical Realities

February 5

- A: Criminal Minds
- A: How Child Molesters' Explain Their Deviance

WEEK FIVE

February 10

- A: Failed Socialization
- What Triggers School Shootings?

³ Please be aware that this is tentative and subject to change

February 12

- A: The Code of the Street
- A: Crimes of Place

WEEK SIX

February 17

- Initiation
- Chapter 2: Female Offenders (Girls' Troubles and "Female Delinquency")

February 19

- A: Juveniles in Corrections
- Film: When Kids Get Life

WEEK SEVEN

February 24

- Chapter 3: Female Offenders (Girls, Gangs, and Violence)
- Film: When Kids Get Life

February 26

- Chapter 4: Female Offenders (The Juvenile Justice System and Girls)

WEEK EIGHT

March 3

- Chapter 6: Female Offenders (Sentencing Women to Prison: Equality Without Justice)

PRISONS

March 5

- A: Theoretical Penology
- *Midterm exam (take home)*

WEEK NINE

March 10—spring break!

WEEK 10

March 17

- A: The Corrections Industry

March 19

- A: The Social World of Prisoners
- *Film: The Farm: 10 Down*

WEEK ELEVEN

March 24

- The New Jim Crow: Introduction and Chapter 1

March 26

- Open

WEEK TWELVE

April 2

- The New Jim Crow: Chapter 2

WEEK THIRTEEN

April 7

- The New Jim Crow: Chapter 3

April 9

- The New Jim Crow: Chapter 4

WEEK FOURTEEN

April 14

- A: The Death Penalty

April 16

- Making Good: Part I (Chapters 1&2)
- Film (Slavery by Another Name; Race to Incarcerate; or Murder on a Sunday Morning)

WEEK FIFTEEN

April 21

- Making Good: Part II (Chapters 3, 4, 5)

April 23

- Making Good: Part III (Chapters 6, 7, 8)

WEEK SIXTEEN

April 28

- Course Wrap-up
- *Final Project Due*

May 5—FINAL EXAM

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE of MILLSAPS COLLEGE

Millsaps College is an academic community dedicated to the pursuit of scholarly inquiry and intellectual growth. The foundation of this community is a spirit of personal honesty and mutual trust. Through their Honor Code, the students of Millsaps College affirm their adherence to these basic ethical principles.

An Honor Code is not simply a set of rules and procedures governing students' academic conduct. It is an opportunity to put personal responsibility and integrity into action. When students agree to abide by an Honor Code, they liberate themselves to pursue their academic goals in an atmosphere of mutual confidence and respect.

The success of the Code depends on the support of each member of the community. Students and faculty alike commit themselves in their work to the principles of academic honesty. When they become aware of infractions, both students and faculty are obligated to report them to the Honor Council, which is responsible for enforcement. A representative, but not exhaustive, list of academic offenses and violations covered by the Millsaps Academic Honor Code is provided at http://www.millsaps.edu/academics/honor_code.php.

The pledge signed by all students upon entering the College is as follows:

As a Millsaps College student, I hereby affirm that I understand the Honor Code and am aware of its implications and of my responsibility to the Code. In the interests of expanding the atmosphere of respect and trust in the College, I promise to uphold the Honor Code and I will not tolerate dishonest behavior in myself or in others.

Each examination, quiz, or other assignment that is to be graded will carry the written pledge: **“I hereby certify that I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment. (Signature)”** The abbreviation “Pledged” followed by the student’s signature has the same meaning and may be acceptable on assignments other than final examinations.

It is the responsibility of students and faculty to report offenses to the Honor Code Council in the form of a written report. This account must be signed, the accusation explained in as much detail as possible, and submitted to the Dean of the College.

The Honor Council, 2013–2014

Students:

Faculty:

Daniella Rossano, Chair
Sarah Peterman, Vice-Chair
Rebecca Foreman, Sergeant-at-Arms
Konstantin Baizat
Pooja Goel
Amanda Kaminski

Dr. Brent E. Hendrixson, Faculty Chair
Dr. Ted Ammon
Dr. Bill Brister

One more undergraduate position will be filled at the beginning of the spring term.