

**WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

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**JUSTICE SEMESTER
JLS492002T**

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

The seminar portion of the Washington Justice Semester is designed to broaden your knowledge of criminal justice issues and policies. It will provide opportunities to meet criminal justice practitioners, administrators, and special interest groups influencing justice research and evaluation, examining the effectiveness and efficiency of providing justice services. Each seminar will afford the chance to critically analyze a specific topic, to inquire about theoretical and pragmatic choices, and to explore competing views of law, justice, and responsibility in our society.

GENERAL FORMAT:

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of week will be devoted to classroom discussion, lectures and seminars with selected guest speakers. Over this semester you will hear from over fifty different legal and criminal justice professionals. Your schedule of seminars will be your "guidebook" providing times, dates and locations, and when necessary, directions to off-campus seminar locations. However, in most cases we will travel together from Tenley. Students who are housed off campus will get explicit directions for the seminar location. Transportation to these seminars is your responsibility. You must be prepared to arrive at least 10 minutes ahead of all seminars that are off campus. Metro is our usual mode of transportation. You will have received a metro map in your student packet. You can purchase metro passes at metro center ticket office, as well as several CVS stores. There will be a few occasions when we have to travel by bus. Bus trips are partially paid for by the program. Our campus is located adjacent to the Tenleytown Metro stop on the red line.

While contacts have already been made with our speakers, please be prepared for some unavoidable disruptions to accommodate speakers' need and conflicts. Many of the speakers carry heavy trial and other schedules, and must meet time deadlines which may require reshuffling our seminar schedule. Punctual attendance at all classes and site visits is required. Poor attendance may result in the loss of up to 10 points (a full letter grade). If you cannot attend a session, please contact me AHEAD of time via phone or email, and designate one of your classmates to take notes and gather announcements or update schedules.

DECORUM IN THE CLASSROOM:

Seminar speakers and fellow classmates are to be treated with respect at all times. **CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING SEMINAR!** No texting as well! Unless there are medical concerns, laptops are not permitted in the classroom. Please notify me in advance with these concerns.

DRESS CODE: Please dress appropriately, (business casual) for outside seminars which are court-related. I will inform you of the dress code in advance. You will receive a memo about dress for our prison visits.

MEDICAL NEEDS:

In the event that you need to take exams in separate areas from regular classrooms, and/or you need extended times for your exams, proper documentation is required in advance. If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans With Disabilities Act, and need assistance, please contact me immediately. You may need to obtain documentation from your home school and/or American University's Academic Support Center. (202-885-3489)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

You should follow the standards set forth by the University's Academic Integrity Code. It can be found at

<http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/index.htm>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. All faculty members will design alternative methods of completing classes. Specific strategies will vary from class to class depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU email and blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU email regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Website (www.prepared.american.edu), and the AU information line at 202-885-1100 for general university-wide information, and contact their faculty and or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

Over the semester, a variety of topics and issues will be introduced to you. We will usually begin each new area (law enforcement, corrections, etc.) with an introductory lecture where I provide you with the background information and context within which to place the specific speaker's comments. We will conclude each area with an informal seminar review during which you will offer to the class your own personal observations about the material that has been presented. Students lead these discussion groups. The entire semester is designed to stimulate

your thinking about various criminal justice issues. You must be prepared to ask probing questions of the speakers and participate fully in the seminar experience. We will address the following issues in the semester ahead:

- 1. Fundamental concepts: use of sanctions for social control. The role of discretion in the civil and criminal justice systems, the nature of crime, the impact of forensics, crime measurement and the shortcomings of current policies and measures, security versus civil liberties in light of 9/11, the political process as it applies to criminal justice policy formulation, and civil rights and liberties.**
- 2. Institutions of criminal and civil justice systems: law enforcement, courts, prosecution, defense, probation, parole, corrections and juvenile justice. We will examine local., state and federal agencies in these systems.**
- 3. Selected topics: terrorism and homeland security, capital punishment, juveniles as victims and offenders, women as victims and offenders, human trafficking, drug and alcohol abuse and their impact on society and the justice system, and a variety of first and second amendment civil rights and liberties issues.**

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE SEMINARS:

As you are aware, you will receive grades for two separate seminars. The following section will explain the requirements to be met in each of the seminars, and the grading system.

