Course Description

Despite increases in the past year, most categories of crime have actually decreased since the 1900s. Still, levels of crime still greatly exceed those of a generation ago. How can we account for the increase of crime in the 1960s, the sharp declines of the 90s, but the continued persistence of high crime rates? Can the criminal justice system effectively deal with the crime problem given the constraints placed on the powers of the state? How is public policy itself linked to crime trends, and can policy be developed to create safer communities and streets? It is to these questions that this course is directed.

Course Requirements

There are two, in-class examinations in the course. Each exam will constitute 50 percent of the student's final grade. Exams are a combination of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer. There is no research paper required for the course.

While there are no texts for the course, there are a number of assigned readings that should be read prior to class. The readings are available through WebCampus. The course schedule below lists topics covered, required readings, and the associated date (listed readings subject to change).

There are several films scheduled to be shown in the course. Material on the film is testable (i.e. information from the film will be included in the exams). Prior to the showing of each film, a handout composed of questions will be distributed to students. These questions, which should be answered during the films, are the same questions that will appear on the exams.

Though attendance is generally not required, it is strongly advised. Attendance is required on those days in which a film has been announced as being shown.

Course Schedule

Jan. 14  Crime and Punishment in American History

Jan. 21  Contemporary Perceptions and the Realities of Crime


Jan. 28  The Policy Making Process
The Media and Crime Policy


Feb. 4  Youth Violence in America


Feb. 11  Youth Violence in America (cont'd)


Feb. 18  Street Gangs and Crime


Feb. 25  Street Gangs and Crime (cont'd)


Mar. 4  Guns, Crime and Gun Control Policies


Mar. 11  Guns, Crime and Gun Control Policies (cont'd)


Mar. 18  Exam 1

Mar. 25  Drugs, Crime, and Drug Control


Apr. 1  Drugs, Crime, and Drug Control (cont’d)


Apr. 8  Spring Break
Apr. 15  The Courts and Sentencing Policies


Apr. 22  Correctional Policies


Apr. 29  The Death Penalty


May 6  Exam 2

LEARNING DISABILITY STATEMENT

"Disability Resource Center (DRC is the official office to provide Disability Services. If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact DRC for coordination in your academic accommodations. DRC is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex, suite 137. The phone number is 702-895-0866, or TTD 702-895-0652. You may also visit our website at www.unlv.edu/studentinf/les"