

Cedar Crest College
Crime and Public Policy
CRJ 316

Paul J. Werrell, M. Ed.
Phone: h 6965-0130
W 610-782-3142
E-Mail: PWerrel@cedarcrest.edu
paulwerrell@lehighcounty.org

Course Description

This course explains how crime; the public perception of crime; and the political reaction to crime influence public policy in the United States. Each component of the criminal justice system will be examined, police, courts, corrections and juvenile justice, evaluating how public policy affects each component.

Course Objectives

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

1. Develop and understanding of the public policy process as it relates to issues crime and justice.
2. Critically analyze and distinguish the key elements in the public policy process.
3. Describe the background of events that have created the current public policy process in relation to social justice issues.
4. Analyze the effect public policy initiatives have on the major components of the criminal justice process.
5. Evaluate current and future trends in public policy.

Course Outcomes

Students will be able to define public policy; will be able to identify the four key characteristics that governments engage in prior to establishment of public policy, identify the constitutional framework established to ensure equal participation in the public policy process and identify the major categories of public policy.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, participate in classroom discussions, evaluate case studies of public policy reform and excel in a written examination.

Students will be able to critically analyze the effectiveness of current public policy initiatives.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination. In addition, students will prepare original research relating to the cause and effect of public policy changes regarding issues of social importance.

Students will be able to describe how current public policy practices have developed to where they are today and whether or not these practices are considered to be successful.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination.

The student will be able to describe how the four primary components of the criminal justice process, police, courts, corrections and juvenile justice, are responsive to ever changing public policy demands.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination. In addition, students will prepare original research relating to the cause and effect of public policy changes regarding issues of social importance.

Students will be able to identify current trends in public policy and provide some insight into future policy development.

Assessment: Students will read selected readings from Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice, participate in classroom discussions and excel in a written examination.

Texts and Readings

Main Text

Hancock, B. W., and Sharp, P. M. (2004). Public Policy, Crime and Criminal Justice. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey; Prentice Hall Publishing.

Student Assignments

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

1. To regularly attend all classes and read all assigned readings.
2. Students will take three written examinations that will cover all of the readings, lectures and other material presented in class.

All written assignments are due on the dates announced in class. The syllabus provides an expected outline, however, all exam dates are subject to change. If a written assignment is not submitted on the required date, a letter grade will be deducted for every day that it is late. Written assignments will not be accepted after the fifth day after the due date and the student will receive a zero for that assignment.

There is no final exam for this course. The last exam is due the final day of the course by 9:30 PM. Any exam not handed in on or before the due date will not be accepted.

Written essays will be graded in three areas: content, academic writing, and APA formatting. In order to receive an A on the written assignment all three areas must be covered correctly. To receive a grade in the "B" range, two of the three (one being content) must be covered correctly; and to receive a grade in the "C" range only the content will have been covered correctly.

This is a reading sensitive course. If students do not keep pace with the readings it will be impossible to participate effectively in classroom discussions.

Attendance Policy

Students may be absent without penalty to their grade (with the exception of class participation) on two occasions. Five more absences will result in a zero for class participation and seven or more absences will result in a failing grade for the course. All absences must be discussed with the instructor in advance, with the exception of medical emergencies.

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 education. Anyone who will be arriving late because of another class must notify me in advance.

Sleeping, or the appearance thereof, is strictly prohibited. Any student who sleeps, or appears to sleep through a lecture will receive a 0 for class participation. If the student makes a habit of sleeping after being spoken to, she/he will fail the course.

The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited. All cell phones must be turned off or placed on “quiet” or vibrate mode. If a student is observed texting during a lecture, presentation or film, the phone will be taken from the student and she/he will receive a 0 for class participation.

Students must 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.

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

1 st Written Examination	20 %
2 nd Written Examination	20 %
3 rd Examination	20 %
Research papers(2)	30%
Participation	10%

Course Outline

Week 1 January 20

Explanation of class design
Explanation of research projects
Introduction to the basic concepts public policy

Reading Assignment:

Chapters 1 and 4 in text

Week 2 January 27

Public Policy Process

- Defining public policy
- Constitutional framework of public policy
- Policy types
- Public policy system

Crime, Justice and Social Environment

- Failure of the conservative strategy
- “social-environmental” approach to public policy

Reading Assignment:

Chapters 5 and 6 in text

Week 3 February 3

At the Roots of Violence: The Progressive Decline and the Dissolution of the Family

- Sociological reflections
- The basis of social violence

Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System

- Case processing
- Arrest rates
- Length of sentences
- Indicators of recidivism

Reading Assignment:

Chapter 7 in text

Week 4 February 10

The Intersection of Drug Use and Criminal Behavior: Results from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse

- Drug use and criminal behavior
- Measuring drug use and crime

- Trends in drug use and criminal behavior

Reading Assignment:

Chapter 9 in text

EXAMINATION #1 DUE FEBRUARY 17

Week 5 February 17

Dynamics of Criminal Justice

- The role of the media
- The role of politics
- The “war” mentality

Reading Assignment:

Chapters 10 and 11 in text

Week 6 February 24

Developing police policy

- The need to control police activities
- Categories of risk
- Model policy elements

Types of policing

- Community policing
- Crime control policing
- Problem-oriented policing

Reading Assignment

Chapter 13 in text

Week 7 March 3

Career Criminals and High-rate dangerous Offenders

- Career criminals
- High rate dangerous offenders

Reading Assignment

Chapters 14 and 15 in text

Spring Break

Week 8 March 17

Public Policy and the Courts

- The role of judges in public policy
- U.S. Supreme Court

The Political Sentencing Game

- Politicalization of crime
- Baseball legislation and sentences

Reading Assignment:

Chapters 17 and 18 in text

“Sentencing Reforms: Impacts and Implications” by Alfred Blumstein

“Commensurability Crime Prevention” by Andrew von Hirsch

EXAMINATION #2 DUE MARCH 24

Week 9 March 24

Punishment as Social Policy

- “Get Tough” policy
- Controlling crime
- Evaluating crime control
- Limits of punishment

The myth of the lenient criminal justice system

- Incarceration trends
- The death penalty

Reading Assignment

Chapters 19, 20 and 21 in text

Weeks 10 and 11 March 31 and April 7

Serious and Violent Juvenile Crime: A Comprehensive Strategy

- General principles
- Delinquency prevention
- Graduated sanctions

Controlling Delinquency and Crime through Family Interventions

- Early health care
- Comprehensive family policy
- Parenting

Emerging Trends and Issues in Juvenile Justice

- Getting tough
- Bifurcated response

Reading Assignment
Malign Neglect

Week 12 April 14

American Drug Policy

- Discussion based on supplemental text *Malign Neglect*

Reading Assignment
Chapter 26 in text

Week 13 April 21

Beyond the Fear of Crime: Reconciliation as the Basis for Criminal Justice Policy

- Case studies

EXAMINATION #3 DUE APRIL 28

Weeks 14 and 15 April 28 and May 5

We will begin a detailed look at several public policy initiatives in detail. Readings will be assigned prior to the assignment of the policy topic.