Seminar 1 Assignments;

A. Abstracts:

You will be required to write four abstracts (critical summaries) relating to the assigned readings and seminars. Each abstract will address a different topic in the seminar syllabus, and will be distributed well in advance of its due date. These papers must be 5-8 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, and properly cited. Specific citations to readings and seminars must be used in these assignments. You will receive a detailed memo of the topic and requirements. You are encouraged to visit the writing lab on Tenley or on main campus for assistance. Details about the writing lab will follow. Papers must be submitted both electronically via email attachment in MS Word and sent to bsiman@american.edu by the evening of the due date. Hard copy is required to be submitted the next day. Papers that miss either the electronic deadline or the hard copy deadline will be considered late.

- B. Class Participation:**
You will be required to participate **ACTIVELY** in all seminars. Your grade for this segment will include: **punctual attendance at all seminars, asking questions of the guest speakers, and participating with fellow students in roundtable discussions.** Please note that class participation is as significant as writing well. Make an effort to participate in questions and class discussions. It will affect your grade for the seminar.

GRADING FOR SEMINAR 1 ASSIGNMENTS:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Abstract #1 | 20% |
| Abstract #2 | 20% |
| Abstract #3 | 20% |
| Abstract #4 | 20% |
| Class Participation | 20% |

Due dates will appear in the weekly schedule.

SEMINAR 2 ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Survey**
Preparing the survey instrument and conducting a survey will also be required. The class, which will be divided into groups, will select a topic. The following topics have been chosen in the past: **abortion, gun control, substance abuse, corrections and capital punishment, racial and ethnic profiling, homeland security, among others.** You may certainly select any topic of interest. Due to time constraints and sample size, this survey will not be a truly representative one. However, it will result in many interesting findings. It will provide you with a “taste” of popular opinion concerning some of the most salient issues in the area of criminal justice. Since this is a participatory learning experience, all students must participate in some manner within their groups. The students design the survey questions, and conduct the survey. Toward the end of the semester, a day will be selected during which each group will present their findings to the class. The grade earned will apply to each member of the group. You will receive a detailed memo about this assignment.
- B. Mid Term Exam:**
An examination will be given approximately halfway through the semester which will assess your understanding of the issues to that point. It will be a choice of essays. Outside readings and seminar speakers up to that point, will be included. We will have a review session prior to the exam.

C. Final Exam:

An examination will be given at the end of the semester which will address the issues we have covered since the mid term. The final exam is also an essay exam. We will have a review session prior to the exam.

GRADING FOR SEMINAR 2 ASSIGNMENTS:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Survey | 20% |
| Mid Term Exam | 40% |
| Final | 40% |

GRADING:

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 96 – 100 |
| A- | 90 – 95 |
| B+ | 85 – 89 |
| B- | 80 – 84 |
| C+ | 75 – 79 |

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

I strongly suggest that you obtain the following texts from Amazon.com. The bookstore is usually very late getting the required texts.

Freda Adler ,Gerard Mueller and William Laufer. **CRIMINAL JUSTICE: An Introduction.** McGraw Hill, latest edition.

Edward Lazarus. **CLOSED CHAMBERS,** latest edition.

Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, eds. **INVISIBLE PUNISHMENT: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment.**

The New Press, 2002 or the latest edition.

RECOMMENDED:

Tracy Kidder. **HOMETOWN**

Robert Johnson, **DEATH WORK**

Connolly. **THE POET**

There will be several class handouts, particularly on the death penalty. Speakers will also provide us with readings. These will be distributed to you.

