

Cedar Crest College
Corrections: Crisis in America

Course: CRJ 306
Credits: 3

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Course Description

The American corrections system is in crisis facing an unprecedented incarceration rate and high numbers of repeat offenders. This course, taught by a prison warden, is designed to examine the effectiveness of the often conflicting four justifications for punishment: retribution; deterrence; rehabilitation; and social protection. Progressive approaches to incarceration will be explored as well as current trends in alternatives to incarceration. The inmate subculture will be examined together with a critical look at the overcrowding epidemic facing today's prison administrators.

Course Objectives

Through this course, the intent is to assist the student to develop and use critical thinking skills to:

1. Distinguish between the historical rationales for punishment, which include; revenge; retribution; rehabilitation; deterrence; and incapacitation.
2. Develop the ability to critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the rationales for punishment.
3. Gain an understanding of the importance of the role inmate management plays in controlling inmate behavior.
4. Develop an understanding of the role architectural design plays in the management of inmate populations.

5. Develop the ability to critically analyze modern correctional challenges, including; overcrowding; ethics; aging, recruitment, and emergency preparedness.
6. Recognize the distinction between jails and prisons and analyze the differences each faces in dealing with critical correctional issues.

Course Outcomes

Students will distinguish and define each of the rationales for punishment, which include; revenge; retribution; rehabilitation; deterrence; and incapacitation.

Assessment: Students will participate in classroom discussion; read selected articles from scholarly journals and other relevant publications; and will excel in a written essay outlining the strengths and weaknesses of each rationale.

Students will be able to identify the advantages of modern inmate management techniques and how those techniques relate to institutional safety and efficiency.

Assessment: Students will participate in the same training curriculum as is offered to jail administrators by the National Institute of Corrections. After the completion of the curriculum, students will complete a budget exercise designed to examine the relationship between cost savings initiatives and their potential effect on inmate behavior.

Students will be able to identify the relationship between architectural design and the ability to manage an inmate population.

Assessment: Students will complete a housing plan exercise upon the conclusion of the inmate behavior management training curriculum. The exercise will challenge the students to make knowledgeable decisions with respects to inmates are manages most efficiently in which housing units; which inmates are most efficiently overcrowded; and at what cost should inmates be comingles given emergency housing conditions.

Students will be able to discuss and critically analyze the challenges modern institutions face in dealing with incarcerated individuals.

Assessment: Students will read and critically review selected readings; and participate in classroom discussion based on selected readings; and participate in guest lectures from prison and jail professionals who specialize in areas of critical interest.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how similar challenges facing jails and prisons are dealt with much differently.

Assessment: Students will excel in a written essay based on classroom lecture and a tour of the Northampton County Department of Corrections.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the challenges of planning for emergencies given the unique nature of the population.

Assessment: Students will develop an emergency preparedness plan for the jail located in their home jurisdiction.

Texts and Readings

Required Texts and Readings

Please note that all of the material needed for this course can be found on line and none of it needs to be purchased by the student. All of the material will be placed on the companion website for ease of use. Details will be provided on the first day of class.

Martin, M., & Rosazza, T. (2004). *Resource guide for jail administrators*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

Potential Required Readings

The following readings will be assigned based on the speed of student learning and the perceived need for supplemental explanation. All will be provided to the student as appropriate.

United States. Department of Justice. National Institute of Corrections. Podular Direct Supervision Jails: Information Packet. Washington: GPO, 1993

Anson, R. H., and Hancock, B. W. "Crowding, proximity, inmate violence and the eight amendment". Journal of Offender Rehabilitation 17 (1992): 123-32.

Kinkade, P. & Leone, M. "The consequences of jail crowding". Crime and Delinquency. 41 (1995): 150-62.

Clements, C. B. "The relationship of offender classification to the problem of prison overcrowding". Crime and Delinquency 28 (1982): 72-81.

Brennan, T. "Risk assessment: An evaluation of statistical classification methods". Classification: A tool for managing today's offenders. Arlington: Kirby Lithographic Company, 1993. 46-70.

Student Assignments

This course is designed to be reading intensive. The selected readings will be assigned in the order in which the concept is covered. The articles are an important facet to evaluating and understanding the key correctional concepts that are faced by industry professional today. All articles must be read prior to class discussion.

