

IMPRISONMENT (SOCIOLOGICAL / SOCPSY 3RR3)

Winter, 2022

Instructor: Dr. Mark Norman
Email: normam2@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Friday, 2:30-5:30pm
Room: PCGLL B131

Office: TBD
Office Hours: Friday, 1:30-2:20pm
TA: TBD
TA email: TBD

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the history, politics, and consequences of incarceration in North America and abroad. We will examine why and how we have punished in the past, the reasons and methods for punishment in contemporary society, and how punishment is experienced by people housed in prisons and those released back into society. Using “the prison” as our unit of analysis, we will tackle both theoretical and substantive issues around incarceration and explore questions such as: 1) What is the relationship between incarceration and class, race, ethnicity, gender, and age? 2) What determines the scope of incarceration and what impact does it have on those housed in prisons, their families, and the communities they come from? 3) How do prisons contribute to the growing penalization of poverty in modern society? 4) How do we go about studying prisons, and what are the strengths and limitations of various approaches?

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will have learned about:

- The politics, history, and collateral consequences of incarceration
- How we punish and the multiple (and often contradictory) aims of incarceration
- The racial, ethnic, and gendered aspects of who we incarcerate
- The overlap between victims and offenders
- The prisoner society, prison codes, and how prisons operate
- Correctional officer culture, discretion, and the dynamics of authority in a total institution
- How to improve their writing and analytical skills
- How to think critically about research and media depictions of prisons and those currently and formerly housed in these spaces.

Required Materials and Texts

There is no text in this course. All readings are available through the McMaster library system or will be posted/linked on Avenue. If you are unsure how to access journal articles through the McMaster library system, please seek assistance from the [library](#). Any additional materials (e.g., documentaries, podcasts, etc.) will be available online or through the McMaster Library.

Class Format

This is an in-person class and lectures are not recorded. Classes will consist of lectures, guest lectures, small group work, student presentations, and documentary or short film screenings.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Group presentation (15%)
2. Final Essay (30%)
3. Midterm exam (25%)
4. Final exam (30%)

Course Evaluation – Details

Group Media Analysis Presentation (15%), March 24 and 31

Students will work in groups of 4-5 to prepare a short (~10 minute) presentation that uses course materials to analyze a popular media representation of imprisonment. Students may choose their own groups by Week 5, or else they will be placed into a group by the instructor. In the weeks leading up to the presentations, class time will be allotted to allow groups to work together on their presentations and for the instructor to answer questions or provide guidance.

Midterm Exam (25%), February 17

This exam will take place in-class and will cover material from Weeks 1-5. It will consist of multiple choice questions. If you have SAS-arranged accommodations, please coordinate directly with SAS to book your exam.

Final Essay (30%), April 6 at 5:00 PM

Students will submit an original essay on a topic to be determined. A detailed overview of this assignment will be communicated in class and on Avenue within the first three weeks of class.

Final Exam (30%), TBD (April 14-29)

A cumulative final exam will be held in-person during the exam period. The exam will consist of multiple choice and written questions. Students must be available to write the exam during this time period. Please plan holiday and travel plans accordingly.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Friday, January 13)

Introduction to the Course AND The Birth of the Prison

Readings:

Rubin, A. 2018. "History of the Prison." *The Handbook of Social Control*, pp. 279-292.

Week 2 (Friday, January 20)

Theoretical Perspectives on Punishment and Incarceration

Readings:

Readings TBC

Week 3 (Friday, January 27)

Mass Incarceration: Causes and Consequences

Readings:

Garland, D. 2001. "Introduction: The Meaning of Mass Imprisonment." *Punishment and Society*, 3(1): 5-7.

Wacquant, L. 2001. "Deadly Symbiosis: When Ghetto and Prison Meet and Mesh." *Punishment & Society*, 3(1): 95-133.

Additional reading(s) TBC

Week 4 (Friday, February 3)

The Pains of Imprisonment and Human Rights Issues

Readings:

Crewe, B. 2011. "Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment." *Punishment & Society*, 13(5): 509-529

Coyle, E., & Omstead, J. 2022. "[The use of solitary confinement continues in Canada.](#)" *Policy Options*, January 18.

Week 5 (Friday, February 10)

Daily Life in Prison AND Collateral Consequences of Incarceration

Readings:

Comfort, M.L. 2003. "In the tube at San Quentin: The "secondary prisonization" of women visiting inmates." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 32(1): 77-107.

Maier, K.H. and Ricciardelli, R. 2019. "The prisoner's dilemma: How male prisoners experience and respond to penal threat while incarcerated." *Punishment & Society*, 21(2): 231-250.

Week 6 (Friday, February 17)

MIDTERM EXAM AND Incarceration & Social Inequality: Race, Gender, and Social Class (Part 1)

Readings:

Alexander, M. 2010. *The New Jim Crow (10th Anniversary Edition)*. New York: New Press. "Introduction," pp. 1-19.

Week 7 (Friday, February 24)

Midterm Break: NO CLASS

Week 8 (Friday, March 3)

Incarceration & Social Inequality: Race, Gender, and Social Class (Part 2)

Guest Lecture: Alicia Clifford (PhD candidate, Department of Health, Aging & Society)

Readings:

Chartrand, V. 2019. "Unsettled times: Indigenous incarceration and the links between colonialism and the penitentiary in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 61(3): 67-89.

Additional reading(s) TBC

Week 9 (Friday, March 10)

Sport, Exercise, and Physical Culture in Prisons

Readings:

Norman, M., 2017. "Sport in the underlife of a total institution: Social control and resistance in Canadian prisons." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 52(5): 598-614.

Additional reading(s) TBC

Week 10 (Friday, March 17)

Working in Prison

Readings:

Haggerty, K.D. and Bucerius, S.M., 2021. "Picking battles: Correctional officers, rules, and discretion in prison." *Criminology*, 59(1): 137-157.

Ricciardelli, R., 2017. "Canadian provincial correctional officers: Gender strategies of achieving and affirming masculinities." *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 25(1), pp.3-24.

Week 11 (Friday, March 24)

Rehabilitation, Re-entry, and Reintegration AND Group Presentations

Readings:

Maier, K., 2021. "Mobilizing' prisoner reentry research: Halfway houses and the spatial-temporal dynamics of prison release." *Theoretical Criminology*, 25(4): 601-618.

Maruna, S., Lebel, T.P., Mitchell, N. and Naples, M. 2004. Pygmalion in the reintegration process: Desistance from crime through the looking glass. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 10(3): 271-281.

Week 12 (Friday, March 31)

Prisons During COVID-19 (and Beyond) AND Group Presentations

Guest Lecture: Alysha McDonald (PhD candidate, Department of Sociology)

Readings:

McDonald, A.D., Berardi, L., Tetrault, J.E., Haggerty, K.D. and Bucerius, S.M. 2022. "More of the same, only worse: COVID-19 and the administrative burdens facing loved ones of incarcerated men." *The British Journal of Criminology* azac026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azac026>.

Ricciardelli, R., Bucerius, S., Tetrault, G., Crewe, B., & Pyrooz, D. 2021. [Correctional services during and beyond COVID-19](#). *FACETS* 6. **[Read pp. 495-507]**

Week 13 (Friday, April 7)

Good Friday: NO CLASS

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

The essay should be submitted on Avenue, in the designated assignment dropbox. Group presentations and the midterm and final exam will be held in-person.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late essays will be deducted 5% per day. Group presentations and the midterm and final exam cannot be submitted late.

Course Modification

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. If any modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#).

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University

activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.