Each student is expected to do high quality work in completing the following assignments:

1. To regularly attend all class periods and read all assigned readings.
2. Each student will be required to submit a jail budgeting exercise designed to cause the student to critically examine the effect budget cuts can have on inmate behavior management. The student will be given a list of budget decisions and must choose and defend the most appropriate decisions.
3. Each student will complete a housing plan exercise designed to cause the student to critically examine the effect inmate housing decisions

- has on inmate behavior management. The student will be given a jail design and must house inmates based on the characteristics of the sample population, explaining why inmates were selected for given housing styles; why certain inmates were chosen to come together; and what options are available given emergency situations.
4. Each student will be responsible for submitting a written essay on the use of situational prevention techniques in a prison environment. The assignment will be given during the second weekend of class and will be due on a date negotiated in class.

Classroom Protocol

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest College Honor Code. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations and any other behavior that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

Furthermore:

Students are expected to have prompt and regular classroom attendance in accordance with the policy stated on the syllabus.

Faculty are expected to make clear on the first day of class reasons for specific classroom decorum and repercussions for non-compliance. Faculty should be aware of setting boundaries and procedures for exceptions to expectations stated in the syllabus.

Sleeping, or the appearance of sleeping is strictly prohibited. Any student who is observed sleeping will receive a zero for the class participation portion of the course. Repeated events will result in any student failing the course. Any student who is observed sleeping during a guest lecture will fail the course without question.

Students need to understand that open discussion is encouraged and expected in order to foster an advanced learning environment. However, all students should use caution when sharing personal information. There is a

point to which personal experiences are detrimental to the learning environment.

Written assignments are due on the date discussed in class. The syllabus is intended to serve as an outline recognizing that the speed of student learning cannot be predicted in advance. All assignment dates will be clearly discussed in class. Any assignment handed in late will be assessed a 10 point reduction in the grade for each day that it is late. A zero will be received once the assignment is five days late. An assignment is considered late if it is not handed in by the time the class period expires on the announced date of the assignment. With respect to the final assignment, it will be considered late if it is not submitted by midnight on the last day of class. All late assignments must be sent to me via email and will not be accepted in any other format. Additionally, late assignments will be graded without comment.

Honor Philosophy

The Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy is based upon the principle that, as a self-governing body, students have the ability to create an atmosphere of trust and support. Within this environment, individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, develop personal regard for the system under which they live, and achieve a sense of integrity and judgment that will guide them through life.

Grading

Class Participation	10 %
Written Essay	20 %
Jail Budget Exercise	30%
Housing Plan Exercise	<u>40 %</u>
	100 %

Attendance Policy

Students may be absent without penalty to their grade on two occasions. Any student absent on 3 or 4 occasions will have their attendance grade reduced by 25 %; any student absent on 5 or 6 more occasions will receive a zero for class participation; and any student absent on 7 or more occasions

will not pass the course. All absences must be discussed with the instructor in advance, with the exception of medical emergencies.

Those students who choose to sleep through lectures will receive a zero for class participation without exception.

Course Outline

Weekend #1

Course Outline

Corrections Overview

- What is corrections

- Objective of corrections

Film: Police Detention Suicide

- Breaking the Silence

Rationales for Punishment

History of American Confinement

Early Architectural Designs

- Pennsylvania Design

- Auburn Style

Sentencing Reform

Jail/Prison Distinctions

- Video: Beyond the Myths

Modern Architectural Design

- Video: Direct Supervision

Jail Environment

- Video: Stanford Experience

- Video: Attica Riots

- Selected articles relative to inmate/officer misconduct

Staff Recruitment, Retention, Selection

The Role of Classification in Inmate Behavior Management

Inmate Behavior Management

Reading Assignment

Chapter 1 *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*

Chapter 2 *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*

Reading Assignment

Chapter 4 *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*

United States. Department of Justice. National Institute of Corrections. Podular Direct Supervision Jails: Information Packet. Washington: GPO, 1993

Reading Assignment

Chapter 6 *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*

Reading Assignment:

Clements, C. B. "The Relationship of Offender Classification to the Problem of Prison Overcrowding". Crime and Delinquency 28 (1982): 72-81.

Brennan, T. "Risk Assessment: An Evaluation of Statistical Classification Methods". Classification: A Tool For Managing Today's Offenders. Arlington: Kirby Lithographic Company, 1993. 46-70.

Reading Assignment:

Chapter 9 *A Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*

Assignment:

Assignment #1 Housing Plan Exercise

Assignment:

Assignment #2 Jail Budget Exercise

Selected Reading:

Weekend #2

Special Management
Contraband presentation
Video: Gang Management

Situational Prison Control

Assigned Readings

*Wortley, Richard. (2002). Situational Prison Control: Crime Prevention in Correctional Institutions. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

* To be distributed in class

Class Assignment

Written examination on situational control
Review of the housing plan